

**Orange County HomeGrown** of Paoli, IN received \$59,862 to expand local farmers markets' customer base through: promotion and use of EBT; training and services to market vendors; promotion and public awareness of nutritional value of locally grown produce; partnerships for 2 existing farmers markets; and creation of a third market within an underserved community.

[Final Report FY10](#)

## **Performance Final Report**

December 12, 2012

Orange County Community Development, Inc., dba Orange County HomeGrown

"Orange County HomeGrown Farmers Markets: Assuring Sustainability and Community Benefits into Their Second Decade and Beyond and Expansion of Existing EBT Project"

IN-259-2010-G-1153

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### **Project Summary:**

"Orange County HomeGrown Farmers Markets: Assuring Sustainability and Community Benefits into Their Second Decade and Beyond and Expansion of Existing EBT Project"

Our project consolidated the strengths of two existing farmers markets, added a new farmers market and established a sustainability process that assured the growth and continuation of the farmers markets by:

- Training a paid Markets Manager and Coordinator of events and volunteers
- Expanding the customer base through Electronic Benefits Transfer operation, use of debit cards, and a third farmers market
- Expanding the financial stability of the farmers markets with support of "Friends of the Market a.k.a. Farmers Markets Sustainability," corporate governmental, private entities and individuals with financial, personnel, and in-kind contributions
- Applying a marketing plan to an eight county region
- Developing training for vendors on safe growing, packaging and sales procedures
- Educating consumers on better use of locally grown seasonal agricultural products
- Providing web-based training to disseminate to start-up markets around the country knowledge and best practices that made the HomeGrown Farmers Market the 10th "Most Loved Farmers Market in the United States" according to the 2009 survey conducted by Care2.com and LocalHarvest.org."

### **Project Approach:**

Below are the four progress report summaries which outline how our project progressed. Details and statistics are shown later in this document.

#### **Progress Report One Summary**

By December of 2010 we had prepared the job description for a farmers markets manager, advertised the position opening, conducted interviews and hired our first paid Farmers Markets Manager. At this time, we are training our new Farmers Markets Manager while preparing for this upcoming season. We are very happy with our choice of a Farmers Markets Manager. She and her husband recently moved to Orange County, Indiana from northern California. She has been very busy with the necessary tasks required to prepare for the season. She has met with the Farmers Market Advisory Committee to update our Vendor Handbook. She has read over all of our past reports and files to become acquainted with our organization. She has prepared a budget report for 2010 season (Orleans, Valley and Holiday Markets) and from that data, has prepared a budget for the 2011 season. She has prepared vendor registration packets. She has met with local VIP's and together they have opened the necessary lines of communication. She is keeping HomeGrown's Facebook account active. She has attended a town council meeting to formally request cooperation regarding the use of the town park for the season. She plans to do the same for the other farmers market and the Holiday Market. She has prepared vendor mailings regarding the Winter Gathering. She has corresponded with Health Dept. and WIC/SNAP officials. She has

attended a Steering Committee meeting in Indianapolis regarding a possible Indiana Farmers Market Association. She met yesterday with HomeGrown's Board and presented the 2011 budget.

### **Progress Report Two Summary**

First and foremost, I wish to say that we are very, very happy with our new Farmers Markets Manager, who we were able to hire as a result of this grant! She has hit the pavement running and is bursting with enthusiasm. We have worked closely with her so that she feels comfortable in her new surroundings and her new job. (She recently moved here all the way from California.) She met many of our vendors at our Farmers Markets Winter Gathering where she was officially introduced as our new Farmers Markets Manager and "knighted" by yours truly with a trowel. She has been overwhelmed with the many kindnesses shown her by the vendors and volunteers that she has met so far. She has embraced our community and can't wait for the season to begin. She has been very busy answering email and phone inquiries from prospective vendors. She is also preparing for the three vendor meetings coming up. We just hired (this week) our new Events Volunteer Coordinator who will also serve as our EBT Administrator. Her position begins immediately.

