

Georgia's New Statewide EBT Farmers' Market Implementation Project

The **Upper Ocmulgee River Resource Conservation and Development Council** of Lawrenceville, Georgia received \$97,961 to reach out to, and educate, low-income and minority citizens on the nutritional benefits of locally grown foods; and to provide EBT machines and training to 16 local farmers markets throughout Georgia.

[Final Report FY09](#)

FINAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

September 1, 2011

Recipient Name: Upper Ocmulgee River RC&D Council, Inc.
Georgia's New Statewide EBT Farmers' Market Implementation
Program
Grant Number 12-25-G-0927
Location (City/State) Lawrenceville, Georgia 30046
Final Performance Report

Project Summary

Interest and Need for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

For many years, locally grown fresh fruits and vegetables were not available to non-farm families. Urban citizens, especially those with low income, were forced to rely on over processed food devoid of essential nutrients. Interest in locally grown food to stem the tide of diabetes and obesity has fueled the growth of community farmers markets. The interest in this project has come from the Department of Human Services as a part of its efforts to reduce healthcare cost that can be traced back to poor diets. Additionally, local food advocates and farmers groups recognized this effort as an opportunity to support and expand the opportunities for small and underserved farmer.

Project Approach

Local farmers market committees were formed throughout the state to identify communities that fitted the basic criteria of the project's objectives: 1) Availability of a local farmers market that was willing to promote fresh fruits and vegetables to our targeted consumers, being EBT/SNAP recipients. 2) Proximity of market to neighborhoods where targeted consumers would have access. 3) Sixteen selected markets were to have been provided with EBT terminals and trained that met the requirements outlined above in 1&2. Training included orienting managers and vendors/farmers on the mission, and stipulations for participating in the project. (Stipulations refer to rules and procedures required by USDA's Food and Nutrition Service to avoid abuse or violations). 4) Develop a sustainable outreach effort to educate consumers about the availability of fresh fruits and vegetables for purchase with SNAP benefits.

Goals and Outcomes Achieved

According to the plan of work, we successfully placed 16 EBT terminals in markets throughout the state of Georgia. See table below identifying each market.

As a part of the Plan of Work presentations were made to 21 local committees and farmers market groups. Sixteen (16) of the twenty-one (21) accepted the proposal. The goal was to install sixteen (16) and was met.

The five (5) markets that chose not to participate had varying reasons yet notable similarities in arriving at their decisions. (This will be discussed in the section on lessons learned).

The following report was compiled by the:

Retailer Administration Center
Southeast Region
USDA, Food and Nutrition Service

FARMERS MARKET PROGRAM IN GEORGIA

National Data

As of November 2010, nationwide there were 1,611 Farmers Markets, less than 1% of all authorized retailers.

As of November 2010, there were \$7.5 million in Farmers Markets redemptions nationwide, compared this represents an increase of 51% from 2009.

Regional Data

AL	\$39,422
FL	\$87,581
GA	\$143,288
KY	\$31,728
MS	\$22,826
NC	\$59,085
SC	\$74,223
TN	\$16,760

Georgia Data

- Total of 46 Farmers Markets in Georgia
- Increase of 34 New Farmers Markets in Georgia over the past year-2010
- Total redemptions for Georgia Farmers Markets as of November 2010 \$143,288
- Total redemptions for the Southeast Region \$474,913.
- Georgia redemptions represent more than 1/3 of the total redemptions for the entire region.

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Comments on the Report

There were 46 markets making up the sales figures for Georgia. Our 16 market project sponsored by the 2009 FMPP grant contributed 21% of the sales for Georgia in the amount of \$30,711. 23 of the 46 were produce type stands or single farmers markets. 7 of the remaining were EBT community markets not direct beneficiaries of the grant. There was not a breakdown of the contributions of the other two categories of markets.



Training Accomplishments

Market Managers

Training of market managers for successfully launching the EBT project began with the support of the local committees and was continued through technical support from the program manager. Activities included providing a manager's checklist that served as a guide to walk the manager and the committee through all of the steps necessary to launch all of the components of the project from application phase, design and purchase of wooden tokens to outreach.

