

Workshop Title: How to tell our organic story

Speaker & their title: Nathalie Landry, Echo Actions Communications
(www.echoactions.ca)

Executive Summary: The speaker shared how to talk about our common organic story with key messages and tools.

My story...Tanzania..volunteered with a 45 member organization...changed me.

Common Communication Challenges (see slide 7)

It is true that it is difficult for many people but look at the cheat sheet given with key messages. Messages are everywhere – how can mine stand out?

Ways to overcome: Use good key messages – develop your own or use those from the Think Before You Eat campaign – ThinkCanadaOrganic.ca. Great messages presented in plain language for clients to understand; refer your customers to this site.

Form partnerships....who is out there that you could partner with?

Common Questions about Organic and How to Answer Them

See “What is Organic?” (slide 11)

Group Exercise: How to Develop Key Messages About Your Farm (Slide 27-28)

Choose from the list of words which ones are the words that embody the most important things about your farm/business. Circle five that are the most reflective about your business.

Next...

What do we do? (e.g. I give, I produce, I sell)

Who do we do it to? (e.g. People, families, community, neighbors, children)

Why do we do what we do? (Use the five words from earlier exercise)

Core values

Using key messages about your farm, create a short elevator pitch. Put together using the work you just did. Tell your customers about your values and why you do what you do. (See slides for more notes) e.g. We are passionate about growing fresh produce.

Now that you know how to talk about your business, here are the **top five recommended promotional tools to have for your farm** (slides 30-41):

-Use your logo and business card (use both sides of your card, get creative, your picture or that of your farm)

-Set up a simple website. You can use the same menus as a template – there are many and they're very ready to use, offering tutorials. An online presence is

**2014 ACORN Conference
Halifax Harbourfront Marriott Hotel, NS**

critical!

-Use Facebook. Ideas: add a photo showcasing produce; behind the scenes photos are a great idea too; follow ACORN; share articles that are being written elsewhere and lastly, post a great recipe and ask people to share their recipes too. You can pay Facebook to promote your Page in a certain community by age, group, and gender and the ads are not so expensive. Try it. Sponsored is the word you will see.

Q I post recipes and I get very few responses.

A Ask a question such as “How would you use it [an ingredient]?” Or ask customers to share some recipes from their home. Personalizing recipes is great too (e.g. This is my grandma's fav stew, I cook this for my kids every Saturday night, or a video of step by step).

Take part in Groups: join a group such as a farm to show your involvement, show you are taking part.

Facebook posts need to be cute, comical, funny, and if picked up by others, it goes further. Posts give an inside look when you show your fun side...family run, easy, breezy things perhaps. Facebook seems to be still, in Atlantic Canada, where people go to browse and snoop. There is an option to pay to “boost” a post with Facebook, which exposes it to more people.

Q How often to post?

A Once a day or three times a week. Time frames: morning, lunch time and 3 -6 pm.

Mail Chimp offers free service for up to 2,000 email contacts and easy-to-use templates or ConstantContact.com is another way to send out newsletters. Send every 6 weeks, not sooner.