### **Progress Report Three Summary**

Our new farmers markets manager, hit the ground running. She has done a superb job running both farmers markets. She is a quick learner and after only a few weeks of on-the-job training, she is now fully in charge of things. The biggest change has been with our HomeGrown Valley Farmers Market (Tuesdays) in French Lick. We've seen an increase in vendor participation and customer counts mostly due to our markets manager's hard work and creative ideas. She successfully convinced the vendors to stay open an additional hour (to 6 p.m.) to accommodate customers who work. She also worked with the French Lick Historic Railway so that riders on the train hear a farmers market promo announcement by the conductor using a script that our markets manager has composed as the train pulls into the station (where the farmers market is located.) Rail riders showing our markets master their ticket stub receive a coupon to spend at the farmers market. This has really increased traffic to the farmers market. Also, the addition of the SNAP program at the Valley location has increased the number of customers. Our markets manager has also worked with local businesses in French Lick in mutual promotions. The HomeGrown Valley Farmers Market now offers free iced tea each week provided by a local pastry shop. This had been a plus for our customer service/host tent during the heat of the summer. It allows customers to pause and chat with our volunteers and vendors about the farmers market. Events/Volunteer Coordinator has arranged for events each week at the HomeGrown Valley Farmers Market. This is the first season in which events have been offered there. We have taken many photographs of the HomeGrown Valley Farmers Market, which was much needed for our promotions.

The HomeGrown Orleans Farmers Market (Saturdays) continues to do very well. We've even seen a small increase in volunteers. We've also seen an increase in regular visitors from out of town. The variety of produce, baked goods and crafts continues to amaze us. New this season are lavender, mushrooms, cotton, shagbark hickory syrup, gluten-free baked goods, just to name a few. Though our overall number of registered vendors is down this season, we've seen an increase in brand new vendors. Many of these new vendors are very enthusiastic about being involved with our HomeGrown Farmers Markets and have offered to be on our advisory committee and to help with fundraising.

Because we have a full time market manager and part-time volunteer/events coordinator, who attend all the farmers markets, we can now offer services at both HomeGrown Farmers Markets that we were unable to do before. These include recycling truck, gleaning program, family events, music jammers, WIC/SNAP, free tea/coffee, coupons, etc.... Had we not received the FMPP grant funds, this would not have been possible. We fully appreciate our good fortune in receiving this grant.

The sustainability campaign ("Keep It HomeGrown Keep It Growing") has begun, replete with all of the attendant literature. A short movie displaying the virtues of the HomeGrown Farmers Markets is still in the works. We are asking our shoppers to donate one dollar per market visit, forever, to kick-start our fundraising totals each season and have established a tent at the market to inform shoppers

of this strategy and answer questions. Soon we will begin the solicitation of businesses and governmental entities and private individuals through mailing.

### **Progress Report Four Summary**

What was supposed to be a nice, well-deserved long winter's nap, turned into a bit of a stressful time. Both of our employees resigned. Our Events/Volunteer Coordinator resigned back in late fall because she had three other jobs and found working four to be too much for her. She has, however, joined HomeGrown's Board as treasurer and has agreed to help train our new Events/Volunteer Coordinator when he/she is hired.

Then, three days before she was to begin, our markets manager, turned in her resignation because she found another job that was full time year round. Needless to say, this put us into a fix because what was to be a year to focus on fundraising efforts, turned into another year of hiring and training a new market master, in other words, back to square one.

The good news is that one of our devoted vendors stepped up to the plate. Kim Arnold (baker, farmer) was hired to fill the Markets Manager position. Her husband, Dave, will step in to do all the vending for their family while Kim runs the farmers markets. Dave joined the HomeGrown Board as well. (Our Board is now made up mostly of vendors.) Kim met with our former markets manager to get acquainted with her new duties. She's met with the Steering and Advisory Committees to update vendor guidelines and to make decisions about our newest farmers market in Paoli. She is now preparing vendor registration packets and also preparing for the upcoming three vendor meetings. Kim, along with the Steering and Advisory Committees, have decided on a few changes this season and these changes will be presented to the vendors in mid-April at all three vendor meetings. These decisions include a raise in vendor fees, a change in hours for our Orleans and Valley Farmers Markets, a change in Opening/Closing Days for the Valley Farmers Market, and final decisions about our brand new farmers market located in Paoli.

