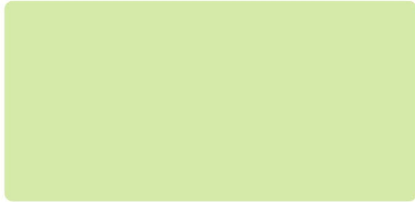
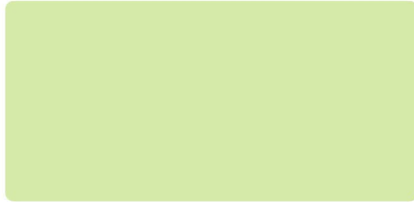
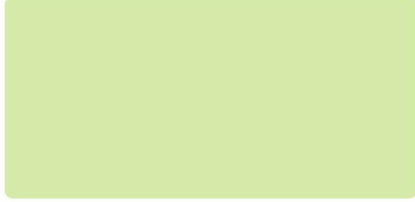
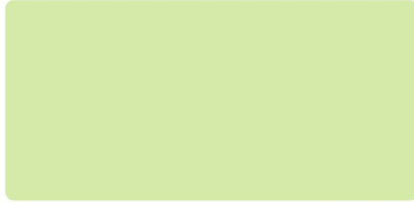




LOCAL FOODS, LOCAL PLACES



Local Foods, Local Places
Community Action Plan
for Harlan, Kentucky
August 2017



For more information about Local Foods, Local Places visit:

www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/local-foods-local-places

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Community Story

Harlan, Kentucky, population 1,607,¹ is situated in the heart of the Appalachian hills, in southeastern Kentucky. Originally named “Mount Pleasant,” Harlan is known for its beautiful mountain scenery and long history as a coal town. Harlan is also the county seat of Harlan County and is home to the county courthouse. For this reason, Harlan acts as central hub of activity for the county, with a high concentration of law offices located downtown.

Like many Appalachian towns, Harlan is experiencing a transition in its economy. As the local economy moves away from coal as an anchor industry, long-time residents are seeking new opportunities. The national shift towards service industries such as healthcare and education is also taking place in Harlan. Major employers in the area include health care facilities such as the ARC hospital and educational facilities such as the Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College. The declining coal economy has resulted in loss of jobs and disinvestment downtown. As a result, downtown is characterized by vacant buildings and empty storefronts.

Harlan is faced with issues such as poverty and poor health trends. The poverty rate (23 percent) is substantially higher than the state poverty rate of 14 percent. The poverty rate is even higher amongst children in the city – 42 percent. Median household income in the city is \$25,769 compared to \$43,740 statewide.² When it comes to health, the rate of obesity in Harlan (33 percent) mirrors that of Kentucky. However, Harlan’s rate of diabetes (13 percent) is about 3 percent higher than the state average of 10 percent. The rate of coronary heart disease in the city is also higher than in the state (354 people per 100,000 people compared to 229 per 100,000).³ For the full community data profile, see **Appendix A – Community Data Profile**.

There are several assets Harlan can leverage to overcome these challenges. Harlan County has a strong tourism industry based on recreational assets. The Harlan Center in downtown Harlan functions as a tourism information and conference center. The state-of-the-art facility offers 7,000 square feet of convention floor space⁴ and a certified commercial kitchen suitable for catering. The Center often hosts corporate events for representatives from nearby industry such as the Appalachian Regional Healthcare hospital. The Center also provides information about local adventure tourism including



Figure 1 – Looking south from downtown Harlan. Image Credit: Renaissance Planning Group



Figure 2 – The Harlan Center, a tourism information and conference venue. Image Credit: Renaissance Planning Group

¹ 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

² Healthy Food Access Portal Mapping Tool, <http://www.healthyfoodaccess.org/access-101/research-your-community>

³ Ibid.

⁴ Harlan County, Kentucky. “Harlan Center.” <http://www.harlandcountytrails.com/harlandcenter.php>. Accessed May 25, 2017.

opportunities for hiking, off-roading, fishing, camping, ziplining, and more. In the summer of 2016, Harlan was chosen as the filming location for *Above Suspicion*, a feature film starring an internationally renowned cast. The film crew invested \$2 million into the local economy during the filming.

Several organizations and agencies in Harlan are responding to challenging economic conditions and poor health outcomes by working to increase access to fresh, healthy food and making local food part of the community’s economic and community development strategies. Some of the key partners include the Harlan County University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension, the Pine Mountain Settlement School, Mountain Comprehensive Health Corporation (a Federally Qualified Health Center), the Community Farm Alliance, and Grow Appalachia. These partners are investigating role local food, health, the arts, tourism, and Appalachian culture can play in diversifying the Harlan economy.