Farmers

Farmers were trained on the importance of their participation in the EBT Farmers Market Project at their meetings and at two major field day events sponsored by this project in partnership with stakeholders listed: Natural Resource Conservation Service, University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Service, Fort Valley State University, Georgia Department of Agriculture, Ag South, Dillwood Farm, Cane Creek Farm and others.

On-the-farm Training and Demonstrations

In our work plan we set a goal to train 150 small and beginning farmers through our on the farm field days. The first event was conducted on April 22, 2010 at the Dillwood Farm in Snellville, Georgia. There were a total of 125 participants in this event. There were approximately 100 turned away due to the capacity of the farm to accommodate participants. This led to the idea of doing a second event which was held on June 24, 2010 at Cane Creek Farm in Cummings, Georgia. There was a tremendous response to this event also including video footage and a magazine article about EBT. There were over 75 participants at this event.

Each farmer attending these events was trained on how the EBT project operated including the purpose of the project and the mechanics of how a transaction is carried out at an EBT Farmers Market.



Fresh Fruits & Vegetable Production Field Day April 22, 2010
Dillwood Farms



Find link to YouTube video of the June 2010 field day filmed and produced by The Georgia Farm Bureau production The Farm Monitor.

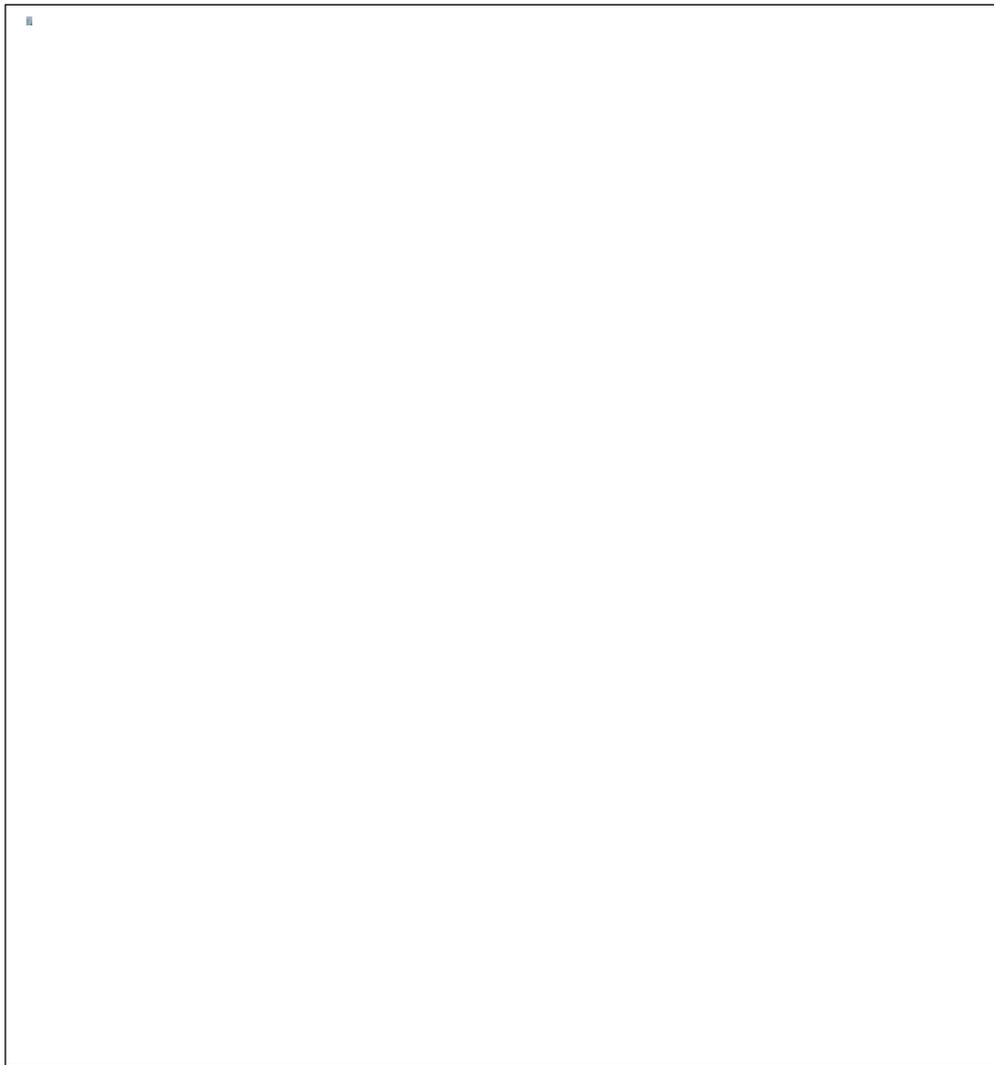
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rK-05wzLcH8>

