Rebuilding Virginia’s Food Processing

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http://www.standardmachinery.com/foodpro.htm
Introduction

Goal

• Propel Virginia’s food economy by supporting local heritage food processing in the Thomas Jefferson Planning District

What is food processing?

• Mills
• Cideries
• Slaughterhouses
• Bakeries
• Canneries
• Breweries

What can food processing do for us?

• Local slaughterhouses enable farmers to raise and process animals close to home.
• Processing facilities can incubate successful businesses.
Introduction

Why processing heritage foods?

• Economic development
• Place-based economy
• Virginia as a heritage food destination

Two policy ideas

• Assist food entrepreneurs
• Develop workforce and cultivate entrepreneurship
Facilities and Resources

Assist Food Entrepreneurs

Methods

• Harness our existing facilities & resources for use

• Expand and modernize facilities by:
  • Connecting them to **Grant Funding.**
    
    *EX: USDA FARMAID. Community Investment Collaborative.*

  • **Promoting Tax Credits.** *Example: Wisconsin Food Processing Modernization Tax Credit equal to 10% of expansion costs*

  • Build a **resource network** to support food entrepreneurs
    • VA Cooperative Extension – food scientists
    • VA Small Business Development

Example: ACEnet in Ohio provides business incubation services

Salsas, Jams, Chutneys, and Hot Sauces made at Blue Ridge Food Ventures in Asheville, NC by local entrepreneurs
Workforce Development and Technical Training

Technical training / workforce services programs at
- PVCC
- CATEC
- VA cooperative extension

Methods
- Develop degree/certificate programs in food processing
- Offer (credit/non-credit) courses and workshops
- Examples
  - Southeastern Community College (NC): a certificate program in food processing
  - Southern State Community College (OH): associate degree program in food processing & technology

Benefits
- Generate skilled workforce
- Aid in success/efficiency of existing processing facilities

To Empower our food heritage and the local food economy we can

• Assist food entrepreneurs

• Develop a skilled workforce

• Strengthen our entrepreneurial culture

PARTNERSHIPS to connect people and resources will be key to enhancing food processing

"OF COURSE I CAN!

I’m patriotic as can be—
And ration points won’t worry me!"

http://www.eatlocalchallenge.com/images/2008/07/31/of_course_i_can_wwii_poster.jpg