

FBGA Progress - Feb 2023

FBGA Members:

We had our Directors meeting yesterday and i wanted to report back on our progress on current priorities:

Website - Our website should be launched within the next week. This is where you will be able to follow the progress of IFAS projects, our work on developing Wood markets, production statistics, disaster relief funding and to do networking with other members. Most of this information will not be available to non-members so the first thing you will do when you get the link is to create your own login. I'm excited that this is about to happen!

IFAS Status and Projects - You know that our IFAS team was awarded a Seedit grant of \$75k. This funding will be received in mid-March. Dr. Davie, the team leader, is visiting a number of our farms on Friday to identify locations for project related trials. The group is planning a Field Day in the next month or so to address using weather station soil moisture data as a tool to conserve water and save cost.

Government Program Benefits - Peter Chaires is our Government Affairs Director and is chasing down the benefits available from USDA/FSA as well as cost share programs for water conservation and other objectives. We reviewed his progress and what other directors have found so far and you will get a separate update on specific programs shortly.

Wood Markets Development - Below is our own tracking sheet of 14 potential sales channels that we are working to develop. Our general philosophy is not to exclude any based on a perception of low pricing, rather to pave the road through partnership, to enable actual sales in these channels. For all of them we need to know a specific buyer's specifications and approximate pricing. Some of the markets like Textiles and Hardwood Floors require that we identify manufacturers rather than the marketers. Also, buyers with a local processing facility reduce logistics cost so we encourage that. We are excited that 2 of the channels (in red below) have given us pricing and specifications and have good potential. Note that the slats (Bamcore), woven plywood and textile markets are making progress.

| Market | FBGA Member | Details | Next Step |
|------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------------|--|
| Biochar for Soil Amendments | | | |
| Biochar Now | Barley | Toll process with mobile kilns | may be able to process in Tampa this summer |
| GCS | Barley | Merritt Island option | seems to low |
| Interra-Ag | Barley | Using Biochar Now | trial of 2 tons biochar in 2023 |
| Compost for Soil Amendments | Barley | Roger Johannson/Veransa | unlikely due to slow breakdown process |
| Energy | Barley | Roger Johannson | will test in April |
| Energy - pellets - Avon Park | Barley | High capacity | Harvest in 2023 |
| Construction Materials | | | |
| Slats - Bamcore | Merrick | | Visit facility in Ocala 4/24 |
| Woven plywood - Rizome | Merrick | | considering building small processing facility |
| Green Steel | ? | | |
| Mulch | Lucero | | working to get specs and pricing |
| Bio Plastics | Barley | Austin group | |
| Hardwood Floors | ? | | |
| Textiles | | | |
| Cozy Earth | Barley | | trying to reach owner |
| Origin | Turner | we need local manufacturing | connect with owners |

Leadership Development - The Wedgworth Leadership Institute is receiving nominations now and this is a great opportunity to foster leadership development in our industry. Our Board decided to offer a \$500 scholarship for this within our industry this year. I'll send you separately more information about this.

Thanks and let us know if you have any questions. You will see the other Board members copied on this email.