In 2016, Mountain Comprehensive Health Corporation requested assistance through the Local Foods, Local Places program to develop an action plan for promoting local food systems and healthy, walkable, economically vibrant communities. The goals of the Local Foods, Local Places program are to create:

- More economic opportunities for local farmers and businesses.
- Better access to healthy, local food, especially among disadvantaged groups.
- Revitalized downtowns, main streets, and neighborhoods.

The Local Foods, Local Places program is supported by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the U.S. Department of Transportation, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Appalachian Regional Commission, and the Delta Regional Authority. Harlan was one of 24 communities across the United States selected to participate in the program in 2017.

A variety of community partners came together in Harlan to form a Local Foods, Local Places steering committee in preparation for this technical assistance award (see Figure 3). Prior to the Local Foods, Local Places process, these stakeholders had begun preparing for a June 2017 launch of a new farmers market in Harlan and were planning to expand the Farmacy Program, a prescription veggies program, to Harlan County. A key ingredient of the farmers market is that eligible patients from the local Mountain Comprehensive Health Corporation (MCHC) will receive “prescriptions” for fresh produce in the form of stipends to use at the farmers market. This provides a “win-win-win,” as it results in better access to

LOCAL FOODS, LOCAL PLACES STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Brandon Pennington, Harlan County Tourism
Mike Jackson, Mountain Comprehensive Health Corporation
Woody Hartlove, Harlan County Farmers Market
Preston Jones, Pine Mountain Settlement School/ Grow Appalachia
Jeremy Williams, Harlan County University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension
Teresa Fleming, Mountain Comprehensive Health Corporation
Chris Bates, Mountain Comprehensive Health Corporation
(L.M.) Mike Caudill, Mountain Comprehensive Health Corporation
Dan Mosley, Harlan County (Judge-Executive)
Danny Howard, City of Harlan (Mayor)

Figure 3 – Local Foods, Local Places steering committee in Harlan, Kentucky

healthy food for MCHC patients, improved health outcomes for MCHC's patients, and guaranteed customers for farmers selling at the farmers market.

The Pine Mountain Settlement School has a long history of agricultural production and education in the region. Located northeast of downtown Harlan, the school has teaching farms, agricultural programs for people of all ages, and is in the process of building a commercial kitchen that can be used by local food entrepreneurs.

There has also been a long history of using the arts to share the unique Appalachian culture, and there is currently an effort underway to secure a grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission to rehabilitate and reuse a vacant building in downtown Harlan as a multi-use arts center for both artists and residents.

In preparation for the Local Foods, Local Places technical assistance workshop, the Harlan Local Foods, Local Places steering committee identified the following primary goals:

- Ensure the Long-Term Sustainability of the farmers market.
- Integrate the Pharmacy Program into the farmers market to Support Local Farmers and Improve Access to Healthy Food.
- Educate and engage the community about healthy food production, preparation, and consumption.
- Revitalize downtown Harlan through food and art.

The remainder of this report and appendices document the engagement process, the workshop activities, and most importantly, the action plan and next steps for achieving the community's goals. Through workshop discussions, the community's goals evolved from those in the initial request for technical assistance to the four shown later in this report. They reflect the holistic, collaborative approach to community development already underway in Harlan, Kentucky.

Engagement

The technical assistance engagement process for Local Foods, Local Places has three phases, illustrated in Figure 4 below. The assessment phase consists of three preparation conference calls with the steering committee to establish the workshop goals, agenda, logistics, and stakeholder invitation lists. The convening phase includes the capstone event—a two-day workshop in the community. The next steps phase includes three follow-up conference calls to review the action plan and discuss implementation next steps.

The community workshop was held on May 18th and 19th, 2017 and included a small lunch gathering with the steering committee members and regional, state, and federal partners; a tour of the community; an evening community meeting at the Harlan County Extension Depot (Day 1); and an action-planning session, also at the Extension Depot (Day 2). The community meeting and all-day working session were well attended by key stakeholder groups, residents, and local leaders. The workshop sign-in sheets are provided in **Appendix B – Workshop Participants and Contact List**.

