

Applicant (GMS): Wormfarm Institute Inc., Reedsburg, WI

Project: Fermentation Fest - A Live Culture Convergence

Attachment 2

Details of Project Narrative: Fermentation Fest – A Live Culture Convergence

A. Budget: Wormfarm requests \$50,000 for our project and will provide the match via a mix of cash and in-kind contributions of \$86,300, for a total project budget of \$136,300. The cash contributions will come from local food-related corporate sponsorships, Sauk County staff time and public granters, including the Sauk County Arts and Culture Committee and the Wisconsin Arts Board. In-kind contributions will be in the form of office space and equipment, materials, space for ephemeral art works, and local volunteer hours. We will also receive a grant for promotion from the WI Dept of Tourism which has expanded its cultural tourism focus in recent years.

B. Major Project Activities: The major activity for this first year is Planning Phases 1 and 2 and Pilot Project implementation for the Farm/Art Dtour. Early Planning (July – Sept. 2011) will develop evaluation and tracking mechanisms and will convene local arts and farming organizations, artists and resources around the second annual *Fermentation Fest: A Live Culture Convergence* (note: convening these disparate groups is manageable because we have built relationships over time). Pilot Dtour and evaluation will occur Oct. – Nov. 2011; and Major Planning will take place from Jan – May 2012.

Fermentation Fest will be “A Live Culture Convergence” - a food and farming festival with a focus on fermentation - in all its manifestations. The festival embodies creative place making, featuring as it does 10 days of programming with most activity clustered within two weekends in mid October when farmers, chefs, artists, poets and cheese makers will converge in the beautiful working lands of Sauk

County to present a series of tastings, demonstrations, cooking classes, art events, brewing seminars, farm tours and more. While each day will have different activities (mostly under the jurisdiction of Reedsburg Chamber of Commerce and not a part of this proposal) the Dtour will be constant and self guided with episodic, time sensitive performances, markets, appearances and happenings. This Dtour through the landscape that is itself a cultural resource is a significant part of the *Live Culture Convergence* and a major focus of this proposal.

In this first pilot year, the Dtour will consist of 16-20 stops whose arts and cultural focus will fall within six categories. The first, site-specific sculpture, is comprised of ephemeral art installations in farm fields in collaboration with private landowners. In 2011 we will work with artists and farmers with whom we have existing relationships through other projects. In Year Two we will create a call for proposals and expand the number of participants. As we establish the protocol necessary for a controlled environment to study and evaluate, Year One (2011) will be Dtour laboratory. In this first year, 3 installations will be viewed from the roadside and be accompanied by interpretive material. The second category, Roadside Culture Stands, is part of an ongoing Wormfarm project at the intersection of culture and agriculture. We have 4 existing artist-designed and built mobile farm-stands that will be located along the tour. There are three more in progress so we may have up to 7 Culture Stands working with local vegetable growers. These Culture Stands are functional public art and mini mobile cultural centers that will cross promote by directing folks to the established Fall Art Tour, that occurs on the last weekend of the festival, where they can visit 40+ artists' studios and purchase work. The third category, Pastured Performance, will be comprised of 4 weekend farm-based performances – string quartets in a hay field or puppet dancers in the corn – temporal arts events to be determined. The fourth category, the Art of Farming – Rural Culture Education Sites will be showcased through self guided tours to elements of rural life that are deeply cultural, vital to our collective well-being and often unknown to urban as well as rural people. These will consist of interpretive signs along the road

and not invitations to visit the farms. They will be well researched with strong humanities content. Examples: A Hay Field – interpretive sign explaining the life cycle of hay, what it is, where it goes. Others might include; Corn Field; Dairy Farm; Soybean Field; an Amish Farm. Poets will partner with each featured farm. Farm Fresh, the fifth category, will feature home grown, home made products for sale from other neighboring farms along the tour, such as pumpkins, maple syrup, sorghum, eggs, jams, pie... with a particular focus on fermented products: sauerkraut, sourdough bread, pickles. The sixth category is Self Taught, and features two of Wisconsin's long history of inspiring self-taught artists. We welcome farmers/ landowners who want to create their own contribution to the tour. It is our sincere wish that unexpected installations will blossom, as creativity can be contagious. For Year One we anticipate encouraging several specific activities to start the process. We will also engage local artists to develop signs locating each stop on the tour.

In order to ensure that this project is easily replicable and can serve as a model for other rural communities, we will invest in a significant planning process from which sample RFPs, letters of agreement, contracts and signage will be produced. Planning will address roadside visibility, land use, safety, traffic and parking issues. From January to June 2012, we will develop a long-term sustainability plan using lessons learned in 2011. The expansion of *Fermentation Fest/Dtour* will provide a framework for ongoing *Agri-Cultural* activities and serve as implementation strategies for the civic engagement goals specified in the Sauk County Comprehensive Plan. We will take all evaluation data and the feedback from a post-Festival focus group, compare that to the goals of the County Comprehensive plan, and develop tools to measure the effectiveness of the strategies we identify. We will address sustainability both from the standpoint of the land and how it is used, as well as the creation of an ongoing event that must not only support itself but grow fertility for future cultural events building both cultural and agricultural infrastructure.

