



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
June 1, 2021

WHIN, Pantheon, and AgriNovus Launch Pilot to Accelerate AgTech in Southwest Indiana

Organizations to Bring Proven WHIN Testbed Model, Partnership to Knox County Agricultural Producers

[WEST LAFAYETTE, IN] Wabash Heartland Innovation Network is excited to announce an advanced agtech pilot in southwest Indiana using WHIN’s strategic framework model. WHIN will be partnering with AgriNovus and the Pantheon in Knox County to expand into southern Indiana.

The Pantheon is a coworking space and business incubator located in Vincennes, Indiana. They exist to develop resources, services, and a community that fosters innovation and helps entrepreneurs and businesses prosper in Knox County. The Pantheon has worked to bring Vincennes City and Knox County government, the Knox County Community Foundation, the Knox County Development Corporation, local business owners and philanthropists together around a common desire to reinvigorate the community’s innovative and entrepreneurial spirit.

“WHIN’s strategy of connecting innovators and entrepreneurs with progressive local farmers aligns perfectly with The Pantheon’s mission of fostering a community that develops and supports entrepreneurs and businesses in Knox County. The collaboration between WHIN and The Pantheon will serve as a connection between local producers who are ready to test new tech on their farms and the strong innovation network of WHIN to drive access to that new technology,” said Nichole Like CEO/President of The Pantheon.

The expansion pilot study into southern Indiana will allow for WHIN’s work to benefit an additional region by developing the multi-county, southwestern Indiana region as a living laboratory for agricultural-directed technology, much like the current WHIN region in north-central Indiana.

“We are excited for the opportunity to explore a potential expansion into southern Indiana,” says Johnny Park, CEO at WHIN. “Knox County’s unique agricultural demographic is a great place for our first franchise pilot study!”

Knox County has unique agricultural assets ranking #1 in melon and vegetable crop production in Indiana and placing in the top 3% of all counties nationwide that grow these specialty crops.



According to the USDA, Knox County farmers grow over 4,300 acres of melons and nearly 9,000 acres of other specialty crops annually. This unique ecosystem is a great opportunity for technology startups searching for early customers in the specialty crop sector. AgriNovus' recent TEconomy study values the total Indiana agbioscience economy at \$52.3B, with Value-added Food & Nutrition being the largest subsector at \$29B.

“Southwest Indiana’s strength in diverse agricultural production and its community of progressive producers make it an ideal destination for this multi-organization pilot,” said Mitch Frazier, chief executive officer of AgriNovus Indiana. “Together this pilot creates an opportunity for us to work with local producers and innovators to connect and inspire the solutions needed to accelerate growth.”

The pilot study will be a one-year partnership beginning in 2021 focusing on Knox County and followed by an evaluation. If successful, an expansion to surrounding counties such as Daviess, Dubois, Gibson, Perry, Pike, Posey, Spencer, Sullivan, Vanderburgh, and Warrick counties is likely.

SOURCES: Alivia Roberts, Marketing and Communications Manager, Wabash Heartland Innovation Network (WHIN): Alivia@whin.org and Jason Tennenhouse, VP Strategy and Design, Wabash Heartland Innovation Network (WHIN): Jason@whin.org.

ABOUT WHIN: WHIN is an innovative nonprofit organization devoted to making the 10-county Wabash Heartland region of north-central Indiana the global epicenter of digital agriculture and next-generation manufacturing empowered by smart IoT technology.

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