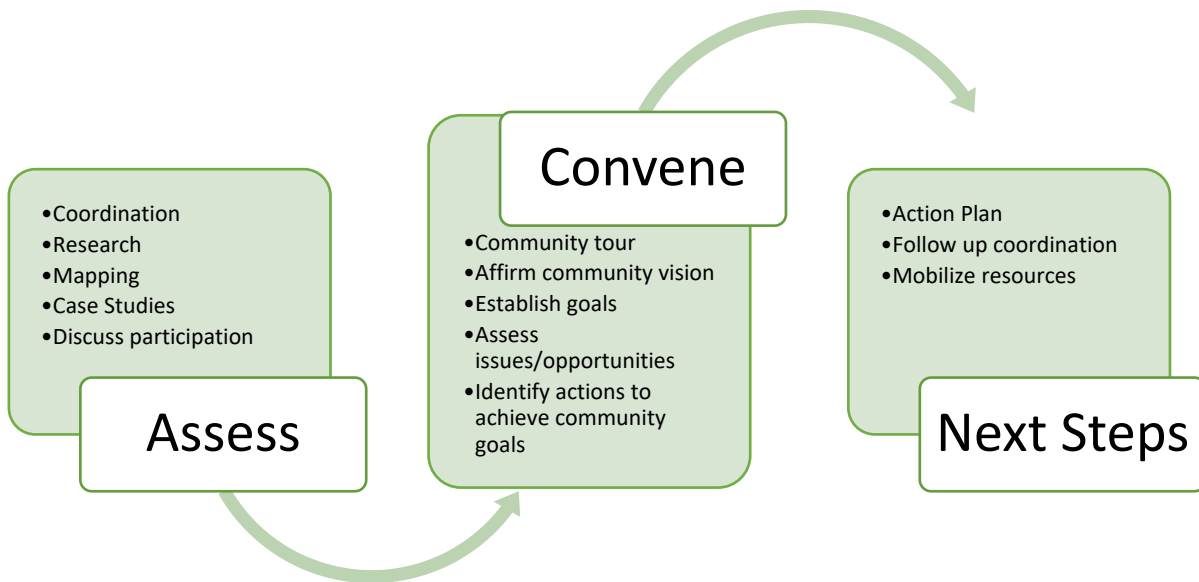


Figure 4 - Local Foods, Local Places technical assistance process diagram.

Community Tour

The Local Foods, Local Places steering committee organized a luncheon on May 18th at the Portal Restaurant downtown with the consultants and federal agency representatives in town for the workshop. Following the luncheon, the steering committee led a tour of key places and projects in the Harlan area including the Court House, the Harlan Center (tourism and conference center), the future sites of the farmers market and downtown arts center, and the Pine Mountain Settlement School. The tour provided an overview of the challenges and opportunities that Harlan faces and allowed for informal discussions about the local food system and placemaking efforts. Several locations visited are shown in pictures here and in **Appendix C – Workshop Photo Album**.

Vision and Values

Approximately 25 Harlan residents and regional partners representing state, regional, and federal agencies attended the community meeting on Day 1 of the workshop. During the meeting, the consultant team facilitated a series of exercises that captured the group’s aspirations for Harlan’s future and their understanding of the current challenges and opportunities relating to the town’s food economy. First, community members and other attendees were asked to write a newspaper headline about something positive happening in Harlan 20 years



Figure 5 – The Local Foods, Local Places steering committee leads a tour of downtown Harlan, starting at the Portal Restaurant. Image Credit: Renaissance Planning Group

from now. This captured the community's vision for the future. Next, participants used index cards to outline the challenges they may face achieving their vision and opportunities that can help Harlan overcome those barriers. The community produced ideas, which are summarized in Figure 6 and presented in **Appendix D – Workshop Feedback and Documentation**.

The visioning exercises revealed many of the group's aspirations for economic revitalization, improved health, entrepreneurship opportunities, community pride, and increased coordination among partner and regional organizations. It was against this positive, forward-thinking backdrop of values and visions for the future that the remainder of the workshop was built upon. The first day concluded with a review of the workshop goals and discussion about the direction for action planning to follow the next day.

The second day of the workshop provided an opportunity to refine the goals and develop the action plan implementation tables that are including in this report. In addition to action planning, the second day of the workshop included presentations of case studies by the consultant team covering farmers and mobile markets, urban farming and commercial kitchens, food and health anchors for downtown revitalization, and arts-oriented public space and placemaking techniques. Mike Jackson from the Mountain County Health Corporation provided information about the Farmacy program, including health improvements seen in other counties, and the plans for implementation in Harlan. Robert Gipe, a local artist and representative from the Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College, discussed the ongoing creative placemaking efforts in Harlan, and the plans for a future Arts Center downtown.