We are now in the process of hiring our new Events/Volunteer Coordinator. So far, three people have applied. Interviews will be held some time next week. The position should be filled and training will begin some time in early April.

In February, we had a Winter Gathering (also known as Harold's Birthday Party) for vendors, volunteers, Jammers, and fans of HomeGrown. There, Kim was officially announced as our new Market Master. (Note: It's also as Harold's Birthday Party, because the first year we got together for the Winter Gathering, we invited Harold, now age 94, who comes to our farmers market every Saturday and spends the mornings with us and his beloved Jammers. From a friend, we found out that it just happened to be his birthday, so a cake was made. He assumed that the gathering was solely for his birthday. We didn't and haven't let him think otherwise. So, each year, we gather in the winter to reconnect with our farmers market "family" and to celebrate our oldest fan's birthday.

The sustainability campaign ("Keep It HomeGrown Keep It Growing") has been uppermost in our minds throughout all of the above changes. The sustainability committee has met several times during the winter months making plans for the coming season. We have begun the solicitation of businesses and governmental entities and private individuals through mailing.

A short movie displaying the virtues of the HomeGrown Farmers Markets has been released. To view them on YouTube, click on the following links: **A Little Town with a Big Market - Orleans Farmers Market** <http://youtu.be/e1FpjB7USSQ> (You'll see Kim Arnold first speaking at 2:36 and at other times on the video. You'll see Harold and hear about him at 9:49 on the video.) Here is another short video showing our beloved Jammers making the music that fills our farmers market with special joy. **Jammers at Orange County HomeGrown - Orleans Farmers Market** <http://youtu.be/hsUPAugVzyA> We plan to show this video around the area to inspire folks to support our farmers markets by shopping, volunteering and donating.

### **Goals and Outcomes Achieved:**

Because of the FMPP grant, HomeGrown was able to transition from two all-volunteer run farmers markets to having and sustaining a paid market manager who works with vendors and volunteers to operate three farmers markets in our county.

Because of the FMPP grant, HomeGrown was able to increase the number of locations and farmers market opportunities for both vendors and customers.

Because of the FMPP grant, HomeGrown was able to expand its EBT program to three farmers markets.

Because of the FMPP grant, HomeGrown had an opportunity to put in place a sustainability plan to keep the three farmers markets going.

### **Beneficiaries:**

- Several vendors are now regular suppliers to Lost River Market & Deli.
- HomeGrown Farmers Markets are now a part of the Fruits & Flowers Trail of Southern Indiana. <http://www.fruitsandflowers.org> This trail is a collection of attractions, farmers markets, gardens, restaurants and wineries located through Southern Indiana. Tourists travel through the trail and collect recipes using local products so that they can take the tastes of Southern Indiana back home with them.
- Limestone Café in Bedford, Indiana hosted several Bistro Nights in which the menu was exclusively made up of local produce. The chefs made regular trips to our farmers market to purchase ingredients for these special nights.
- As of December 7, 2012, we now have 653 “Likes” on Facebook, an increase of 88 fans of our organization since our last report. Those who “Like” our Facebook page get information about our farmers markets through Facebook newsfeeds. We had 340 “Likes” at the end of the 2010 season.
- Each year deserving members of the Orange County community are recognized for their works of service and philanthropy through annual Golden Deeds Awards presented by the Orange County Community Foundation Youth Council the recipients for this award must be nominated by fellow members of the community and approved by Orange County Community Foundation. During the grant cycle, farmers market volunteer and HomeGrown Board member, Sandy Clark-Kolaks, and HomeGrown Farmers Markets volunteer, Bev Baird, were presented with this honor.
- HomeGrown had a large turnout for the 5-K Race, which was held as a fundraiser for the farmers markets. It was such a success that another is planned next season.
- A concert was held this past season as a fundraiser for the farmers markets. Another fundraising concert is to be held this winter.
- Town Council of Orleans asked the HomeGrown Farmers Markets (Orleans) to be a co-sponsor and coordinate activities for their annual Fall Fun Fest.
- Several local festivals and organizations sought out having HomeGrown vendors for their activities.
- Maple Street Restaurant informed HomeGrown that they are “delightfully busy” on farmers market days. A direct quote from them was, “We get pounded before and after the farmers market. We love it!”
- Lost River Market & Deli, our community-owned grocery store, also noticed an increase in shoppers after the farmers markets.
- HomeGrown now has a PayPal link on their website <http://www.orangecountyhomegrown.org> for those who wish to donate.

