

THE BUSINESS LEAD



SUMMER 2023

OPEN FOR BUSINESS

SUPPORTING FARMERS AND RANCHERS

Being a farmer or rancher is not simply a job. Its a way of life. There are many long days filled with a variety of different tasks including harvesting and inspecting the land, growing crops, and raising animals. In addition, record keeping needs to be completed, machinery serviced, and buildings and fencing maintained.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) supports farm and ranch businesses through a number of programs and services. Read about what is offered for funding and assistance on page 2.

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To subscribe to the Business Lead Newsletter, contact City Hall at cityhall@caledoniamn.gov or call 507-725-3450

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A farm or ranch business relies on good planning and continued support. The USDA offers various programs and services for starting a new business and assisting existing businesses with growth and sustainability. By offering advice and guidance, access to capital, and information pertaining to conservation and disaster assistance, the USDA can help farmers and ranchers identify and solve issues they are experiencing. In addition to traditional farming and ranching, Specialty Farmers Groups are included as well:

Specialty Farmers Groups:

Historically Underserved Farmers/Ranchers-Assistance for groups including military veterans, women in agriculture, heirs to property landowners, and producers with disabilities.

Urban Farmers-Assistance for farms and gardens in urban centers such as community gardens, rooftop farms, vertical production and warehouse farms.

Organic Farmers-Assistance with certification and specific conservation assistance.

Funding:

USDA can help farmers, ranchers, and foresters get the loan support they need to be successful. Whether you're a new farmer just getting started or a seasoned rancher in business for decades, there are loan options available to fit everyone's needs:

Loans to Purchase or Expand a Farm or Ranch-Can be used to purchase or expand a farm or ranch. This loan can help with paying closing costs, constructing or improving buildings on the farm, or to help conserve and protect soil and water resources.

Loans to Purchase Livestock, Seed or Equipment-Can be used to purchase livestock, seed and equipment. It can also cover farm operating costs and family living expenses while a farm gets up and running.

Storage Loans-Can be used to help producers build or upgrade farm storage and handling facilities.

Commodity Loans-Can provide producers interim financing at harvest time to meet cash flow needs without having to sell their commodities when market prices are typically at harvest-time lows. source: www.farmers.gov



Old Buildings Renewed

The building that houses Thrivent Financial located at 114 S. Kingston Street was once owned by Belgian born Jacob Bouquet who built the building in 1872 for his general mercantile business. It was built as a two storefront structure with stained glass trim around the windows. Jacob continued the successful business until his retirement in 1903. His son John P. followed his father and was known as “The Square Dealing Merchant.” Their inventory included dry goods, clothing, boots and shoes as well as grocery items. John retired in 1946 and the store was passed on to his three children Theodora, Otto and Evelyn.

It was during their ownership that the focus of the merchandise changed to women’s wear. Their slogan was “Ready-to wear for those who care.” Otto was an electrical engineer and Theodora married in 1953 and moved to Windom, MN. This left the management of the store to Evelyn. The store gained the reputation for being the finest dress shop in the area. The centennial year of the business in 1972 was celebrated with fashion shows and several months of special displays featuring vintage clothing and hats from the family’s collection as well as photographs and artifacts.

The Bouquet family sold the business and building in 1978 to Joanne Kappler and Pat Schiltz who ran “Bouquets of Fashion” until 1982. The next business was “The Gift Mill” operated by Jeanne Miller and Florence Frank. This business closed in 1996 and the building was sold to Anna Von Arx who relocated her “Ewenique Boutique” shop to this location. The period between the years 2000 to 2012 saw several businesses, including P J’s Diner and Mustang Sally’s. Matt and Sue Bauer purchased the building in 2012 and moved their Caledonia Electronics store here. The current owner, Tom Bjerke, purchased the building in 2014 and opened the Thrivent Financial business. source: Houston County Historical Society



Thrivent Financial 2023



Bouquet Store 1904

BENEFITS OF STARTING AN INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Regarding today's workload and tomorrow's workforce, starting an internship program is an excellent way to facilitate success at your company. Below are 7 benefits for starting an internship program at your place of business:

Year-Round Recruiting Tool—With fall internships, summer internships, semester internships, and quarterly internships, implementing an intern program creates an ongoing pipeline of future full-time employees.

Test-Drive the Talent—Hiring someone as an intern is the most effective way to evaluate their potential as a full-time employee. When you "try out" candidates via a semester or summer internship, you are able to see if an individual will be a good fit for your company.

Increase Productivity—A quality intern can make contributions to productivity by helping your full-time staff avoid becoming overburdened by side projects, and free them up to accomplish more tasks that require a higher level of expertise.

Enhanced Perspective—New people bring novel perspectives, as well as specialized strengths and skill sets. Include interns in brainstorming sessions to maximize this benefit.

Labor Costs—Interns are an inexpensive resource. Wage requirements are modest, and you aren't obligated to pay unemployment or a severance package should you not hire them full-time.

Community—Hiring interns not only helps students in your community get started; it enhances the local workforce as a whole. In return, the community will be motivated to support your organization. This makes internship programs an excellent, cost-effective public relations tool.

Close the Gap—New grads enter the workforce lacking the skills employers need, typically in the softer skills like professionalism, leadership and communicating effectively. Become a mentor and help a student close the gap with real-world experience in an internship.

source: www.internships.com

Job Shadowing

Job shadowing is a type of on-the-job training that allows an interested employee to follow and closely observe another employee performing the role. This type of learning is usually used to onboard new employees into an organization or into a new role.