Additional Accomplishments

Created website

A major accomplishment enabled by FMPP funds was the development of a website that serves as a directory of the 16 pilot farmers markets along with other EBT and Wholesome Wave markets located throughout the state. The site has also served as an effective promotional and technical tool for directing registration for farmer's market events, farmers training opportunities and providing EBT customers and stakeholders with a networking tool. Our web address is www.ebtfarmersmarket.com.

(See samples of features of website below. Visit site for complete experience: www.ebtfarmersmarket.com)



Web Site

Media and Outreach

The success of the project was due to outreach efforts supported by the local and statewide specialized media including Georgia Farm Bureau News, Georgia Neighbors, Georgia Farmers Market Bulletin, E-Dirt, Sustainable Pattie (a business news blog for sustainable options for communities).

Georgia farmers markets offer produce, experience

By: April Reese Sorrow, University of Georgia

4/15/2011 10:58:29 AM

Farmers markets are popping up across the state. And as the summer harvest nears, they'll be offering fresh produce and a chance for patrons to get to know the local farmers who grow their food.

The Riverside Farmers Market in Roswell, Ga., will open for its fourth season on May 14. It draws more than 1,000 people each Saturday morning to shop and listen to live music, said Louise Estabrook, a University of Georgia Cooperative Extension agent in Fulton County and manager of the market.

"It's the place to be, where farmers and consumers meet face to face and everyone is the better for it," she said.

All of the more than 50 vendors at the market only sell Georgia products. The market, which now accepts EBT cards, served 26,000 patrons last year, she said. Besides farmers selling produce, meats, honey, flowers, nursery plants and eggs, there are bakers and salsa vendors as well as others with prepared foods.

"We have 140 farmers markets in the state registered on Georgia Marketmaker," said Kent Wolfe, director of the UGA Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development. "These markets benefit everybody - not just the farmers and consumers, but the local businesses as well."

Marketmaker does not include the 12 state farmers markets found in Atlanta, Augusta, Macon, Savannah, Thomasville, Cairo, Cordele, Glennville, Jesup, Moultrie and Valdosta.

Markets across the state are looking to provide access to all citizens. According to Wolfe, the WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program is available in 65 markets statewide. The program equated to nearly \$1 million in FMNP funds used to purchase Georgia-grown fruits and vegetables in 2009. A similar program for seniors will serve an estimated 11,000 Georgians this year, supplying \$250,000 in fresh, local foods.

The Athens Farmers Market is already open for the year. The producer-only market offers fresh produce from local growers. Amanda Tedrow, UGA Extension agent in Athens-Clarke County, helps organize the market.

"The market is a great way for the consumers to interact with the farmers directly," Tedrow said. "They learn about products they may not be familiar with, like kohlrabi, and learn new recipes."

Local chefs offer weekly cooking demonstrations featuring foods available at the market. UGA-trained Master Gardeners are on hand to answer questions ranging from composting to canning.

"People are looking for home-grown, local foods," said Ronnie Barrentine, UGA Extension agent in Pulaski County, which is located in middle Georgia. "The problem is not that we don't have the demand. It is having the amount of produce."

Barrentine started a market in downtown Hawkinsville on Saturdays in the summer, a trend that began in 2004. Plans are to open daily soon. Before this market, growers traveled to markets in Cordele or Macon to sell their goods.

When the Henry County Farmers Market opened in 2009 in south metro Atlanta, UGA Extension agent Frank Hancock didn't know what to expect. The first day, 50 people were lined up waiting for the market to start.

"Everybody likes the market," Hancock said. "We are focused on our goal of providing our farmers with a place to sell their goods and local citizens a place to buy fresh produce. Our market is growing."

