



Pasture to Plate

The Thirsty Heifer Letcher County, Kentucky

When Tyler Ward was looking for a building in downtown Whitesburg where he could open his new restaurant, The Thirsty Heifer, he looked no further than the building where the long-time local favorite, Courthouse Café, used to be. It was the perfect spot to open a restaurant that hoped to blend the old Whitesburg with the new.

The Thirsty Heifer serves specialty burgers made from organic, grass-fed beef, and offers a rotating selection of 16 craft local and imported beers. The restaurant makes every effort to use local foods and Kentucky Proud products.

But serving the food is only half of the battle when owning a restaurant. Ward—a Letcher County native and Centre College graduate—researched extensively about what it takes to operate a restaurant, and even developed a management team to address his limited management experience. And MACED assisted him with technical assistance, and some funding to help him open the doors of The Thirsty Heifer, and now, Ward is able to contribute to Whitesburg's efforts to become a tourism hub for food and entertainment in eastern Kentucky.

MACED works with people in eastern Kentucky and Central Appalachia to create economic opportunity, strengthen democracy and support the sustainable use of natural resources.

Development Impacts

3 jobs created or retained

Distressed county business

New business

Local ownership supported



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