## **Lessons Learned:**

Throughout the two farmers market seasons with FMPP support we learned that:

- Nearly all current vendors were supportive of higher registration fees and the initiation of a per diem fee to participate in the markets
- Our customer base would help financially support the project through a \$1.00 a week donation placed in “little red barns” at each vendor’s booth
- The Board-directed financial sustainability initiative was supportable, but financial targets need reassessed
- Local governmental and public support for the markets was stronger than initially realized
- That expansion of a third market is appropriate though further research regarding a more suitable location and sales hours is needed
- Suitable market manager leadership was available locally within our vendor community
- The board of Orange County Community Development, Inc. as sponsors of the markets was committed to the continuation and strengthening of the markets
- Members of our vendor community are willing to assume more oversight and responsibilities for the management of the markets
- The support was strong among consumers for greater access to the EBT/SNAP process.
- Members of the commercial and business communities are open to providing underwriting support for specific components of the market operations
- A stronger marketing plan using print and social media are needed to promote the markets and grow a larger consumer base
- A core of 10-15 volunteers each week in addition to the paid staff is required to support the operations of the three markets
- Our accounting system needed strengthening with a more regularized reporting process
- Our farmers market operations are replicable in other locations

## **Problems:**

Because our market followed a volunteer model for so many years, we encountered a small amount of resistance to the transition to a fund-raising model. A small number of people and vendors would like the volunteers to continue. We continued to discuss with these folks the issues involved and believe the lack of understanding surrounding and causing this problem is disappearing. Also, a very few vendors were resistant to our changing leadership at the market, but that resistance seems to have faded also. Additionally, we are still struggling to recruit enough volunteers for all three farmers markets. We’re continuing to work on this as well. Besides our volunteers, we also use people who are doing required community service.

Of course, weather was a major problem during this two-year grant period. First, we flooding and then we had excessive heat (triple digit) and a severe drought. Many produce vendors suffered and ran out of produce early and some had a complete loss. During the 2012 season, we did not have any sweet corn to speak of. The weather conditions adversely affected our customer count and our EBT sales.

We heard grumbling about our new vendor fee structure and lost some vendors because of it, but not so many as to be detrimental. We did have many new vendor registrations. We offered scholarships to vendors who we knew to be low income.

Our biggest concern right now is fundraising for sustainability now that the FMPP Grant funds have ceased. We are committed to our farmers markets and the HomeGrown Board has dropped all of its other projects to focus on the sustainability of our farmers markets.

### **Additional Information:**

#### **Education/Training/Technical Assistance:**

Over the course of the grant cycle, volunteers and our farmers' markets manager attended Farmers Market Manager Boot Camps sponsored by Indiana Cooperative Development and Purdue University.

In past years, we've only had one preseason vendor meeting. We now schedule three preseason vendor meetings. At these meetings, vendors and prospective vendors are given their Vendor Handbook, which outlines our Vendor Guidelines. We schedule guest speakers from the Health Department and WIC/SNAP. The meetings are held in three different locations around the county so that vendors will have every opportunity to attend. We have a large number of Amish vendors, and so we made sure that one of the meetings would be near their community because they travel via horse and buggy.

