

## **Interview with Tamera Jepson, Cranberry-Agriculture Cluster member**

**Q. Why/how do you think working on the Cranberry-Agriculture cluster team makes a difference, e.g. in business, retail, tourism and quality of life?**

A. I think that with not having a background in agriculture, I'm able to bring a different viewpoint to the Cranberry Cluster. I feel that it's very important to educate members of the community about how large the Cranberry industry is in our area. If more people were made aware that Wood County is one of the largest producers of cranberries in the world, we could market it better in our local businesses.

**Q. In what ways do the members 'come together' to create the objectives?**

A. Members come together from a variety of different areas and brainstorm ideas. Cluster members will agree on a few major objectives and then research and give feedback to the group.

**Q. How will the ideas get implemented?**

A. It is a work in progress.

**Q. What have you learned from the process so far?**

A. I learned from this process that individuals from different industries can spark ideas together and new connections can be made to help one business grow another.

**Q. What would others gain from 'joining in' with your cluster?**

A. If others joined our cluster they would gain more knowledge about our community and feel rewarded that they are creating a brighter future for South Wood County.

**Q. What kind of skills/help do you still require to make your objectives as a cluster succeed?**

A. We need other community businesses get involved in promoting cranberries in their businesses.

### **Final Comments:**

Tourism promotes cranberries, restaurants create great cranberry dishes, and some convenience stores/community events sell cranberry trail mixes and cranberry juice products. There are so many individuals passing through Wood County, and they may not see one single cranberry item. Just think of the opportunities that this area could have – similar to Door County's connection to cherries – Wood County could become known as the Cranberry County.