

Re: Effectiveness of + Gratitude for my grant funding

To those members of the various Senate committees present at today's hearing, I am sorry I am not making this statement in person, and thank you for being there doing the good work you all are doing!

As a lifelong Vermonter from Pomfret, I started my business, VT Wildwoods in 1998. My family has a 200 acre property and I learned to work in the woods from my dad. And I started off using the family tractor + trees from our wood lot.

And in 2016 I received my WLEB grant to complete my R&D efforts to create the first ever commercial scale spalted wood manufacturing system.

Here is a simple product comparison to understand what spalted wood is; it is the intentional prolonged aging of wood under controlled conditions to achieve a particular artistic effect. Think Vt. Salumi's dry-cured charcuterie products, or Jasper Hills cave aged cheeses. But with Sugar Maple logs.

When I applied for my grant, I was at the end of my R&D budget and if I did not get the grant I was going to say I tried my best, and shut down the effort to intentionally spalt wood.

Instead I got the grant!!! And indeed did finish my R&D, and am proud to say that my current spalted maple client list includes: The 4 Seasons/ Nordstroms/ Chipotle/ Equinox Health Clubs/ Harpoon Brewery + Bar Hill gin locally.

Nike, Google and Rolls Royce have all requested samples for upcoming projects.

Without my grant none of these firms would be on my client roster, and I might have very well closed my business.

Thank you very much. Please keep funding this very important program at its current level and more!

Respectfully,

Parker Nichols
Vermont Wildwoods