

2009 Innovations Awards Program APPLICATION

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ID # (assigned by CSG): 09-S-25TX

Please provide the following information, adding space as necessary:

State: Texas

Assign Program Category (applicant): Infrastructure and Economic Development (Use list at end of application)

1. **Program Name:** GO TEXAN Restaurant Program
2. **Administering Agency:** Texas Department of Agriculture
3. **Contact Person (Name and Title):** Bryan Black, Assistant Commissioner of Communications
4. **Address:** 1700 North Congress Ave. 11th Floor, Austin, Texas 78701
5. **Telephone Number:** (512) 463-7664
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7. **E-mail Address:** bryan.black@TexasAgriculture.gov
8. **Web site Address:** www.gotexan.org
9. **Please provide a two-sentence description of the program.** The GO TEXAN Restaurant Program, established as part of the Texas Department of Agriculture's GO TEXAN campaign, promotes restaurant owners and chefs who use locally grown and produced ingredients for their menu items. GO TEXAN helps link restaurants with local producers and growers, and also promotes member establishments to consumers.
10. **How long has this program been operational (month and year)? Note: the program must be between 9 months and 5 years old on March 2, 2009 to be considered.** The GO TEXAN Restaurant Program was established in January 2008.
11. **Why was the program created? What problem[s] or issue[s] was it designed to address?** The program was created to help consumers identify Texas-based restaurants, highlight establishments serving local products and connect restaurants with Texas farmers and food processors. Restaurants purchasing local ingredients help drive the state's economy, keep transportation distances to a minimum and encourage consumers to dine locally.

12. Describe the specific activities and operations of the program in chronological order.

- Established the GO TEXAN Restaurant Program in January 2008 and within the first year recruited more than 400 members
- Updated the GO TEXAN Food Service Buyers Guide, a listing of GO TEXAN food products, growers and ranchers made available to restaurants, hotels, schools and other high-volume establishments to help them identify local producers
- Created a series of targeted advertisements featuring local chefs and touting the Restaurant Program to Texas diners
- Conducted the first-ever statewide dine-out day in Texas on Oct. 1, 2008, called the GO TEXAN Restaurant Round-Up, to encourage the public to dine at member restaurants. More than 200 restaurants participated, with 41 percent pledging to donate a portion of the day's proceeds to food banks in the Lone Star State to help feed hungry Texans

13. Why is the program a new and creative approach or method? To raise the profile of the GO TEXAN Restaurant Program, TDA conducted the first-ever statewide dine-out day, where the public was encouraged to dine at participating GO TEXAN restaurants. This event, called the GO TEXAN Restaurant Round-Up, generated economic revenue and media attention across the entire state. In addition, although other state agriculture departments operate restaurant programs, TDA developed its restaurant program as part of its 10-year-old GO TEXAN program. Therefore the restaurant program could take advantage of existing brand marketing already familiar to consumers.

14. What were the program's start-up costs? (Provide details about specific purchases for this program, staffing needs and other financial expenditures, as well as existing materials, technology and staff already in place.) It cost \$60,000 to start the Restaurant Program; operating costs such as supplies, funding for printing and design of applications, booth materials, pull-up screens, posters and recruitment brochures. The GO TEXAN Restaurant Round-Up (cost approximately \$350,000). Funding for Round-Up was used on photo shoots using restaurant member chefs and owners, radio advertising, magazine and newspaper advertising, design and printing of save-the-date cards, posters and a Web site (www.GoTexanRestaurantRoundUp.com).

15. What are the program's annual operational costs? For this fiscal year, including the annual GO TEXAN Restaurant Round-Up event, it cost \$450,000 to operate the GO TEXAN Restaurant Program.

16. How is the program funded? The GO TEXAN Restaurant Program is funded by the state's General Revenue allocated by the Texas Legislature.

17. Did this program require the passage of legislation, executive order or regulations? If YES, please indicate the citation number. Yes, in January 2008 the GO TEXAN Restaurant Program was posted on the Texas Register and adopted in the *Texas Administrative Code* in Title 4, Chapter 17, Subchapter C.

18. What equipment, technology and software are used to operate and administer this program? Equipment, technology and software used to operate the GO TEXAN Program includes the Internet to post information on GO TEXAN Web sites, e-mail marketing software for e-mail blasts to consumers and members, plotters, printers, mounting equipment, telephones, computers (Microsoft and Mac) and scanners.

19. To the best of your knowledge, did this program originate in your state? If YES, please indicate the innovator's name, present address, telephone number and e-mail address. The GO TEXAN Restaurant Program originated in Texas; no other state carries the GO TEXAN mark or initiative. Few other state agriculture departments operate restaurant programs, TDA took the concept to a new level through its promotional support and the creation of the first statewide dine-out event.

20. Are you aware of similar programs in other states? If YES, which ones and how does this program differ? Yes, the Texas Department of Agriculture is aware of the various state agriculture departments currently conducting restaurant programs within their states such as New York, Colorado, New Jersey and Vermont; however, none of these states have organized a statewide dine-out day. Also, many of these agency's restaurant programs do conduct restaurant weeks; however, they are centralized to focus on particular cities and not the entire state.

21. Has the program been fully implemented? If NO, what actions remain to be taken? Yes, the program has been fully implemented. In addition, plans are in place to conduct a second GO TEXAN Restaurant Round-Up for Sept. 28 – Oct. 2, 2009.

22. Briefly evaluate (pro and con) the program's effectiveness in addressing the defined problem[s] or issue[s]. Provide tangible examples. Pros: Partnerships between farmers and restaurants, establishments' purchases of local ingredients, consumers dining at local restaurants to enjoy the freshness of local products and the GO TEXAN Restaurant Round-Up donating proceeds to food banks across Texas. With all of these initiatives combined, Texas is able to generate a circle of economic revenue within the state.

Cons: Communication with restaurant owners and chefs will continue to be a struggle. These restaurant affiliates are not always available to meet in person or by phone to discuss their option to purchase local products for their menus. In order for the program to be effective, continued or additional funds for marketing and promotion are needed to increase the program's exposure on how restaurants can bring Texas to the table.

23. How has the program grown and/or changed since its inception? During the first three months after the program was adopted, GO TEXAN recruited 31 members. Due to the extensive marketing campaign for the GO TEXAN Restaurant Round-Up and the increased exposure of the program, the agency was able to recruit another 369 restaurant members.

24. What limitations or obstacles might other states expect to encounter if they attempt to adopt this program? Limitations and obstacles other states could encounter include funding and communication. Both are needed to recruit and encourage restaurants to serve locally grown ingredients and entice consumers to dine at these establishments.

2009 Innovations Awards Program Program Categories and Subcategories

Use these as guidelines to determine the appropriate Program Category for your state's submission and list that program category on page one of this application. Choose only one.

Infrastructure and Economic Development

- Business/Commerce
- Economic Development
- Transportation

Government Operations

- Administration
- Elections
- Public Information
- Revenue

Health & Human Services

- Aging
- Children & Families
- Health Services
- Housing
- Human Services

Human Resources/Education

- Education
- Labor
- Management
- Personnel
- Training and Development
- Workforce Development

Natural Resources

- Agriculture
- Energy
- Environment
- Environmental Protection
- Natural Resources
- Parks & Recreation
- Water Resources

Public Safety/Corrections

- Corrections
- Courts
- Criminal Justice
- Drugs
- Emergency Management
- Public Safety

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CSG Innovations Awards 2009
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This application is also available at www.csg.org, in the Programs section.

Deadline: March 2, 2009