

Incubating Local Brands

Harvindar Singh, Regional Local Food Forager,
Northern California & Reno

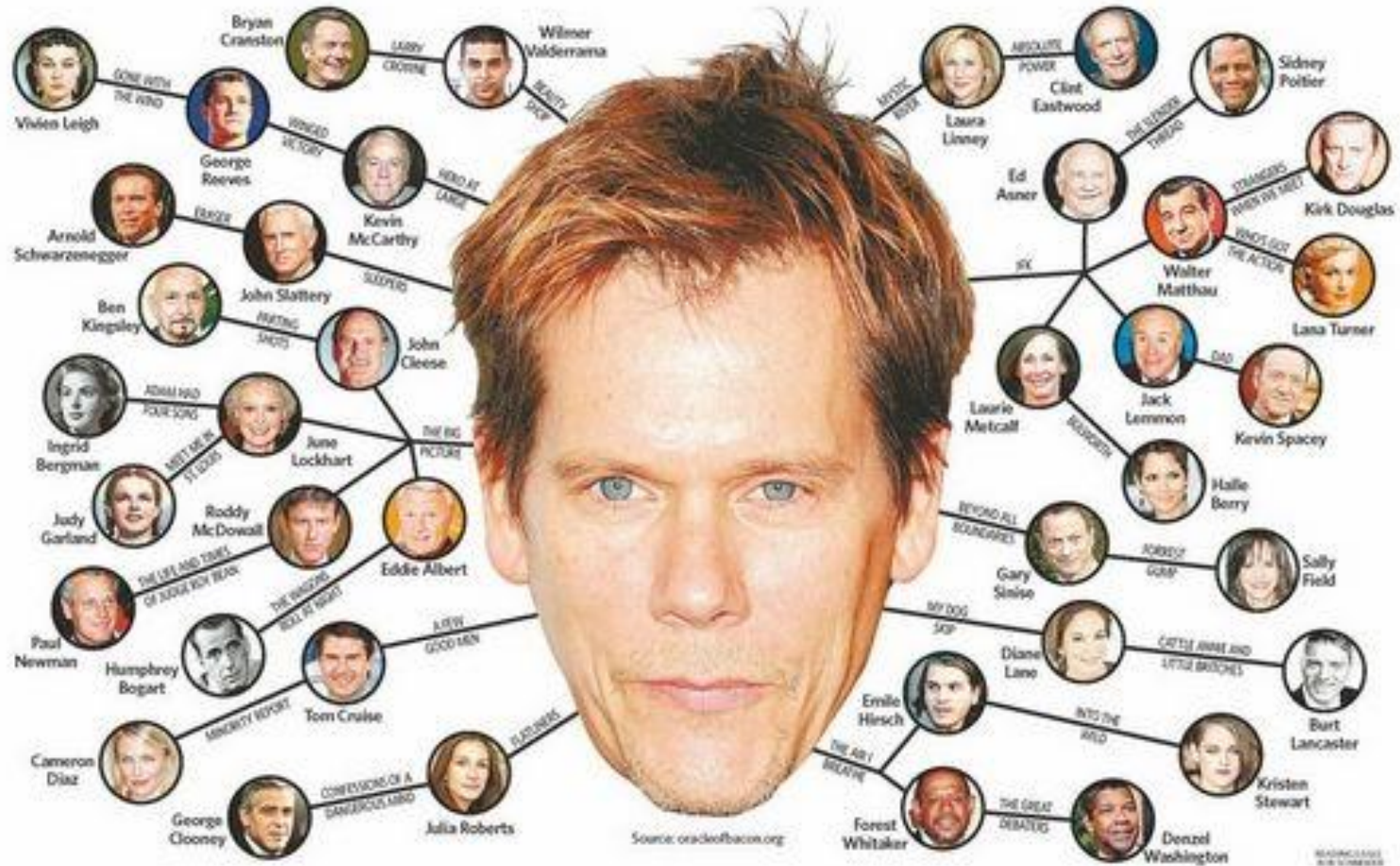


Topics Covered

- Forager Role In Incubating Brands
- How we support local entrepreneurs
- What do I look for?
- Local Producer Loan Program (LPLP)



Forager's Network: we know people who know more people



My Role as Forager

- Areas I Cover: All Dept's but heavy Grocery/Non-perishables
- Help suppliers navigate WFM decentralized system.
BUILD RELATIONSHIPS
- Hand hold on-boarding process/chart growth plan
- Manage Local Producer Loan Program
- Working with Product Coordinators to grow new categories and new product development



Role as Food Incubator

- Identify early stage innovative brands
- Assist with product development, costing, pricing, ingredients, packaging, legal compliance, FDA, USDA
- Work with distributors, brokers
- Finance growth thru Loan Program to help scale operations
- **EXAMPLE:** 2nd Story Bakeshop



My Mission

“My job is to cultivate relationships with our local supplier community and help small businesses thrive”

“To help build resilient, healthy and vibrant regional food systems.”