#### **Establishing New Market:**

Our new Farmers Markets Manager met with town and county council members as well as local chamber members and other local VIP's. She met with our Farmers Market Steering Committee and HomeGrown Board members to plan the new farmers market was planned to be located in the town of Paoli. Vendors and many of our farmer's market supporters showed much interest at the prospect of an additional HomeGrown Farmers Market. We had a meeting with vendors to discuss details for starting the farmers market in Paoli. We then searched for a location that would suit our needs. We decided on a Thursday market. Many vendors expressed interest in participating at the Paoli location. We expanded our WIC/SNAP and gleaning programs at the Paoli location as well as family events. Our new markets master along with our vendor committees found what was thought as a good location, and settled on dates and times for our new farmers market in Paoli. We set up our new farmers market just a block east of the Paoli town square on the Paoli Presbyterian Church Parking Lot. The farmers market was also located across the street from our community-owned grocery store/deli, which sells local produce and other locally made products. They offered the use of their bathroom to our vendors and customers. The farmers market was also right next door to the WIC office, which was a major plus for everyone. The recycling cooperative is just a short walk from the farmers market too. The "downtown" merchants around the square were very happy to have our presence there. A new low-income housing development was being built two blocks from the farmers market, so we hoped to draw more WIC/SNAP customers after it opened. We did not have events at this farmers market, but we had music jammers performing during the farmers market hours. The HomeGrown Paoli Farmers Market was open on Thursdays, beginning at the end of May 2012, from 2 to 6 p.m. The season will ended on the last Thursday in September.

#### **Sustainability**

Brochures were printed which included a donation form those who wished to make donations and/or pledges towards Farmers Markets Sustainability.

The brochure can be downloaded from the HomeGrown website.

<http://www.orangecountyhomegrown.org>

A PowerPoint was created and presented to community organizations in order to educate them about HomeGrown's efforts and to solicit support for Farmers Markets Sustainability.

Vendor fees were raised. See "Vendor Fees" information below. The increase in vendor fees went towards Farmers Markets Sustainability.

During the 2012 season, each vendor was asked to display a "little red barn" at their booth and to encourage customers to "Give a Buck" each time they visited the farmers markets with the proceeds going toward sustainability.

Sustainability (Orleans) Donations = \$732.66

Sustainability (Valley) Donations = \$90.85

Sustainability (Paoli) Donations = \$17.50

HomeGrown now has a PayPal link on its website for those wishing to donate to Farmers Markets

Sustainability. <http://www.orangecountyhomegrown.org>

HomeGrown has sold t-shirts, shopping bags, postcards and DVDs as fundraisers for Farmers Markets Sustainability.

HomeGrown has held a 5K Race and a fundraiser concert with proceeds going to Farmers Markets Sustainability. Another fundraiser concert is planned for this coming winter.

## **Vendor Fees**

### **2010 Vendor Fees *Pre-Grant***

There was a \$10 annual registration fee due at the time of registration. If a vendor intended to sell at both farmers market locations (Orleans and Valley) the registration was \$20. The registration fee was waived for vendors age 10 and under. Children age 11-17 were given three free markets, and if they decided to continue, would pay the \$10.00 registration fee. Scholarships were available for hardship cases. Half of the registration fee went towards Farmers Markets Sustainability.

### **2011 Vendor Fees**

There was a \$10 annual registration fee due at the time of registration. If a vendor intended to sell at both farmers market locations (Orleans and Valley) the registration was \$20. The registration fee was waived for vendors age 10 and under. Children age 11-17 were given three free markets, and if they decided to continue, would pay the \$10.00 registration fee. Scholarships were available for hardship cases. Half of the registration fee went towards Farmers Markets Sustainability. HomeGrown charged a \$5 late fee to those vendors who registered after an April deadline.

### **2012 Vendor Fees**

There was a one-time \$40 annual registration fee for Orleans due at the time of registration. During the market season was a \$5 fee per vending day collected.

There was a one-time \$20 annual registration fee for Valley due at the time of registration. During the market season was a \$2 fee per vending day collected.

There was a one-time \$10 annual registration fee for Paoli due at the time of registration. During the market season there was a \$2 fee per vending day collected.

