

# *Northeast Ohio Agbio Leadership Council*

September 9, 2009

Dear Frank:

We are forming an Ag-Bio Cluster Leadership Council for the 16 county region of Northeast Ohio, and you have been nominated to be one of its charter members. We feel you would be a valuable member of the Council, and we'd appreciate your acceptance of this invitation to become involved. The goal of the Council is to help build strong and sustainable local economies that protect the natural resources and agricultural lands of NE Ohio while providing the quality of life expected by its citizens.



Under the auspices of the Fund for Our Economic Future (FFEF), and in partnership with Advance Northeast Ohio, FFEF has provided a grant to the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center (OARDC) to assess current resources and opportunities for economic and business development in the agricultural and bioscience industries in our region.

The purpose of this Council is to guide and promote economic and business development opportunities for the agricultural and bioscience industry in Northeast Ohio. The specific objective for the Council during the next year is to provide guidance and feedback to the OARDC and collaborators in their work on a one-year grant that includes the following planned outcomes:

- Create a charter for the Leadership Council
- Conduct research to assess resources throughout the agricultural and bioscience production-to-consumption value chains
- Build a business case "investment portfolio" based upon opportunities identified through the resource assessment
- Implement an ongoing communication strategy that utilizes social networking processes and tools to engage stakeholders and focus their attention on high-potential opportunity spaces where growth and expansion are anticipated
- Outline a strategic planning process for the next phase of the project

The Leadership Council is co-chaired by Stuart Cordell from the Ashtabula County Growth Partnership and Rod Crider from the Wayne Economic Development Council. Members of the Council will come from throughout NE Ohio, and represent as many aspects of agriculture and business as possible. Each member will serve a term length to be defined in the charter (likely 1-2 years). Obviously, one of the first tasks for the Council is to write and approve its charter in order to clarify purpose, principles, and goals, define term lengths and conditions of Council membership, and provide clear and concise accountability metrics by which to indicate progress on goals and set priorities for subsequent action.

We would like to finalize the members on the Council by 4 September. The kick-off meeting for the Council will be Monday, 14 September, at a central regional location (tentatively the Portage County

Extension office). We anticipate another in person meeting in early October, and one more in 2009 as the Council gets organized, then no more than two in person meetings per year. Other meetings and communication will be via technology.

For more information and to accept this invitation, please reply to Stuart ([scordell@warrenyoung.com](mailto:scordell@warrenyoung.com)) and Rod ([rcrider@waynecountyedc.com](mailto:rcrider@waynecountyedc.com)) as soon as possible, so we can move forward. When we receive your acceptance, we will forward you a package of background information to prepare for the 14 September meeting. You will also receive a hard copy version of this invitation in the mail within the next few days and upon acceptance of this invitation your name will be added to a social networking group set up to facilitate discussion around this initiative at <http://localfoodsystems.org>.

Thanks in advance for your thoughtful consideration as we work to shape a strong future for NE Ohio based on the potential of its agricultural and biosciences industry!

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Stuart Cordell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Stuart Cordell

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rod Crider". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Rod Crider