



## The Kentucky Center for Agriculture and Rural Development

### GUIDING YOU THROUGH BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

by Kati Bowman,

The Kentucky Center for Agriculture and Rural Development (KCARD) is a non-profit organization that facilitates agricultural and rural business development in Kentucky. We provide educational opportunities, technical assistance, and business support services to new and existing agribusinesses.

A major part of what we do is assist producers and agribusinesses in developing a business plan. Your business plan is the roadmap for your business and can help you reassess business ideas and enterprises each year. The business plan answers the key questions about the business: who, what, where, when, why, and



how. They help an owner of a business think through key elements essential to the business's success, capture those pieces in a written document, and help make the case for a business to receive financial support from potential investors, lenders, or grant sources. For existing businesses, a business plan may be specific to an expansion or new enterprise that the business wants to pursue. Most importantly, going through the process of planning forces business

owners and/or managers to think key questions.

You can find many business plan templates online, but KCARD has a Business Plan Development Guide we routinely use that lists all of the questions we run through when we work on a business plan. You can find that document here:

[https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5b3e51bc9772ae7a7f66d05f/t/5ba93aeaec212d6aelacd1b8/1537817322553/2\\_Business+Plan+Development+Guide+FINAL.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5b3e51bc9772ae7a7f66d05f/t/5ba93aeaec212d6aelacd1b8/1537817322553/2_Business+Plan+Development+Guide+FINAL.pdf)

The most important thing to remember if you are starting to write a business plan: Just start. Many people starting a new business struggle to find the time to write the whole document at once when each new section poses a new question for them to have to consider. That's okay. Just start with one section and write it down. Then tackle another part of it and write it down. Keep going and you will make progress.

Another service KCARD offers is marketing plan assistance. A well-defined marketing plan helps

businesses make the most of their marketing dollars. KCARD can assist businesses develop a marketing plan that addresses specific goals of the business and provides marketing strategies that fit your targeted customer groups to achieve those goals, and update marketing plans and perform the necessary market research.

Your marketing plan can help you figure out how to reach your customers, including wholesale customers. Connecting with wholesale accounts can present a whole new challenge. Chefs and restaurateurs have varied hours based on food service times, institutions can present food safety and procurement challenges, and selling to a distributor can present lots of hoops with barcodes, food safety, and others. Luckily, KCARD has partnered with several other organizations to launch the Local Food Expansion Initiative. With this program, KCARD has hired a Local Food Coordinator to connect



farmers with buyers. To learn more about the Local Food Expansion Initiative, visit our blog post at <https://www.kcard.info/news2/localfoodexpansioninitiative>

KCARD's goal is to provide the best information and assistance to

our clients, no matter the stage of their business, and make sure that information is tailored to their needs. We are able to provide the majority of our services, including business plan development, at no cost to you as much of our work is supported through grants provided by USDA and the Kentucky Agricultural Development Board. Additional support is provided through our work with partners around the state and through fees charged for select client services. For more information on KCARD and how to develop a business plan, contact KCARD at 859-550-3972 or via email at [kcard@kcard.info](mailto:kcard@kcard.info).

*Kati Bowman, brings over 8 years of experience in direct to consumer marketing to her role as Marketing and Communications Specialist with KCARD. Kati provides marketing and communications assistance to businesses and organizations, assists with business planning and recordkeeping assistance, and provides support for KCARD's external communications.*

## The Kentucky Sheep and Goat Check-Off Program began

in 2010 and collects \$.50 for every \$100 worth of sheep and goats sold in the Commonwealth. According to Kentucky law, Check-Off funds must be used for the purpose of promoting the increased use and sale of sheep and goats.

### TO DATE, CHECK-OFF HAS PROVIDED:

- **\$50,000 in New Farmer Recruitment loans** have been given to 25 new/beginning producers in Kentucky since 2012
- **\$50,000** given for special projects to help producers increase marketing efforts throughout the state since 2012
- **\$10,000** spent in promotion of sheep & goat products in 2018

### KY Sheep & Goat Check-Off Sponsors the Try Something Different Tonight marketing campaign

- # of people who tasted lamb and goat products: **26,000**
- # of people who have learned about products and cooking techniques: **5 million**



To learn more about the Kentucky Sheep and Goat Check-off Program visit

[www.kysheepandgoat.org/Check\\_Off.html](http://www.kysheepandgoat.org/Check_Off.html)

KY Sheep & Goat  
**CHECK-OFF**