Job shadowing may also be used as a learning opportunity for interns or students to gain an understanding of the role requirements and the job tasks.

To connect with interested students, contact Mary Anne Smith, Youth Workforce Navigator Bluff Country Collaborative bccnavigators@gmail.com>



BUSINESS SPOLIGHT

Established in 1943 by J.P. Gengler, the Sno-Pac brand of fruits and vegetables continues under the 4th generation of the Gengler family.

Located at 521 W. Enterprise, the processing plant is overseen by Pete and Nick Gengler along with other family members who work in various roles.

Organically grown and processed, Sno-Pac products do not contain any added chemicals or pesticides making them a healthy choice.

In addition, farming organically includes methods that promote biodiversity and the well-being of the ecosystem.

Product includes fresh packed peas, carrots, green beans, sweet corn, blueberries, and strawberries just to name a few.



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

University of Minnesota Extension

Each summer, the UM Extension welcomes undergraduate students interested in crops, livestock, horticulture, natural resources or communicating science as interns throughout Minnesota.

Learning from real-life experiences and seeing the challenges farmers endure first hand, allows for interns to develop a true sense of what is entailed in the career field of their choice. Visit www.extention.umn.edu

WHAT IS B2B MARKETING?

B2B (business-to-business) marketing refers to any marketing strategy or content that is geared towards a business or organization. Companies that sell products or services to other businesses or organizations (vs. consumers) typically use B2B marketing strategies. The purpose of B2B marketing is to make other businesses familiar with your brand name, the value of your product or service, and convert them into customers. Below are a few examples of B2B companies:

- A co-working space that leases office spaces to remote teams and freelancers.
- An on-demand order fulfillment, warehousing, and screen printing service.
- A marketing software company that sells social media management tools, lead generation software, and other marketing tools to businesses and organizations.

B2B Marketing Strategies

Determine your brand position: Brand positioning is the process of positioning your brand in the mind of your customers. More than a tagline or a fancy logo, brand positioning is the strategy used to set your business apart from the rest. For example, if you scrape your knee, do you ask for a bandage or a Band-Aid? The Band-Aid name has become a generic term for all similar products in their niche.

Identify your target audience: Find your target audience, or who's really looking for your brand's products or services. That information will help you create buyer personas and understand how they make purchase decisions, a tool that's extremely useful for any type of marketing.

Run a competitive analysis: Scope out the market and see what other businesses are marketing to your target audience with a competitive analysis. Your analysis should include a look at how your competitor is offering product, a review of their sales tactics, and what their marketing content and social media presence is.

Types of B2B Marketing: Once you've established who your target audience is and you have done some research on your competitors, you'll need to determine how and where you intend to reach your audience. Here are a few of the most common B2B marketing types and channels:

Blog: Regularly updated blogs provide visibility and drive inbound traffic to your site. Your blog can house any number of different content formats: written copy, infographics, videos, case studies, and more.

Social Media: Social networks allow you to reach and engage prospects where they're active. B2B buyers increasingly use these channels to research potential vendors for purchase decisions.

Email: While its effectiveness is waning somewhat in the age of spam filters and inbox shock, email won't disappear anytime soon. To work around overloaded inboxes, some sales and marketing professionals use LinkedIn InMail for lead generation.



Upcoming Events

Founder's Day Celebration: Founders Day will be celebrated June 15th through June 18th with a variety show, parade, car show and cruise, 5K run/walk, vendors, a children's fun fest, and music.

National Wild Turkey Federation Ceremony A celebration to recognize Caledonia as the Wild Turkey Capital of Minnesota. July 22nd North Park. Time to be announced. All are welcome to attend!

Community Pool Party: Meet at the pool on July 29. 6:00-9:00pm Refreshments, prizes, movie at dusk. Everyone welcome! Hosted by Community Spirit.

Music in the Park: Hosted by the Caledonia Chamber and the City of Caledonia at Gazebo Park. Event dates include June 27, July 11, July 18, July 25.

National Night Out: August 2nd. More information will be provided as the date draws near.

Houston County Fair: August 16 through August 20. To learn more, check out the fair website at <https://www.houstoncountyfair.com/>

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT



On May 9th, the City of Caledonia Economic Development Authority hosted a Homegrown Entrepreneurship in Your Community Workshop through a partnership with the University of MN and the University of WI Extension.

Conversation included learning how to use resources and relationships to revitalize our community through entrepreneurship and how to create an entrepreneurial ecosystem that fosters a vibrant and diverse economy.

Thank you to all the Business Owners, EDA and Chamber Board Members, and Community Members who attended the event. To learn more about being a part of an entrepreneurship drive in Caledonia, please call City Hall at 507-725-3450.

Farmers Insurance located at 102 E. Grove St. opened for business in early May. Insurance Agent Bun Jun Xiong's knowledge and experience can help his customers better understand their coverage options including auto, home, renters, life, business insurance and more. Bun Jun can be contacted at 507-500-5123 for more information. Welcome to Caledonia!

The City of Caledonia is on Facebook! For better communication and engagement, the city will use this page to share information and upcoming events, general updates, and timely notices for utility outages, street closures, and projects. Follow us here: <https://www.facebook.com/CityOfCaledonia/>