

Expanded Awareness and Growth of Silver Creek Farmers Market

To increase the number of farmer vendors and to expand the customer base of the Silver City Market through implementation of promotional strategies that increase market visibility and accessibility.

[Final Report](#)

The Silver Creek Farmers Market in Silver City, IA southeast of the Omaha Council Bluffs area. Although a small we have some built in advantages the grant helped us capitalize on. Getting the word out in town about the market was easy. Getting known around the larger area was the difficult part.

The largest portion of the grant was spent on newspaper advertising. Without the grant there was no way we could advertise on a county wide scale. We placed a 4" x6" ad in the Opinion Tribune 1 week before the start of the season & ran it weekly thru the end of the season. The grant also allowed us to print posters & signs that were distributed in what we felt were strategic spots. The Opinion Tribune also helped us design a logo.

The grant also helped us get on line with a web site from Council Bluffs on Line. This website enabled us to get directions, highlight the different vendors with what they had to offer, as well as up coming events.

And finally to promote the market we had 300 canvas totes with our logo printed by the Shirt Shack in Omaha. These totes were given free to those attending the market. It helped us "go green" & get away from using plastic bags and was very well received. We encouraged our customers to use them wherever they shopped to help get our market name out in the greater public.

The market was a big help to The Friends of Silver City Library. Being located in the city park, they set up a coffee shop in the gazebo serving coffee & lemonade, along with rolls & donuts for a free well offering. The regulars would show up for coffee, chat with neighbors & friends & do a little shopping. The funds raised help some special projects for the library.

Three times per season we would bring out the grill & do a Customer Appreciation Lunch. Free food tends to bring out the people. We had live music compliments of the Courtier Family & Friends.

We had a space set up for the Mills County Master Gardeners to answer questions. This helped the public get good information, and gave the master gardeners a chance to get their community service hours logged.

Some of our vendors specialized in heirloom varieties and handed out free recipes to the buyers. Having such a wide variety of fresh fruits, vegetables & herbs on display, along with tips on how to use them and the expert advice of the master gardeners even encouraged some in the community to get back into gardening.

The customer appreciation cook outs were very well received. They always brought out new customers. In the beginning we cooked hamburgers, which was tough to keep up with when it was free. So we decided to go to brats, hot dogs & chips, which made it easier to keep up with the crowd, and it helped keep the cost down. We recruited the Friends of the Library to serve drinks & dessert for a free will offering, which gave them

Kay. Hagan @ 2004.000

Our primary areas this grant was spent on were

- 1) Newspaper ads
- 2) Posters & signage (posts for mounting)
- 3) Web site
- 4) Canvas totes with printed logo
- 5) Appreciation lunches

Sincerely

Robert Mejstrik
Silver Creek Farmers Market Manager