



Re: Reef Fest Benefit Event – Exhibitors

9/10/14

Dear Environmental Education Exhibitors,

The Virgin Islands Marine Advisory Service of the University of the Virgin Islands in association with Blue Flag USVI - Virgin Islands Conservation Society, Reef Fest organizers, would like to invite your agency, business or group to host an environmental exhibit or support through sponsorship the **St. Thomas Reef Fest on November 9th, 2014 at Coral World Ocean Park, from 9am until 3pm.**

Over the last decade, the UVI's Center for Marine and Environmental Studies and federal and local partners, through high quality scientific research, have documented losses of over half of the live coral reef habitat around the territory. This unprecedented decline could adversely affect the invaluable ecological services corals provide in shoreline stability, water quality, nutrient recycling, and habitat for fish and related organisms.

Our thriving tourism industry intimately depends on the health of the marine environment, clarity of the ocean waters, and gorgeous beaches. Divers, snorkelers, boaters, beach goers, sailors and fishers repeatedly choose the Virgin Islands as their vacation destination, securing our multimillion dollar industry.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Status of the Reef Report 2008 asserts that without significant improvement in management efforts to reduce land based sources of pollution and increasing awareness of the fragility of the coral reef ecosystems, these corals will continue to be impacted by coral disease, bleaching and climate change. Educating the community about the value of the marine resources and the relationship between our activities on land and the sea is one way we can help reverse the decline in our coral reefs, while preserving our marine based tourism economy.

The goal of St. Thomas Reef Fest is to empower communities to protect their reefs and convey the importance of the marine resources. To this end, a diverse array of activities is being organized to ensure success in meeting our goals: to raise awareness of coral reef values, promote environmental stewardship, and strengthen natural resource management and conservation.

St. Thomas Reef Fest activities, facilitated by NGO's, Government agencies, private businesses, volunteers and members of VINE, include:

- Complimentary admission to Coral World Ocean Park –Explore five acres with exotic aquariums, outdoor pools, Undersea Observatory and nature trails.
- Interactive presentations at various exhibits throughout the park
- Interactive marine educational games and activities: Snorkel Clinics, Build a Castle, Scavenger Hunt, Reef Tours, Coastal Naturalist, Human Ocean Bingo and more...
- Expert local speakers in natural resource science and management;
- Environmental exhibits and activity booths from various government and community organizations, and displays by local agencies and programs;
- Local "green" vendors of both food and retail
- Recycling Demo

On behalf of Reef Fest organizers we humbly request your participation. Your organization is welcome to join us by providing for the display of a wide array of environmental information to the public. For example, we welcome the showcasing of ecologically oriented services or opportunities, environmental information conveyed through demonstration, games or activities, or any opportunity you can provide that allow community members to learn about the importance of a balanced and healthy coastal ecosystem. The most important aspect about your exhibit is that the audience has an opportunity to participate and interact with you.

If you aren't interested in hosting an exhibit, your help can come in various forms: donations of goods and services, or prizes for games and activities; equipment loan or monetary donation to support supplies and giveaways; volunteer time; talent; and anything you are willing to contribute to make this a truly fun community-based event.

Your participation will be promoted and acknowledged within all Reef Fest correspondence, radio announcements, Facebook and newspaper advertisements, as a partner in Reef Fest. Any donations or proceeds raised at Reef Fest will go to environmental community outreach and education programs for the USVI territory.

We hope you consider assisting us in this important community sponsored event.

Exhibitors are requested to set-up no later than 8am on the day of the event.

Please R.S.V.P. with the enclosed **reservation form** by October 10th, 2014, through email or phone.

Thank you for supporting the conservation of our marine environment.

Sincerely,



Valerie Peters
Blue Flag USVI – Coordinator
And
Coral World Ocean Park – Marketing
(340) 775 1555 ext 246
marketing@coralworldvi.com





Reef Fest 2014: Exhibitor's Reservation Form

Please email this form to Valerie Peters – marketing@coralworldvi.com
or fax (340) 775-9068 by OCTOBER 10th, 2014

Name of organization: _____

Contact/Name of representative attending: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Theme or Activity: _____

Equipment needs:

Tables and chairs are very limited. Please bring these if you have them. If not, we can work together to reserve equipment and space for you.

Number of chairs needed: _____

Number of tables needed: _____