C. Outcomes and Measurements: This project strengthens the livability of our community through

the arts in the *long-term* by creating dynamic new relationships across diverse sectors. Farmers, artists, writers, conservationists, and educators will - through their varied perspectives and different abilities - contribute to a thriving rural culture that inspires more arts activity, attracts tourists, draws new residents, provides economic activity and revenue growth, builds pride of place and serves as a model for other rural communities. By deepening existing relationships with partners, revaluing the role of the farmer and the artist, forming new alliances and expanding both the reach of and the appetite for the arts, we will increase collaboration between agriculture and arts sectors. Achievement of the long-term outcomes can be measured through a base line and five-year comparison mapping of partnerships and engagement in *Fermentation Fest* and revenue tracking of several area businesses. We will also track the growth of other arts activities/ collaborations at some of the more traditional farming events such as County Fairs and Dairy Breakfasts. The planning component of this grant will undoubtedly uncover more evaluation methods. The outcomes of the early planning phase will be 1) increased dialogue and cooperation of participants from a range of sectors; 2) increased state media attention due to the innovative hybrid project (arts and agriculture); 3) broad public engagement; 4) an increase in tourism; and 5) demonstrated interest in continued participation by farmers and artists.

D. Schedule of grant related activities: Early Planning Phase *July – Sept. 2011:* Implement mechanisms to track achievement of short- and long-term outcomes, including a visioning session with an initial group of farmers, artists and community members focused on a vibrant polycultural region with arts at its core. Continue planning for *Fermentation Fest 2011* (the framework for this vision) – including a broader spectrum of voices in the planning. *Sept. – Oct. 2011:* Finalize pilot Dtour plans, install Culture Stands and Dtour installations, celebrate *Fermentation Fest 2011*. *Nov. – Dec. 2011:* Evaluate Dtour, develop ongoing fundraising strategy. Publicly link outcomes of *Fermentation Fest* and Dtour to the goals of the Sauk County Comprehensive Plan- within both arts/innovation and sustainable agriculture themes. Continuation Planning Phase *Jan. – June 2012:*

Use formative evaluation from Early Planning Phase to continue to coalesce fragmented arts, farming, and tourism sectors around an annual Festival. *Jan. – Feb.:* Develop RFP for 2012 Dtour installations, circulate RFP statewide, develop long-term *Fermentation Fest* sustainability plan. *April-May 2012:* Jury proposals, select 2012 artists, continue publicity for 2012. July –Sept. 2012 (post grant period): Complete evaluation reports, present results to the Sauk County Board.

E. Partners, key organizations, artists and works. Wormfarm and Sauk County are the primary partners (see letters of commitment). Other key organizations already committed include Reedsburg Chamber of Commerce; Sustain Sauk County; Wisconsin Arts Board; Cluster 350 Justice and Peace Committee; and Sauk County UW Extension’s Departments of Agriculture, Community and Economic Development, 4H, and Family Living. Anticipated partners include Organic Valley, Inc.; Fall Art Tour; Sauk County Art Association; Aldo Leopold Foundation; Family Farm Defenders; Arts Build; WI Rural Development; and Wisconsin Farmer’s Union. Partner responsibilities vary, but always include serving as on-call advisors in every step of this project, and promoting the festival in every possible way. Proposed 2011 artists are profiled in attachment to create farm-sited ephemeral installations. Poets and writers will take part in planning process and partner with farms included in the tour in a format to be determined. Artists will be integrally involved in all stages of the planning.

F. Target Community: The 2011 Dtour will take place primarily along beautiful rural roads in northern Sauk County. This unique unglaciated region of Wisconsin has a rich agricultural heritage, and the landscape itself has long been a cultural resource and a locus for community identity. While this will be the primary geographic community served, the project also targets the surrounding 250 mile radius for increased tourism, based on the tourist population currently drawn to the well established Fall Art Tour, the growing local food and farming movement and increased interest in organic and fermented foods and home brewing. Dtour planning partners include artists and arts

organizations, farmers, food processors, County Extension programs, teachers, chambers of commerce, creative entrepreneurs, conservationists and economic development specialists.

G. Neither the NEPA ACT nor the NHPA Act will impact this project in 2011. We realize that as the project grows we may need to address the NEPA Act

H. Plans for promoting, publicizing, and disseminating: We have received a Wisconsin Dept of Tourism Joint Effort Marketing grant (JEM) to promote Fermentation Fest 2011 with the help of a PR firm JDI Enterprises. The partners listed above will use their Facebook pages, newsletters, websites, etc. and we will work closely with statewide networks through Arts Wisconsin and WI Arts Board, Wisconsin Public Radio and portal.wisconsin.org – Wisconsin's very effective cultural online portal. A dedicated website and social media will be used extensively. In an effort to encourage folks to visit all installations, there will be a unique stamp or punch at each site that can punch a map to be redeemed at trailhead (Woolen Mill Gallery or Railroad Depot/ Chamber of Commerce) for valuable prizes.

I. Documentation, Evaluation: We will use the services of an experienced professional to advise the project and develop evaluation tools. We will use a logic model to demonstrate accomplishments are consistent with stated goals. We will document increased civic engagement on a quarterly basis through a variety of methods including: counting people/ sectors represented at all formal planning meetings, tallying number of 1:1 farmer/artist interactions involved with installations, compiling year end summary of all media coverage.

J-K – not applicable