The market sells produce grown within a 50-mile radius of the county, all freshly picked. Vendors also offer freshly baked breads, homemade jellies, ice cream and salsas. Fresh flowers are available, too. A couple hundred people stop in to purchase goods on Thursday afternoons.

Susan Howington, UGA Extension coordinator in Henry County, also conducts cooking demonstrations and food preservation classes at the Henry County market.

"The local people here in Henry County are benefiting and so are our local farmers because we are keeping it right here in our community," Howington said.

To find a farmers market near you, visit www.pickyourown.org/GAfarmersmarkets.htm or www.localharvest.org.

For more information: http://georgiafaces.caes.uga.edu/index.cfm?public=viewStory&pk_id=4093

Read more: <http://www.gfb.org/gfbnews/GFBNewsMoreInfo.asp?RecordID=1335#ixzz1TEMDgKn8>

(Posted from Sustainable Pattie's Blog)

in-Tasmania mentioned the [A Ton for Hunger Drive](#) on her blog, in [the same post as this charming sign](#).

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That [this home](#) got awarded this sign, and that some farmers markets double the value of SNAP.

And that my new friend, [Janet Michal](#), will be featuring her coop today on the Urban Coop Tour, and she will be soon be selling her recycled fabric creations at the [East Atlanta Village Farmers Market](#).

By the way, that farmers market, as well as the Decatur Farmers Market and the Peachtree Road Farmers Market are the only ones of which I am aware in the Atlanta area that participate in Wholesome Wave ([here are the others in Georgia](#)), which is [a program that doubles the value of Federal Food Stamps](#) (now called the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP), thereby making local, organically-grown fresh food more affordable to families-in-need. Many farmers markets don't even accept SNAP, never mind doubling the value of them. Does *yours*?

See email communication below between Project Manager and

IRE: Georgia's SNAP program

TO: 1 More1 recipient
CC: recipients, You, More
[Hide Details](#)
FROM:

• [Pattie Baker](#)

TO:

• ['Willie Torrey'](#)

[Message flagged](#)

Wednesday, March 3, 2010 1:24 PM

Message body

Willie: Nice to hear from you! I made the change on the link. Thanks. I am out of touch with the person I know at the East Lake Market right now, so I don't have contact info. I am encouraging the Dunwoody market to accept EBT but I'm guessing they haven't done anything about it. Can you make it easy for them? I can give you that contact info.

-----Original Message-----

From: Willie Torrey [mailto:willietorrey@att.net]
Sent: Wednesday, March 03, 2010 12:31 PM
To: sustainablepattie@comcast.net
Subject: Georgia's SNAP program

Hello Pattie,

This is a nice site. I will plan to visit often. I want to thank you for the publicity about the Georgia Farmers' Market EBT Project. I am Willie Torrey, project manager for the effort. I would like to ask you to help us get the word out more and more just as you are doing.

First, please correct the email address to read willietorrey@att.net , not (att.com). This error originated at the Georgia Organics website. Secondly, please send me your contact information for The East Lake Farmers Market.

Finally, please help us develop the muscle necessary to get maximum participation in the SNAP farmers market program by those who can benefit. There is an educational component in the project that is reliant almost exclusively on volunteers coming together with to develop strategies to get the needy to the market.

I would like to speak to you by phone at your convenience. I may be reached at 678-768-2942 office. Private cell #678-768-2942.

EBT News Ad

if opposition would come out of the woodwork once the plan was made public. County Chairman Kathy Morgan said she expects the proposed savings in infrastructure to drive home the benefits of concentrated growth.

...now, you can now to claim your new portable computer loaded with programs used for email, internet, and web surfing, etc. Great for students, grandparents, and small businesses. These Windows powered PCs sell for up to \$600 in stores, but through this special program call now and claim up to two for just one payment of \$179 each. Phone lines open today at 9am. When they're gone, they're gone!



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One Time Public Offer

The Newton County Republican Party will hold candidate qualifying beginning Monday, April 26, 2010 thru Friday, April 30, 2010 at 12:00pm at Strickland Law Office on Conyers Street next to the Conyers Street Gym in Covington. Qualifying will run from 9:00am-5:00pm Monday thru Thursday; and 9:00am-12:00pm on Friday.