“By supporting local foods, we foster community and sense of purpose”



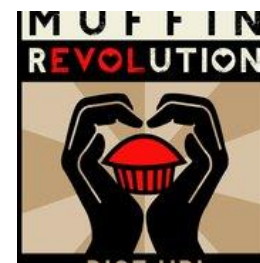
About Whole Foods Market

- Over 401 stores. 500 by 2017. Plan to grow to 1,200 stores within 10 years, \$12 billion, 76,000 team members.
- 42 stores in NorCal/Reno
- New stores planned in 2014: San Jose The Alameda, Gilman Berkeley opened Nov
- New leases signed: Dublin, CA, Walnut Creek, Santa Clara
- New Distribution Center in Richmond opened Spring 2013



Ways We Support Local

- **LOCAL - It's in our DNA, embedded in our core values!**
- Local Foragers in each region
- Local Foodmaker Grant Program
- Local Producer Loan Program
- Entrepreneur Summits
- Marketing: Farmers Markets, Food Trucks, Pop-Ups, Work with Incubator programs, local vendor fairs/tastings/culinary events, local vendor tours



\$200,000 in grant money to 40 small, local producers



Local Foodmaker Grant Program

- July 20 awarded \$200,000 in grant money to 40 small, local foodmakers and entrepreneurs in NorCal/Reno region
- Average size grant \$3,000-\$8,000
- Funds come from regional 5% Day
- Funds administered thru our partnership with Working Solutions
- First ever grant program in the company!



Jean and Chris use pure beeswax and honey from local beehives in Alameda to craft small batches of lathery soaps, soothing salves, and relaxing bath salts.

With their grant money, Jean and Chris opened their first retail store in Alameda!



Food Trucks on our Lots

- Partnered with Off the Grid to host weekly food truck event on our lot in Cupertino store.
- Supporting local food entrepreneurs!



Farmers Markets on our Lots

- Partnered with farmers market organizations to host weekly farmers market on our lots in Roseville, Folsom, Mill Valley, Reno
- Supporting local growers!



Local Entrepreneur Summit

- Host 3 Local Entrepreneur Summits for new local suppliers interested in learning how to do business with WFM. Distribution, Co-Packing, Packaging/Labeling, Marketing, Networking, 1 on 1 meetings with regional buyers
- Supporting local entrepreneurs!



Marketing Local “Entrepreneurs”



Talking more about
Entrepreneurship and good
food producers

Regional food systems not
just hyper-local
communities

nona lim

REAL : SIMPLE : DELICIOUS

Local Rebrand 2014

nona lim

Oakland, Ca

WHOLE
FOODS

Owner
NONA LIM

QUALITY
INGREDIENTS

MADE FROM
SCRATCH

2012
LOCAL PRODUCER
LOAN RECIPIENT



Credibles

- Funding favorite food business by paying in advance ...Customers prepay for food and receive edible credits to use like a gift card. In the meantime, food businesses get the money they need to grow.
- Supporting local food entrepreneurs!

Credibles

BUSINESS OFFERS HOW IT WORKS GET FUNDED [Login or Signup](#)

Driver's Market

Fund your favorite food business by paying in advance

[Find](#)

"The concept is simple: Customers prepay for food and receive edible credits to use like a gift card. Large prepayments can even earn edible interest. In the meantime, food businesses get the money they need to grow." — Yes! Magazine

WHOLE FOODS MARKET Customers can now invest in local food with Credibles

LOCAL
Good stuff from around here

Support CSA's, Pop-Ups, Business Incubators

- Our stores are pick-up spots for CSAs
- We host pop-up's for new local vendors not even approved
- Our Mid Atlantic region host Incubator Space inside store allowing new local vendors to introduce their products
- Another region piloting WFM Entrepreneur University
- Permanent retail kiosks inside store of local vendors – Smitten Ice Cream
- We work with Food Incubators like La Cocina, Kitchener, etc



Local Producer Loan Program



- 235 loans to 197 producers for a total of \$14.25 million dollars!
- NorCal: \$1 million, 30 producers



Local Loan Recipients



nona lim
REAL : SIMPLE : DELICIOUS



What Do I Look For in Brands?

- The **PEOPLE** behind the product. How committed, passionate they are, where they are in the process? How prepared are they? We're building a long-term relationship. It's all about **RELATIONSHIPS!**
- The **QUALITY** of the product – unique features, attributes, niche product, how does it taste, look, feel. Something **DIFFERENT**.
- Packaging – **SUSTAINABLE**, recyclable, compostable, different, unique, glass, plastic
- **Triple Bottom Line:** People, Planet, Profit
- Commitments/**VALUES** – **ORGANIC**, non-GMO, Biodynamic, Fair trade, Whole Trade
- Distribution - how are you going to get it into the stores?
- Pricing – is it priced to sell? Priced to market? To margin? Can I sell a \$12 jar of jam?
- Marketing – what are you going to do to support the brand/sales – demos, marketing, PR, events – **DEMOS KEY TO DRIVING SALES/AWARENESS/RETRIAL!**
- Is there a need for this product? Can we **SELL** it? Long-term prospects. Can we grow this brand?
- Sometimes even the most passionate people cannot drive sales in **SATURATED** category – so you better be different. Granola, really? Jams?
- **FOOD TRENDS:** Superfoods, functional foods, fermented foods, Health Starts Here, Gluten Free, Vegan, Paleo, unique ingredients, different varieties, Cider, Homesteading, etc

Oakland Food Innovation



Thank You!

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