Action Plan

The culminating product of the workshop is a strategic action plan to guide implementation. The plan is organized around four goals and includes actions the participants brainstormed at the meeting and during follow-up calls. The action plan matrix helps to further clarify, prioritize, and define roles and responsibilities for moving forward on these actions. The goals and actions that are part of this plan are

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Challenges:

- Providing access to quality food for all
- Educating people about healthy eating, behaviors and lifestyles
- Increasing the number of people that are responsible for organizing and coordinating the farmers market
- Motivating the community to get involved in the local food economy
- Realizing the economic potential of food production
- Connecting and identifying a common vision for all the food initiatives in Harlan

Opportunities:

- Build a new, diversified industry and future for Harlan.
- Remember our history but move forward.
- Leverage the many available resources.
- There is a burgeoning desire for local food across the county and not a lot of competition regionally.
- There is existing momentum around local food.
- The farmers market launches June 10, 2017.
- The Farmacy Program has seen huge successes in other counties.
- Pine Mountain Settlement School has many resources for food education, production, and processing.
- The upcoming Community Food System Assessment will identify gaps and resources in the food economy.
- There is potential for a downtown arts center and culture around arts/artisans.
- Harlan is central hub of activity for county.
- There is a culture of adventure tourism in the area.

Figure 6 - Workshop participants' summarized thoughts on the challenges and opportunities present in the local food system and downtown revitalization efforts.

in full detail below. A list of funding resources (**Appendix E – Funding Resources**) and references (**Appendix F – References**) are provided to aid the community in implementing the goals and actions.

GOAL 1: Ensure the long-term sustainability of the farmers market.

The Harlan County Farmers Market opened in downtown Harlan on June 10th, 2017. The market will run every Saturday until October from 9:00am – 2:00pm. The market is run by a Board of Directors, which consists of three representatives, and is supported by an Advisory Council, which is comprised of the Board of Directors and other volunteers who assist in running and managing the operations of the farmers market. During the workshop, the members of the Farmers Market Advisory Council indicated that the market can be a driver of wider economic development and can provide supplemental income to community members struggling in a transitioning economy. Harlan County Cooperative Extension ran an informal farmers market in the early 2000s for three years, but it was ultimately unsustainable due to a lack of formal structure or overseeing body to manage the operations of the market. Harlan has learned from the challenges faced by the previous farmers market and plans to build a market that can be sustained well into the future. Long term sustainability for the market requires a dedicated and diversified group to run the market, a consistent supply of quality produce, and sufficient long-term demand for the products.

Action 1.1: Get more people involved in the management of the market.	
What this is and why it is important	The Harlan County Farmers Market was launched and is managed by a dedicated group of community members, including the Farmers Market Manager, the Advisory Council, and the Board of Directors. Many of the responsibilities associated with the market fall to the same small group of people. A common challenge for farmers markets is ‘burnout’ – a situation that can arise if a few individuals carry the responsibility of running the market over a long period of time. A small group can struggle to sustain a market over many years if any unexpected circumstances arise, such as health issues or family responsibilities that need to be prioritized. By recruiting more community members to help run the farmers market, there is a greater chance that the market can be sustained well into the future. This process involves expanding the existing Farmers Market Advisory Council, as well as recruiting volunteers to help on a part-time basis. (An example of part-time volunteers could include high school students who provide childcare at the farmers market while parents shop.)
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two members added to the Advisory Council • Five volunteers recruited • Two local corporate sponsors brought on board
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • July 2017 – October 2017
Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmers Market Advisory Council and Board of Directors
Supporting cast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pine Mountain Settlement School • Grow Appalachia • Harlan County Cooperative Extension • Harlan County Tourism

Action 1.1: Get more people involved in the management of the market.

Costs and/or resources needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low cost; requires time for outreach and engagement with potential volunteers • An overview document that outlines the responsibilities for each level of involvement – volunteer, Advisory Council, Board of Directors (from articles of incorporation) so that people know what they are signing up for. This would also allow the existing Advisory Council and Board to get a clearer sense of where they need the most support and where the gaps and opportunities are.
Possible funding sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kentucky Center for Agricultural and Rural Development (Myrissa Christy) • Pine Mountain Settlement School • Harlan County Cooperative Extension • Harlan County Tourism • Community Farm Alliance (CFA) Farmers Market program might be able to help as they provide support for market management, facilitation and development • USDA Agricultural Marketing Service Farmers Market Promotion Program

Action 1.2: Expand the number of producers selling at the market.

