Tips of the Trade:
Creative Marketing for Humane Farms

Presented by Holly Browder
(Browder’s Birds Pastured Poultry)
&
Geoff McPherson
(Good Life Ranch)

Hosted by:
Food Animal Concerns Trust (FACT)

Photo courtesy of Good Life Ranch
Introductions

Food Animal Concerns Trust (FACT) is a national nonprofit organization that promotes humane farming and advocates for the safe production of meat, milk, and eggs. FACT helps consumers make humane and healthy choices.

FACT’s Fund-a-Farmer Project awards grants and facilitates peer-to-peer farmer education to increase the number of animals that are raised humanely in this country.
Our Presenters

Holly Browder – Browder’s Birds Pastured Poultry
• Mattituck, NY
• 2012 & 2014 Fund-a-Farmer grant recipient

Geoff McPherson – Good Life Ranch
• Liberty, KY
• 2014 Fund-a-Farmer grant recipient
BROWDER’S BIRDS PASTURED POULTRY FARM
MATTITUCK, NY
RETAIL

FARM STAND
FARMERS’ MARKETS
CSA
WHOLESALE

RESTAURANTS & CATERERS

RETAIL STORES

DELIVERY SERVICES
THE STORY OF THE “LITTLE GERRY’S”

Farm to Table to Farm
VALUE-ADDED
CREATE LOYALTY & BUILD YOUR BRAND

TELL YOUR STORY

FRIDAY NEWSLETTER

FACEBOOK, TWITTER & INSTAGRAM

FARM EVENTS
EDUCATE YOUR CUSTOMERS

THE EGG QUIZ

SHELF-TALKERS

PANELS, PRESENTATIONS & BOARDS
CONTACT

HOLLY BROWDER
holly@browdersbirds.com
A Little About Good Life Ranch

Located in Casey County, Kentucky

Founded in 2010

Specialize in pastured meats
  chicken
  turkey
  lamb
  pork
  beef

Focus on heritage breeds

Permaculture principles applied on-farm
Property

157 acres

~75% wooded

bottomland pasture bordering large creek

wooded uplands used for pork production, forest products
Location

- Extremely rural location
- 2 hours from Lexington
- 2 hours from Louisville
- 2 hours from Bowling Green

Entire county has a population of 14,000

Poverty - median household income in our county in less than $21,000
Limitations

• We are a long way from urban clientele and restaurants.

• The closest successful farmers’ market is over an hour away from us.

• 3 farmers’ markets closest to us have failed due to lack of customer base and support.

• Extremely high poverty in our local area.

• Local customers want cheap food, quality is much less important.
1. We have tried a roadside stand selling our products along with products from our neighbors who also grow as we do.

2. We have tried starting a local farmers’ market in the 2 closest towns.

3. We have tried to generate enough interest to start a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) program, but logistics are extremely difficult due to our location. We are still working on this one.
How we sell our products

1. Direct marketing to individual consumers
   a. customer buys a whole or half animal
   b. processed to their specifications

2. Local grocery store in Somerset, KY (~1 hour away)
   a. began with a consignment arrangement to help out the owner, now we are paid our price when we deliver and owner sets store price

3. Evening farmers’ market in Somerset
   a. product exposure & outlet for miscellaneous products

4. Sales of breeding stock
   a. maintain registered herds/flocks/sounders of heritage breed livestock
   b. exceptional animals can bring exceptional prices
Direct Marketing

Most customers encounter our website first, so having an informative website that shows up high in search engine placement (SEO optimization) is a key.

Kentucky Proud program helps market products, especially to new customers and in stores and restaurants.

Blogging is another way to generate interest in your products. Many of our customers read the majority of our blog before ever contacting us directly.
Direct Marketing to Customers

“Foodie” sites like Eat Wild and Locally Grown allow site users to find their ideal producers through maps, farm descriptions, and keyword searches.

Farm visits allow potential and existing customers to connect with the farm, see how products are grown, and buy products on-site.

Social media drives customers to our website and keeps them involved in the day-to-day happenings of the farm.
Direct Marketing to Customers

Focus on creating a relationship, not making a sale.