Republican candidates for the following offices can qualify at this location by paying the following fees:

Board of Education Districts 1, 3 and 5 - \$216.00
Board of Commissioners Districts 2 and 4 - \$569.54

Republican candidates with additional questions can contact the Chairman of the Newton County Republican Party, Ester Fleming at 770-385-1433.

FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLE PRODUCTION FIELD DAY



Small & Beginning Farmers Training
April 22, 2010
Dillwood Farm
4000 Brudley Fork Road, Loganville, GA 30052



8:00am-12:30pm

Topics

Training Sessions

Registration

Organic Farming

- What is organic farming
- USDA EQIP programs provides finance incentives
- How to propagate & germinate vegetable seeds & other plants

Greenhouse management/farm equipment safety

Raised beds vegetable production

- Growing vegetables in raised beds

Beneficial insects

- Which plants draw beneficial insects & benefits

Micro Irrigation

- Drip irrigation water management

Marketing of vegetables

- Direct marketing, local farmers' markets and CSAs

High tunnel (hoop) houses

- Advantages of producing vegetables in high tunnel houses

Fruit production

- Pruning & insect control

Soils

- Collection & analysis of soil tests

Wildlife issues

- Deer & wildlife control

Lunch Provided

Speaker

- GA New EBT Farmer's Market Program

Speakers, Sponsors and Organizers
Dillwood Farms, Farm Credit, Georgia Farm Bureau, Georgia Organics, Gwinnett County Soil & Water Conservation District, University of Georgia-Extension Service, USDA Natural Resources Service, Upper Ocmulgee River RC&D Council Inc. & GA EBT Farmer's Market Program

Free Registration by April 19, 2010
770.339.6871
Email: Jerome.Brown@ga.usda.gov
Upper Ocmulgee River RC&D Council, Inc.
750 S. Perry Street, Suite 212
Lawrenceville, GA 30046
Fax: 678.442.1329

Call 770-786-4373 x11 for a

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Open



Grand Opening of Fort Valley Farmer's Market Celebration



The Following is a report on the food preparation demonstrations conducted at seven EBT Farmers markets by Essence in Nutrition, A nutrition education firm. The report was submitted by Leonie Harris, manager and director of the firm.

2010 Farmer Market EBT Outreach Report
Essence In Nutrition Consultants LLC
Committed to Health and Wellness through Lifestyle Change and Nutrition Education

Theme: Taste the Flavors of Georgia Farmers Market”

Organizational Contact Information

Essence in Nutrition Consultants LLC
990 Holcomb Bridge Road, Suite 3
Roswell, GA. 30076
Phone: 404-259-2206
Website: nutrileeessence.com
Executive Director: Leonie Harris, BS, FPC, Nutrition Educator/Nutritionist

Coordinated Farmers Market Promotion Activities

Essence promoted the consumption of Georgia grown fruits and vegetables at selected EBT Farmers Markets and provided cooking demonstrations with taste testing of recipes at 7 targeted markets. The approach was twofold; to educate families on the health benefits of fresh fruits and veggies and to encourage the utilization of SNAP benefits at local Farmers Markets.

The breakdown of the sites are as follows:

Farmers Market Sites

Fort Valley Market
Henry County Market
Battlefield Farmers Market
Athens Farmers Market
Rancho Alegre Farmers Market
Riverside Farmers Market
Phoenix Garden Farmers Market

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Implementation Dates

Friday July 17th, 2010
Friday July 16th, 2010
Saturday July 24th, 2010
Saturday August 7th, 2010
Saturday August 21st, 2010
Saturday September 11th. 2010
Saturday September 11th, 2010

Food Demonstrations





Lessons learned at each farmers market:

The summer temperature of 100 degrees presented many challenges for outdoor meal preparation at the markets. This includes liability and food safety.

The food safety issue was a big concern as there was no running water to clean and sanitize surface areas, wash utensils, hands and foods and to prevent cross contamination while preparing foods. Additionally there was limited access to electricity. These are the major set - backs in doing food outdoors demonstrations in open parking lots.

The amount of fresh fruits and vegetables in the markets were limited and should be considered when scheduling demonstrations:

Battlefield Farmers Market had a large amount of freshly grown vegetables and a very small amount of fruits, home- made bread and sauces. It was well supported by the community.