What this is and why it is important	<p>The success of the farmers market lies in the relationship between vendors and consumers. Harlan community members are more likely to shop at the market on a weekly basis if the market is an attractive, thriving place to shop, and if the produce is abundant and diverse. If the market is successful in attracting consistent customers, vendors can generate consistent income. To keep customers coming back to the market week after week, there needs to be a diverse selection of products. Expanding the number of producers selling at the market also ensures steady support (financial and otherwise) for the market itself. Finally, the more local producers that participate in the market, the more money kept in the local economy, ensuring that the market is indeed a tool for economic development.</p>
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five new producers per year
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing • Five new producers by the 2018 market season and every year thereafter
Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmers Market Manager
Supporting cast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pine Mountain Settlement School • Grow Appalachia • Harlan County Cooperative Extension • Farmers Market Advisory Council

Action 1.2: Expand the number of producers selling at the market.

Costs and/or resources needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time to have conversations and build relationships with potential vendors • Promotional and information materials – brochures, printing • Technical assistance to local producers to help them scale up their production to get to market.
Possible funding sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harlan County Cooperative Extension • Community Farm Alliance (toolkits, activities) • Grow Appalachia (technical assistance to gardeners, small farmers, and other producers) • USDA Agricultural Marketing Service Farmers Market Promotion Program • Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) could support small producers to help them scale up their production to become consistent vendors at the market. ARC can fund trainings, rental equipment, mobile cold storage, etc.

Action 1.3: Organize ‘special event’ market days.

What this is and why it is important	<p>The Harlan County Farmers Market has the potential to be more than a site for food distribution and sales. The weekly market can become a beloved community gathering space, attended by a diverse range of people from across the city and county. Special events, or themed days, that periodically take place at the farmers market can draw people who would not necessarily come out for the market itself. One example for a special event is the Health & Wellness Fair outlined in Action 2.1. Other events could include a Kids Day that provides games and activities for youth; Dance Day, including Zumba demonstrations and square dancing; and agricultural themed days, such as Tomato Fest. Involving non-traditional partners in planning and implementing these special event days could also potentially lead to increased volunteer participation in the day-to-day management of the market as well.</p>
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larger crowd at the market on event days • Increased sales
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer – Fall 2017
Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harlan County Farmers Market Advisory Council • Local volunteers – committees formed for each special event day

Action 1.3: Organize ‘special event’ market days.

<p>Supporting cast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food and Agriculture Organizations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pine Mountain Settlement School ○ Grow Appalachia ○ Harlan County Cooperative Extension ○ Agricultural & Natural Resources, nutrition activities ○ Farm Bureau • Government <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Harlan County Tourism ○ City Hall and the Mayor • The arts and artisan community • Health Providers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mountain County Health Corporation ○ Appalachian Regional Healthcare Hospital ○ Local gym/ fitness center • Youth organizations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 4-H ○ Boys & Girls Club ○ Challenge Academy
<p>Costs and/or resources needed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varies by event – some events require higher levels of capital and resources. A Health & Wellness Fair may require more planning and partners than Dance Day, which would just require collaboration with a few local dance instructors or groups. • Advertising, marketing, promotional materials for special event days • Volunteer contributions (performers, service providers, etc.)
<p>Possible funding sources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partners (listed under supporting cast) would provide funding or a participation fee for their portion/engagement in the event. • USDA Agricultural Marketing Service Farmers Market Promotion Program • Harlan 2020 Community Development Foundation (Received a check of \$750 to use for any purpose of managing the farmers market) • Harlan County Community Foundation (Going to receive a check for managing the farmers market) • Farm Bureau provided \$200.

Action 1.4: Initiate a social media marketing campaign for the Harlan County Farmers Market.