Always be kind. Word of mouth is a powerful thing.

Don’t get burned by not being truthful.

Emphasize the quality of your products, the ethical manner in which the products are grown, and the mission of your farm. This is what separates your farm from the industrial food system. They can buy whatever you’re selling somewhere else, and probably cheaper. *Give them a reason to support your farm.*

Your best customers are going to be people who want to know where their food comes from and who want to know their farmer, so *let* them.
Direct Marketing

Farm visits can really be a positive experience for everyone

Cover yourself legally and be safe

Allow people to connect with you and your farm

Allow people to connect with each other
Website

- Informative
- Inviting
- Tell your story
- Photographs!
- Online storefront
- Include easy ways to contact you:
  - email
  - phone
  - social media

Welcome to Good Life Ranch!

Good Life Ranch is a family-owned sustainable farm located in beautiful Casey County, Kentucky. We are a pasture-based farm producing clean healthy food for our local community as well as heritage breeding stock for like-minded farmers nationwide.

Nestled in the hills and valleys and surrounded by Amish farms, we strive to produce food the natural way. All of our animals have access to fresh pasture every day and we use no unnatural chemicals - no steroids, no hormones, no antibiotics, no dewormers, and no chemical fertilizers. We strive to allow our animals to express their physiological uniqueness and to utilize the individual aspects of each type of animal to improve our farm naturally. We embed principles of natural animal husbandry, successional ecology, and permaculture in everything that we do in an effort to give the best lives to our animals and plants while they build our soils, maintain our clean water, and ultimately feed us healthy meals.

Good Life Ranch began on June 18, 2010, so we are still in the process of building up the full complement of meats and produce that we will eventually have, so please stop back often to check out our Products tab to see what we’ve added lately and what is available now. You can also check availability or ask questions by emailing us any time.

We want to be your home for clean, healthy, sustainably-produced, locally-produced, ethically-raised, family-oriented food. In short, we want to be your farmers!

Contact us:

Phone: (606) 787.4217
Email: geoff@goodliferanch.com

Lindsey and Geoff McPherson

Lindsey and Geoff met in San Antonio in 2000 and married in 2008. Prior to purchasing Good Life Ranch in 2010 they were both accomplished educators at The International School of the Americas, Lindsey in English and Geoff in Biology. They both have Master’s degrees and loved their careers in the field.

Lindsey and Geoff have travelled extensively - to Mexico, Canada, Peru, Japan, England, Greece, Spain, Ireland, Puerto Rico, Fiji, India, South Africa, Namibia, Kenya, and Tanzania. They are using their knowledge and experience from these travels to create an authentic poverty simulation here at Good Life Ranch for students from all over the country.

Both Lindsey and Geoff are excited to begin this new life together! Lindsey is directing the marketing and curricular phases of Good Life Ranch, while Geoff is in charge of the daily operations at the Ranch. Currently both Lindsey and Geoff also double as teachers at Taylor County High School.

Email Geoff
Email Lindsey

Photo by James Byrd Photography. Used under license.

Bailey and Scooter

Bailey acquired Geoff in 2002 as a silvery, blue-eyed puppy. She has since made the transition to a brown, brown-eyed old lady. She excels at hali-chasing. While work is happeenin...
Our Eatwild.com Listing

Name:
Good Life Ranch

Description:
Liberty, KY. Turkey, chickens, beef, goat, lamb.

Good Life Ranch is a family owned and operated sustainable farm in south central Kentucky. We are Kentucky Proud certified, and we use "beyond organic" techniques. We raise all of our animals as naturally and humanely as we can. That means no painful castrations or branding, no feedlot fattening, no grain for cattle, goats, and sheep, and no early weaning. We raise our ruminants on grass alone. Our pigs forage in the woods for acorns, roots, and tubers as well as receiving seconds from the garden. Our poultry (chicken and turkeys) spend their lives roaming freely in the pastures and gardens eating insects and green material.

We process our animals at a local, family-owned and operated facility very close by the ranch. Our animals travel a very short distance and are kept together in groups so they are not anxious and stressed by being separated from the herd. We stay with them through the very end and supervise the process very closely. The well-being of our animals is our top priority throughout their lives. On our ranch, the animals truly have a Good Life.