During the 2012 season, HomeGrown granted 7 Orleans/Valley vendors with full or partial "scholarships," meaning these low-income vendors did not have to pay either the registration fee and/or the weekly fees. HomeGrown offered no scholarships at Paoli, but if the weather was particularly bad, we did not charge the \$5 weekly fee. HomeGrown charged a \$5 late fee to those vendors who registered after an April deadline.

## **Vendor Income Reports 2010 *Pre-Grant***

Orleans Farmers Market Vendor Income for 2010 Season (52 of 170 registered vendors reporting anonymously, with an average of 61 vendors selling each week):

\$92,634.67

The highest income reported was \$7500.17 with the next highest being \$7,000.00

The lowest income reported was \$20, but vendor indicated that he/she vended for one market day.

## **Vendor Income Reports 2011**

No data available.

## **Vendor Income Reports 2012**

Paoli Farmers Market Vendor Income for 2012 Season (2 of 20 registered vendors reporting anonymously, with an average of 2 vendors selling each week):

\$1,700.00

Valley Farmers Market Vendor Income for 2012 Season (3 of 20 registered vendors reporting anonymously, with an average of 10 vendors selling each week):

\$5,125.00

Orleans Farmers Market Vendor Income for 2012 Season (13 of 95 registered vendors reporting anonymously, with an average of 46 vendors selling each week):  
\$44,320.00

### **Buck-a-Book Donations**

\*These figures do not include the countless books that are donated. Books are sold for \$1.00 or they can be traded two books for one book with all the proceeds going towards the running of the farmers markets. Each child who visits the farmers markets gets a free book per visit.

There were fewer sales in the 2012 season, but there were more trades than ever before. During the 2012 season, we also noticed that more children were taking advantage of the free books because we kept running out and had to make numerous requests of the community for donations of children's books.

*Pre-Grant* 2010 Orleans and Valley Farmers Markets Buck-a-Book Donations \$3,822.00.  
2011 Orleans and Valley Farmers Markets Buck-a-Book Donations = \$4,281.00  
2012 Orleans and Valley Farmers Markets Buck-a-Book Donations = \$3,266.00  
These figures do not include the countless books, which were donated.

### **Host Tent Donations**

In the 2010 season, *Pre-Grant*, the Host Tent (Orleans and Valley) made \$1,296.81 in donations. In the 2011 season, the Host Tent (Orleans and Valley) made \$1,775.36 in donations. In the 2012 season, the Host Tent (Orleans, Valley and Paoli) made \$1,070.68 in donations.

### **Vendor Stats and Participation**

#### **2010 Season *Pre-Grant***

2010 Registered Vendors Orleans = 170  
2010 Registered Vendors Valley = 42  
Total Registered HomeGrown Farmers Markets Vendors = 184  
28 of those vendors were registered to vend at both Orleans and Valley  
58 of the total number of registered vendors were brand new  
10 of the total number of registered vendors child/rookie vendors  
15 of the total number of registered vendors were Amish  
39 of the total number of registered vendors were WIC vendors  
42 of the total number of registered vendors were SNAP vendors  
Orleans Farmers Market Vendor Attendance Average = 63 Vendors  
Valley Farmers Market Vendor Attendance Average = 10 Vendors  
Orleans Farmers Market Volunteer Count Average = 12 Volunteers  
Valley Farmers Market Volunteer Count Average = 2 Volunteers  
Orleans Customer Count Average = 489 Customers  
Valley Customer Count Average = 38 Customers

#### **2011 Season**

2011 Registered Vendors Orleans = 145  
2011 Registered Vendors Valley = 13  
Total Registered HomeGrown Farmers Markets Vendors = 158  
32 of those vendors were registered to vend at both Orleans and Valley  
57 of the total number of registered vendors were brand new  
5 of the total number of registered vendors were child/rookie vendors  
15 of the total number of registered vendors were Amish  
42 of the total number of registered vendors were WIC vendors  
55 of the total number of registered vendors were SNAP vendors