<p>What this is and why it is important</p>	<p>As the Harlan County Farmers Market launches in the summer of 2017, it is important that residents across the city and county know that there is a central place to purchase fresh food every Saturday and that there is fun and entertainment for the whole family. Potential consumers need to know when and where the market takes place, what they can buy, and whether they can use their SNAP benefits. Food producers, including small hobby farmers, need to know that the farmers market is a weekly opportunity for them to generate some supplemental income. Social media can be a useful tool for spreading information and gaining support. The Farmers Market Advisory Council could work with students at local high schools and community colleges to manage an active social media campaign including Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Through these mediums, information can be disseminated about times and days, weather updates, what produce is available each week, and special events (see Action 1.3). Instagram is a useful medium for sharing photographs and videos of the vibrant activities taking place at the market.</p>
<p>Measures of success</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of followers on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ After the June 10th launch the market had 450 followers • Website for the farmers market launched and maintained
<p>Timeframe</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spring - summer 2017
<p>Lead</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmers Market Manager • Representative from Farmers Market Advisory Council
<p>Supporting cast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College - Students in the health-related academic divisions: Allied Health; Nursing and Related Technology ○ Local high school students • Local photographer • Local Media <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Harlan Daily ○ WYMT News Station • Harlan County Tourism • The Harlan Center
<p>Costs and/or resources needed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time spent managing social media volunteers • Camera and other recording devices • Management of farmers market social media accounts
<p>Possible funding sources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harlan County Tourism • The Harlan Center • USDA Agricultural Marketing Service Farmers Market Promotion Program

Potential Future Action Steps

The following action step was discussed during the workshop and post-workshop calls as a potential idea to explore in the future, but it did not make it into this short-term action plan.

- To continue expanding support for the market, create a “Friends of the Farmers Market” group to formalize the connection between volunteers, vendors, Board of Directors, Advisory Council, and regional partners. Assign specific roles to each member of the Advisory Council (social media, customer engagement, youth engagement, etc.) and get representatives from community organizations (churches, schools) to sit on the Advisory Council or become a “Friend of the Farmers Market.”

GOAL 2: Integrate the Farmacy Program into the farmers market to support local farmers and improve access to healthy food.

A key ingredient of the farmers market is that eligible patients from the local Mountain Comprehensive Health Corporation will receive “prescriptions” for fresh produce in the form of stipends to use at the farmers market. The success of this “Farmacy Program” and the market are interdependent. Patients are more likely to use their prescriptions and improve their behavior and health if the market is an attractive, thriving place to shop and if the produce is diverse and abundant. Likewise, the market is likely to thrive if the Farmacy Program can ensure a consistent source of customers who are guaranteed to spend their money at the market. For this reason, the community identified the long-term integration of the farmers market and the Farmacy Program as an important goal.

Action 2.1: Hold a farmers market event to showcase the Farmacy Program.	
What this is and why it is important	On July 8 th , 2017, about a month after the launch of the farmers market, a market day will be dedicated to showcase the importance of the Farmacy Program. Informational materials can be displayed and distributed, including information about successes in peer counties. Seeing success in similar communities could increase support for the program in Harlan. Patients at Mountain County Health Corporation who are not yet enrolled in the program may be incentivized to do so, and other community members may be inspired to enroll in health care clinics or programs to receive similar benefits.
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foot traffic and number of consumers at the market increases • Increased sales at the market • Positive conversation generated around prescription produce programs
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • July 8, 2017 and annually thereafter
Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmers Market Advisory Council • Mountain Comprehensive Health Corporation
Supporting cast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers and residents of Harlan • Local farmers • Farmers market vendors
Costs and/or resources needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature and promotional materials explaining the project (flyers, posters, free giveaways)

Action 2.1: Hold a farmers market event to showcase the Farmacy Program.

Possible funding sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mountain Comprehensive Health Corporation • Special event fee for non-member sellers
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Action 2.2: Hold a Wellness and Health Fair.

What this is and why it is important	<p>Wellness and health fairs are a popular strategy to support conversations about health in a community. A health fair can be an opportunity to provide education and services such as health screenings in a convenient and accessible setting. Examples of health screenings could include blood pressure and BMI testing. A health fair in Harlan would function as a community event, bringing people together to learn and talk about health, and giving them a “one-stop-shop” to receive health and wellness information and to sign up for follow-on health programs and services. The focus of the health fair would be to promote the Harlan County Farmers Market and the Mountain County Health Corporation Farmacy Program. The fair would take place during the farmers market and could feature discounted farmers market produce to attract new members. If successful, this event could turn into a reoccurring event where each market day focuses on a different health or wellness topic area (nutrition, diet, fitness etc.).</p>
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of people that attend the health fair (set up a system to track attendance) • Increased attendance at the farmers market after the health fair • Number of people who sign up for follow-up health and wellness services after the fair. • Increased interest in and conversation about health and wellness in the community
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fall 2017 – to allow enough time to organize a robust and successful event, with full community and institutional participation
Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmers Market Advisory Council • Mountain County Health Corporation • Cooperative Extension

Action 2.2: Hold a Wellness and Health Fair.

