

Group Memory from Agtourism Conference Keauhou Beach Hotel, Hawaii, January 12, 2007

FORCE FIELD ANALYSIS - allows group an in-depth analysis of the issue by identifying:

1. **Best Case Scenario** - Most desirable outcome if issue is addressed successfully
2. **Worst Case Scenario** - Worst possible outcome if issue is not addressed
3. **Current Reality** - What currently exists relative to the issue
4. **Sustaining Forces** - Those forces that move the Current Reality toward the Best Case or prevent it from getting worse
5. **Restraining Forces** - Those forces that prevent the issue from getting better or move the Current Reality towards the Worst Case

Best Case Scenario

- Complete paradigm shift that moves away from understating of ag as subsistence, to ag that is sustainable
- Lower costs to collectively market
- Mobilizing efforts of farmers to create appropriate state and county regulations
- Group is the credible voice of agtourism needs
- Loose association that serves many diverse needs and interests
- Visitors perceive Hawaii as an agtourism destination
- The government spends money to promote agtourism
- Existing successful models are used to help address issues of signage and liability
- Retail venues on all islands for members' products
- Every small farm is recognized as a small business and receives treatment and services as such
- Ability to address issues of quality control so ag tourism maintains a high standard
- Group provides liability insurance that covers all agtourism business in group
- An association that has diverse membership, ie transportation, tour companies, restaurants, etc
- Our vision statement becomes the foundation for all government regulations

Worst Case Scenario

- Ag business will die out in Hawaii
- Precious ag lands will be developed as subdivisions
- Will get stuck with current bill/legislation (ie Chris Yuen Bill 148) which farmers don't want
- Will remain in limbo in the existing "grey" area forever
- If we lose ag land the property taxes will increase for EVERYONE
- We may end up with more than one association and small farmers will not be well represented
- Large outside ag businesses will take over small local farms
- Large landowners will consolidate the smaller farms into one large entity as existing leases expire
- Lose tourists seeking ag tourism and local grown fresh food meals while on vacation
- Lose all the progress gained so far by the chef and farm to table projects
- Regulation would be restrictive, punitive and hostile, rather than encouraging and supportive

Current Reality

- Gray area, state of limbo farmers presently exist in
- Farmers are at the whim and discretion of neighbors who can stop their business with their complaints because there are not laws protecting agtourism
- Auspicious time: can go to the positive
- Unacceptable - we must get it together to have a significant and unified voice
- Can't sell our products on our own farms, ie brewed coffee
- General public not educated about how ag businesses survive (or don't survive)

- It's ok for us to provide services as long as we don't charge, this is unsustainable
- We are five steps behind other parts of the country/world
- Lack of education in terms of different options in agtourism, more than one farm grows same thing but small guys are passed over
- Climate of fear vs. innovation
- Not on any agenda or radar of government, tourism board
- Interest in agtourism on the rise
- High percentage of creative and unique farmers in the state of Hawaii
- Network with nationwide associations is possible, if desired
- Concern that loose agtourism regulations will allow for a "Disney Land" development on ag land
- There are successful role models in other states we can use
- There is government money available for promotion and development of culinary and agtourism
- Wellness travel, ecotourism and ag tourism can create a powerful voice
- Current cash incentives and 100% income tax deduction for keeping ag lands working farms and ranches

Sustaining Forces

- UH extension support, yet
- Visionaries do exist in Hawaii and they are very willing to share
- Traditional ag practitioners (past 30 years) are gradually beginning to accept ag tourism as part of the ag community
- General trend in US to support ag
- Population as a whole is becoming more aware of food and the connection to wellness
- Critical mass of interested farmers want to have agtourism business
- Positive public response to existing agtourism farms and businesses
- Kent [Fleming] wants to retire from running agtourism conferences (incentive to start an organization)
- Networking and collaboration aids success and moves whole group forward
- Passing solid legislation that enables agtourism farmers to move forward
- Chefs and culinary schools have desire for local grown food and products
- Only state showing an increase in ag operations
- State constitution and county charter mandates favor ag but the "How To" is unclear
- A good mailing list (traditional and email) of potential members to encourage interaction
- Increasing visibility of agtourism by the media
- Planning director in the County of Hawaii is open to dialogue
- We have federal advocates for sustainable ag with Inouye and Abercrombie
- Hungry world
- Ag beginning to have a face (farmers)
- We can review existing laws in other places to help develop laws/guidelines for quality ag tourism, ie a % of their operation

Restraining Forces

- No organization
- No consensus
- Outdated views of some farmers, afraid to change
- Demand for ag land by developers
- Antiquated definition of successful ag business by county
- Source of life "water"
- Lack of county ordinance concerning agtourism operations
- Lack of understanding in community of what agtourism means
- Disproportionate number of farmers with own concerns are apathetic to needs of whole group

- Resistance from ag community
- Lack of understanding among the ag community of the forces that drive tourism and how the tourism industry operates
- Money issues
- Lack of time, people busy, logistics of setting meetings to discuss organizing
- Fulltime farming leaves no time to market or run a business or time to meet and form an organization that will help us with business and regulation aspects of agtourism
- Core group who champions efforts can only do so much
- Money to pay an organizational manager
- Can't do it all with volunteers
- Rich folks buying ag land, don't live here yet complain about ag activities and don't want them
- Inappropriate use and implementation of ag land laws by gentlemen farmers
- Desire to get it done now and frustration about long term process needed
- Labor shortage, lack of workers
- Lack of knowledge and understanding of how government should implement ag tourism laws

Follow Up

- Have another meeting
- Group of people volunteer to get started
- Suggest committees to be formed
- Invite other stakeholders to participate from the front end
- Write compelling case to convince them to attend
- Carri volunteered to organize a meeting
- Invite everyone from conference
- Invite Todd Lowe
- Distribute group memory to all, so larger group can start on the same page
- Consider the Poly Com system (audio/visual support for meetings) so all islands can participate (UH Extension can help)
- Issue of Hawaii county ordinance, need to address sooner than later
- More power with a statewide organization (vs. island)
- Try very hard to give as many folks a voice-UP FRONT
- "Synergy on the Big Island indicates we are ready to mobilize," Lani Weigert
- Everyone wants this to happen-HFBB, DBEDT, HTA, CnC
- Big Island is closest to making it happen
- HTA (Hawaii Tourism Authority) is ready to help but ag has not taken time to ask. The case is already made, need to organize for the ask
- Lani will also help coordinate meetings and efforts to form a statewide association
- Kim will type up group memory and send to Donna for further distribution
- Ask HFBB to help get the word out about our next meeting/s
- Meet as soon as the week of 2/12
- Lani can come back to Hawaii either Feb. 8 or Feb. 9, prefers a meeting at 2pm
- If statewide meeting, meet at Kamehameha Schools or UH Extension Office for Poly Com. availability and assistance
- Small group meeting to determine who to invite and how to reach

Include these two in meeting notification:

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