33 of the total number of registered vendors were both WIC and SNAP vendors

### **2012 Season**

2012 Registered Vendors Orleans = 95 (SNAP=35/WIC=19)

2012 Registered Vendors Valley = 20 (SNAP=8/WIC=3)

2012 Registered Vendors Paoli = 23 (SNAP=10/WIC=6)

Total Registered HomeGrown Farmers Markets Vendors = 138

of the total number of registered vendors were WIC vendors = 28 Vendors

of the total number of registered vendors were SNAP vendors = 53 Vendors

Orleans Farmers Market Vendor Attendance Average = 46 Vendors

Valley Farmers Market Vendor Attendance Average = 14 Vendors

Paoli Farmers Market Vendor Attendance Average = 2 Vendors

Orleans Farmers Market Customer Count Average = 419 Customers

Valley Farmers Market Customer Count Average = 114 Customers

Paoli Farmers Market Customer Count Average = 8 Customers

Orleans Farmers Market Volunteer Count Average = 9 Volunteers

Valley Farmers Market Volunteer Count Average = 3 Volunteers

Paoli Farmers Market Volunteer Count Average = 1 Volunteer

### **WIC/SNAP/EBT**

We are very pleased with the positive response from vendors and customers to EBT/SNAP and WIC. Orange County HomeGrown Farmers Markets have more SNAP/WIC vendors than any other farmers market in the state of Indiana. Over the course of the grant cycle, several other farmers markets in the state have contacted HomeGrown interested in including EBT/SNAP and WIC at their farmers markets. We made and continue to make efforts to encourage our vendors who sell produce to become WIC vendors and vendors who sell eligible products to become SNAP vendors. We have WIC vendor applications printed up to give to anyone planning to sell produce. We also help the vendors fill out the WIC vendor application and then mail it in for them. In other words, we make it so easy for them, that they are glad to participate. We have written scripted plays which volunteers perform at our vendor meetings to train all our vendors in the use of WIC/SNAP. We have sent the scripts to other farmers markets for them to use as well. We've discovered that vendors who were at first reluctant to accept WIC checks or SNAP tokens, when told about the high number of other vendors at our farmers markets accepting WIC/SNAP, were then happy to join the masses. We've noticed an increase in SNAP token usage. Also, our SNAP vendors seem happy about the program. We are really happy to see our SNAP customers return to our farmers markets with their families to enjoy the events too. Our markets master attended training session "Using the WIC/Senior/SNAP Voucher Program." Volunteer, Alice Wootton, attended a Webinar sponsored by Indiana Cooperative Development Center, Inc. and Purdue to brush up on SNAP. Alice has presented several workshops around the state regarding SNAP implementation and vendor training. This coming winter (January 2013), HomeGrown volunteers, Alice and Jim Wootton, will be visiting Porter County and also Muncie, Indiana to speak about EBT/SNAP/WIC implementation and vendor training with farmers market managers and vendors, which they have done on several other occasions at other Indiana locations. Indiana Cooperative Development Center, Inc. and Purdue are sponsoring these efforts. We purchased cell phones so that we can call on site to verify SNAP vouchers. (We use paper vouchers and then give customers SNAP Tokens to spend.) The cell phones also take photos and have data plans, which will allow us to photograph produce and events available at the markets to post on Facebook and to send to the media and our email lists. We are prepared special postcards, which are sent to WIC recipients announcing the opening dates of our farmers markets with special mention of our ability to accept WIC and SNAP. Because of the FMPP grant we were able to add the EBT program to two other HomeGrown Farmers Markets. We scheduled three vendor informational/orientation meetings before each season from which the vendors could choose to

attend with an emphasis on WIC/SNAP training and sign-up. Below are the SNAP token sales figures from the past three seasons. We are quite certain that the reason the numbers were down in 2012 was because of the severe drought/heat, which affected vendor and customer attendance. We do know that we had many new SNAP/WIC customers in 2012 that we had not previously seen before.

*Pre-Grant* SNAP tokens purchased for 2010 season (Orleans) = \$849.00

SNAP tokens purchased for 2011 season (Orleans and Valley) = \$1,465.00.

SNAP tokens purchased for 2012 season (Orleans, Valley and Paoli) = \$785.00

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