Currently our products are available through direct farm sales and at the Market on Main in Somerset, KY. If you are interested in placing a meat order with us, contact us right away. The demand for our meats consistently outweihgs our supply, especially for Thanksgiving Turkeys.

Good Life Ranch, Geoff McPherson, 563 Via San Miguel, Liberty KY 42539, (606) 787-4217.
E-mail: geoff@goodliferanch.com, Website: http://www.goodliferanch.com.

Details from Google Maps
Liberty, KY 42539
Kentucky Proud Program

Marketing assistance

Promo materials

Locator app

Featured members
Direct Marketing Tips

Get your products in front of (in our case, inside) as many potential customers as you can. Quality sells itself and people who appreciate it will return for more.

Seek out the customers you want. Finding good, loyal customers who want to support you and your farm is key.

Emphasize the quality of the products you are selling, not the price. Customers seeking the lowest price are fickle and easily lost.

You will get all manner of special requests. Do what you can, but know when to say “no.”

If you are backed up on demand, create and honor a waiting or reservation list. Keep in contact with those who are on it.
Local Grocery Store

makes getting small amounts of product convenient for customers

saves us time and fuel on taking product to farmers’ market

generates exposure

can serve as a taste test for customers who may potentially buy larger amounts directly

helps support a venue that supports you and other local small farms
Farmers’ Market

market excess product

taste tests to drive more sales

meet many potential new customers

answer questions

put a face to your farm
Farmers’ Market Tips

Have an attractive, inviting set-up.

Items that customers can eat out-of-hand draw people to your stand.

Make nice with the other vendors, even those who are selling the same products. Send them customers when you are out of something, and they may do the same for you. They are also good sources of information, seed, stock, and help when you need it.
Sales of Breeding Stock

get a higher price for breeding quality livestock

gain access to breed association marketing efforts

dober referrals from fellow breeders
Marketing & Pricing Your Products

Be a price maker, not a price taker.

Create customer value. Value is different than cheap.

Choose customers or purchase situations where value is recognized.

Don’t forget to account for labor, fuel, delivery, electricity, water, etc

Don’t sell items at unprofitable prices. This is a trap. The more you sell, the more money you lose. You won’t last as a business and you will make it harder for other farmers to succeed. If you have extra products, it’s better to give free samples or buy-this, get-that deals than to sell at an unprofitable price.
Scaling Your Business

If your marketing is successful, then you may have more demand for your product than you can satisfy quite quickly. That’s OK.

It’s better to have a waiting list than to have product you can’t sell.

Scale up carefully and really gauge your market, finances, and land base before you do. It can be easy to outproduce the demand for your product if you don’t do your homework first.

Remember the competitive exclusion principle - be careful who you’re competing with.
Find Your Niche . . . or else.

Niche partitioning among five species of coexisting warblers

- Cape May warbler
- Black-throated green warbler
- Yellow-rumped warbler
- Bay-breasted warbler
- Blackburnian warbler
Take Advantage of Opportunities & Foster Good Will

- articles
- radio interviews
- chef’s dinners
- food/lifestyle bloggers
- fairs/festivals
- school visits
- how-to talks

At Good Life Ranch, we’ve been very fortunate to have received some very favorable reviews from both our customers and some web and print publications. We love hearing feedback from both our customers and from our farm visitors, so if you’ve written something about us that you’d like for us to share with others please let us know and we’ll be thrilled to post a link to your content on this page.

Please follow some of the links below to read what others have to say about us.

- Central Kentucky News Journal: Taylor County Teachers Building Reality Farm
- The Casey County News: Casey County Couple Building Reality Farm
- Sustainable Kentucky's Young Farmer Series: Good Life Ranch
- Bird and Belle - A Chickening
- Story Magazine: Living the Life
- Food Animal Concerns Trust: Fund-a-Farmer

We also try to stay active on social media (more on Facebook than Twitter):

- Good Life Ranch on Facebook
- @GoodLifeRanch on Twitter
Please type your questions!

Photo courtesy of Browder’s Birds Pastured Poultry
Contact Information

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