Supporting cast⁵	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community and volunteer organizations (e.g. local chapter of American Diabetes Association; churches) • Health care promoters/providers (e.g. Appalachian Regional Healthcare Hospital; local EMT team; fitness centers; drug recovery centers) • Government agencies (e.g. Parks & Recreation) • Community resources (e.g. local restaurants, childcare services, schools and community colleges) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College - Students in the health-related academic divisions: Allied Health; Nursing and Related Technology
Costs and/or resources needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderate Cost • Promotional materials • Time, labor, and volunteers to plan and run the fair
Possible funding sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donations from community organizations or businesses • Corporate sponsorship, e.g., Appalachian Regional Healthcare Hospital • Sponsorship, donations, and volunteer participation by local organizations, foundations, or corporations that have an interest in health promotion (see “supporting cast”) • Appalachian Regional Commission implementation grant could support a reoccurring health and wellness program (series of events).

Action 2.3: Introduce farmers market rewards coupons (“gift cards”) for community members that do not qualify for the Farmacy Program.

What this is and why it is important	<p>In its initial stages, the Farmacy Program is limited to a certain number of patients at Mountain County Health Corporation who meet eligibility requirements (diabetes, obesity). A one-time coupon given to community members who do not qualify for the Farmacy Program could encourage greater participation of the community at the farmers market, which in turn benefits the farmers selling at the market. Community members who participate in healthcare activities and services, such as completing health screenings at the Wellness and Health Fair, getting a flu shot, or enrolling at a fitness center, could receive a \$5 coupon to use at the farmers market. The program would incentivize healthy decision-making; provide residents with access to affordable, fresh produce; and function as a pilot or test run for expanding the Farmacy Program. Recipients may see the benefits of purchasing produce at the market and continue to regularly attend the market.</p>
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of coupons redeemed

⁵ For more guidance on planning a Wellness and Health Fair, see the Moda Health planning guide https://www.modahealth.com/pdfs/wellness/health_fair_planning_guide.pdf.

Action 2.3: Introduce farmers market rewards coupons (“gift cards”) for community members that do not qualify for the Farmacy Program.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farmers market attendance increases after the launch of the program
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Could launch alongside the Wellness and Health Fair or October 2017 during the lull or the end of the market season
Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farmers Market Advisory Council Harlan County Health Department
Supporting cast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Harlan County Health Department staff Farmers market vendors Local pharmacy
Costs and/or resources needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time, volunteers Printing coupons/ gift-cards Equipment, medication, and tools for screenings and health services (e.g., flu shots) Subsidize the cost of produce at the farmers market
Possible funding sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Harlan County Health Department program Community Farm Alliance Kentucky Public Health Department Obesity Prevention Program: Partnership for a Fit Kentucky (FitKY)⁶ Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky⁷

Action 2.4: Raise awareness about the Farmacy Program among local farmers.

What this is and why it is important	<p>As the farmers market and Farmacy Program launch in the summer of 2017, it is important that both are well publicized and understood by all participants in the local food economy, especially food producers such as farmers. The Farmacy Program provides a guaranteed stream of income to the farmers market. Participants receive prescriptions for fresh produce that can only be used at the market, thereby ensuring some baseline level of spending at the market every week. By raising awareness about the Farmacy Program amongst local farmers, more farmers may be inspired to join the Harlan County Farmers Market. Increased participation by, and support from, local farmers across the country could increase the size, quality, and long-term sustainability of the farmers market.</p>
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of participating farmers Number of social media followers Survey responses indicating that people heard about the program through the awareness campaign
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Immediate and ongoing

⁶ <http://www.fitky.org/>

⁷ <https://www.healthy-ky.org/grants/grant-opportunities>

Action 2.4: Raise awareness about the Farmacy Program among local farmers.

Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One person appointed from the Farmers Market Advisory Council
Supporting cast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Farm Alliance • Farmers market members, vendors, and customers
Costs and/or resources needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time • Promotional and informational materials – flyers, postage
Possible funding sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mountain Comprehensive Health Corporation

GOAL 3: Educate and engage the community about healthy food production, preparation, and consumption.