Riverside Market also had a large volume of vegetables along with different meat and, fresh baked goods, herbs, home- made sauces and spices. There were activities for the children, which was a major plus. This market was well supported by the community.

Phoenix Gardens had mainly freshly baked goods, small amount of fruits and vegetables home- made pasta, bread, some herbs, sauces, and spices. It was well supported by the community.

Rancho Alegre Farmers Market had the smallest amount of fruits and vegetables in their market and it was not well supported. (They need promotional help).

Athens Farmers Market had organic fruits and vegetables, smaller amount of fruits, lots of vegetables, herbs, sauces, bread and was well supported by the academic community. It needs to be more inclusive

of the local community.

Henry County Farmers Market did not have a large variety of fruits and vegetables, they had mostly tomatoes, and this market is well supported by the community. More Farmers are needed.

Fort Valley Farmers Market could have more farmers; the community is supportive of having the farmers market there. They need support and promotion.

Recommendations:

For the success of this program and for it to reach the customers it was intended, I would suggest that the farmers markets be taken to the intended customers. It would be more effective if all customers who are on food stamps do their purchases in a comfortable environment, such as their living surroundings, church, community centers and schools. There is running water and electricity available as well as indoor use of the facility.

The cooking and nutrition education was successful, people asked questions such as what is this fruit or vegetable? How do I cook it? Can I eat it raw? I have a certain illness can I eat this? I want to lose weight. What is the best way to eat this? How much can I eat? They also loved the food samples we prepared and handed out at the market. They were given nutritional handouts and a copy of the recipes. I found that the list of foods giving to me by the market managers was not always available at the markets. This meant I would have to go shopping and purchase fruits and vegetables to have a variety or just to have fruits and vegetables to prepare.

We have done peach salsa, served with tortilla chips and vegetable bean salad, vegetable stir-fried served with bread from the market, other grains or whole wheat crackers and fruit smoothie. There needs to be more guidelines for the markets to sell foods that are wholesome, nutritious and follow the My Pyramid Guidelines. I did notice that a number of these markets had other non-food items. There should be clear rules about what items should or should not be sold at these farmers markets.

Food Safety Guidelines and more Government Regulations should be adhered to at these local farmers market.

Farmers need to have more support and resources on how to grow their produce successfully, clean and get produce to the markets. They need training/information on the availability of markets and best ways to set up and display their produce so they can sell to customers.

There was a situation at one of the markets where a dog got really aggressive. (I was there) Personally, I don't think dogs should be allowed in the market for health, safety and liability reasons.

Overall I think this method of promoting the consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables grown locally is a successful program. Having the markets, and doing the nutrition education and cooking demonstration in a nearby facility, after which the participants could go on a market tour to make purchases with their food stamps should be considered. It would give the participants a more comfortable feel knowing they are all food stamps recipients shopping together.

Submitted By Leonie Harris, BS, FPC

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Beneficiaries

EBT Recipients (Marketing and creative signage, flyers used by markets including newspaper advertising and stories elaborating on the availability of fresh produce to EBT recipients.)



