



## Visioneering Wichita Agri-Business Strategic Alliance Summary of Accomplishments to Date September 2007

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Recognizing a need for a regional comprehensive agri-business plan, the Agri-business Strategic Alliance was formed thru Visioneering Wichita in May 2007. Using the Visioneering Wichita document for benchmarks and strategies this Alliance was created to support the following strategies:

- **Develop value-added processing/packaging of new agricultural and horticultural crops to expand into new markets.**
- **Add value to production from using high value crops and new production methods.**
- **Develop agri-tourism enterprises.**

The initial meeting of the Alliance was held on June 14, 2007. Representatives from local farmer's markets and independent growers were in attendance along with representatives from corporate enterprises. It has always and continues to be a goal to keep the synergy of the two distinct groups as an integral part of this Alliance. The early meetings provided a learning opportunity for both "buy local" and "corporate" to share ideas, discuss visions and concerns, and to learn more about each other.

Subsequent meetings of the Alliance provided the opportunity for discussion around the need for a regional comprehensive Agri-business Alliance. The Alliance also presented a chance to identify our natural partnership opportunities as well as to identify our current strengths and challenges in achieving this accomplishment. One of the outcomes that was evident was that there are two distinct groups represented, "buy local" and "corporate" and their needing to work together toward a common goal.

The common goal agreed upon was the development of an Agri-business Innovation Center that would be located in Wichita. The mission of the Agri-business Innovation Center is "to promote new and innovative business relationships within the agricultural business arena." These relationships may include agricultural as well as non-agricultural organizations.

As an Alliance, it was decided that each of the two groups would work individually at the beginning of meetings to develop concepts for inclusion in the Innovation Center and collectively share ideas as a total group at the end of meetings. This process is working well and has allowed the "synergy" of the Alliance to grow as they learn and share with each other.

### **Strategic Alliance Strategy**

- Develop value-added processing/packaging of new agricultural and horticultural crops to expand into new markets.
- Add value to production from using high value crops and new production methods.
- Develop agri-tourism enterprises.

### **Strategic Alliance Benchmark**

Under development.

### **Economic Development Foundation Vision Supported**

Before 2024, the Wichita MSA will be a leading community for retaining and expanding current businesses and creating and recruiting new businesses.

### **Key Benchmarks Targeted**

**Job Growth:** By 2008, exceed the highest of the annual percentage job growth rate of the U.S., Omaha, Tulsa, Kansas City and Oklahoma City.

**Downtown Development:** Invest \$144 million annually in total private and public funds.

*“Agriculture enterprises are important to the financial health of our regional economy. Visioneering opened the door for us to raise the awareness of the contribution of agriculture to south central Kansas by forming this alliance and also provided us with the platform to dream, plan and develop new directions for a possible agri-business innovation center. We are enthusiastic about the possibilities and will soon share our vision.”*

**Jim Mock  
President  
Executive Committee  
Agri-Business Council of Wichita**

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