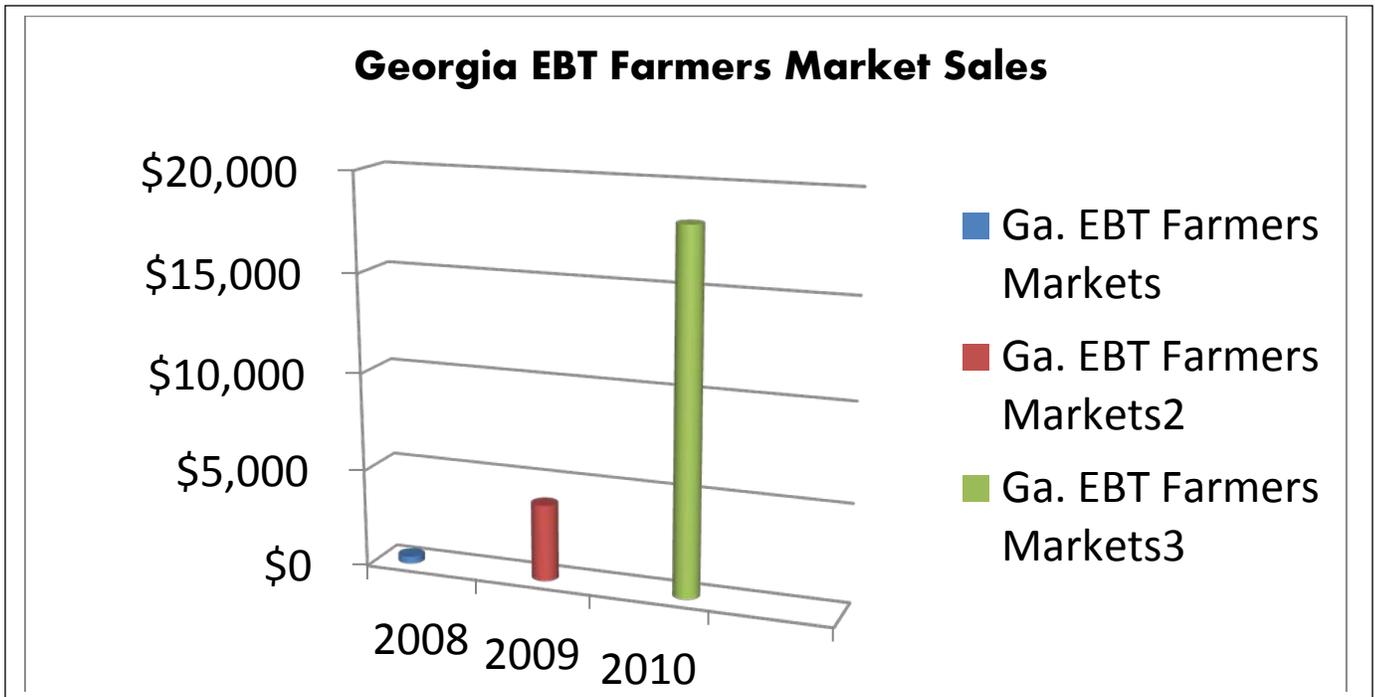
Planning meeting for children's agricultural field day. EBT project provided funds to build a pizza garden at Rockdale County Cooperative Extension Service site.



The pizza garden was designed to show children the ingredients used must be grown in the soil.

Producers

Many small farmers expanded their income options through this project as evident in the increased sales generated by EBT transactions at community markets around the state. Because of the exposure this project gave community farmers markets through media exposure and outreach Georgia registered more farmers' market EBT sales than any other state in the Southeast Region. **As reported earlier, Georgia EBT farmer's market sales of \$143,288 represents over 33% of all farmers market EBT sales in the Southeastern States.** The bulk of farmers market revenues remain as gross sales in the hands of individual producers/vendor. This major portion of regional EBT sales attributed to Georgia markets is evidence of the program's effectiveness on increasing producer income.



We have installed 16 EBT Terminals at Farmers Markets in Georgia.

Market Transaction Increase in Georgia

Year	# of EBT Transactions	Increase/Decrease
2008	23	<i>Increased</i>
2009	273	<i>Increased</i>
2010 (to date)	754	<i>Increased</i>

Wholesome Wave, An Extra Boost To Producers Income



Jerome Brown, RC&D Coordinator; Judith Winfrey, Manager of Wholesome Wave, GA; Willie Torrey, EBT Program Manager discuss ways to expand Wholesome Wave support of EBT Farmer's Markets.

Market Managers

Federal Agencies, Agricultural colleges, county extension services(focus on supporting and establishing local food networks, Georgia Organics(was able to expand its influence in the sustainable farming and local foods movement by making presentations at 2 field days being exposed to 250 farmers.

Lessons Learned

Market managers did not work closely with local committees effective to maximize results to have a greater impact over a wider geographical area such as the state of Georgia. There is a need for a larger staff to insure a timely and ongoing roll out of an effective outreach and educational campaign. We learned that the field days were excellent events to link market managers and producers.

Additional Information

Oversight Committee

From the inception of the project an oversight committee was formed to guide the ongoing need to sustain education and outreach. These two efforts are necessary pillars to continue to raise public awareness of the opportunities that have been created through this project and the importance to the wellbeing of SNAP recipients and all who will benefit from a sustainable farmers market system in our communities.