One of the challenges facing Harlan in the pursuit of a diversified economy around food is changing perceptions and behaviors. Workshop attendees said that many residents of Harlan believe that processed food is cheaper, quicker, and more enjoyable than fresh, healthy produce and that the community does not yet recognize the economic potential of local food production for their own families or for the Harlan community. Workshop attendees stated that a key goal in building the food economy is to educate people at all levels about producing and consuming healthy food – including kids, parents, teachers, hobby farmers, market gardeners, and even larger producers. If residents of Harlan can learn about local food, perhaps they are more likely to participate in and benefit from the food economy in the long run.

Action 3.1: Connect with other local food efforts taking place across the region.

What this is and why it is important	<p>There is a strong network of local food practitioners and initiatives across Kentucky, including farmers markets, prescription produce programs, and other projects that drive economic and community development through food. The Harlan County Farmers Market, and the team who runs it, can benefit from building relationships with leaders in the field across the county. By connecting with others working on local food initiatives, the Harlan County Farmers Market Advisory Council can share knowledge and resources. They can learn from others’ successes and seek help with common challenges. Participating in the broader regional food economy and community also provides important social capital and support that will help sustain the farmers market.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Term: Local representative from the Farmers Market Advisory Council attends the “Local Food Economies” meeting at Eastern Kentucky University hosted by USDA; Connect with resources and list food assets on the Kentucky Farms are Fun Website⁸ • Long Term: The Farmers Market Manager and Advisory Council learn about the latest innovations and strategies for Harlan’s food economy and share their knowledge with regional peers.
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New connections are made in Harlan County’s local food economy

⁸ <http://www.kentuckyfarmsarefun.com/>

Action 3.1: Connect with other local food efforts taking place across the region.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional connections with other local food economies are created
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Last week of June 2017: Attend the Local Food Economy Meeting at Eastern Kentucky University Ongoing: outreach to others in the region on local food
Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Representative from the Farmers Market Advisory Council
Supporting cast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Food System Collaborative (they organize the meeting)
Costs and/or resources needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel to the meeting Time, communication
Possible funding sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> USDA Rural Development could help facilitate relationship building and networking

Action 3.2: Develop a strategy for engaging kids in producing and consuming healthy food.

What this is and why it is important	<p>Harlan County has a high rate of food insecurity among youth. A large part of developing Harlan’s local food economy is ensuring that children in the area have access to fresh, nutritious food. In addition, working towards a self-sustaining local food economy requires engaging youth who are the future farmers and consumers of Harlan. Workshop participants determined that it is important to develop an ongoing strategy for engaging youth in all parts of the food system. This includes providing education on how to grow, purchase, and prepare healthy food, and inspiring youth to participate in the local food economy through participation in educational programming, community gardening, and the farmers market as examples.</p>
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pine Mountain Settlement School has a bigger presence in the schools, and a dedicated staff person for education A curriculum is developed that can be used by anyone to do food education with local kids Local kids are more interested in growing and eating local foods, they participate in the farmers market, and health outcomes amongst youth improve Farmers Market Advisory Council has a dedicated youth director
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short Term (1 month): Set up a kids zone at the farmers market Long term (1 year): Complete a youth and food curriculum
Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pine Mountain Settlement School Harlan County Cooperative Extension Farmers Market Advisory Council

Action 3.2: Develop a strategy for engaging kids in producing and consuming healthy food.

Supporting cast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boys and Girls Club (Possibly coordinate the kids zone at the market) Harlan Public Schools (for classroom programs) Local college student to help develop a curriculum for a project or thesis
Costs and/or resources needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteers to run kids zone at the market Play equipment/games Time for relationship building with key youth organizations and schools Farm-to-School coordinator to connect local farmers to local schools
Possible funding sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kentucky Agricultural Commission (dedicated to food insecurity issues) Farm Service Agency (Megan Moore, Amanda Robertson) Farmz School (Tina Garland) USDA (Natural Resource Conservation Service, Farm Service Agency, Rural Development)

Action 3.3: Provide education and training for small-scale market gardeners who want to expand or scale up.

What this is and why it is important	<p>As Harlan’s economy transitions away from coal and diversifies to include local foods as a means for growth, it is important that producers at all scales, and all sections of the food system, are included. Harlan County is home to many small-scale market gardeners, hobby farmers, and families that grow produce for their own family. A culture of growing for consumption at home and occasionally sharing between families and through churches, already exists in the region. A training program that targets this group of producers would prepare them for entering the broader local food system to generate supplemental income. Education about expanding a small garden, scaling up, processing requirements for wider distribution, and help with sales and marketing, would allow people in the community to generate revenue thereby supplementing their income. There are many resources available to this group, including being able to sell at the farmers market, and an educational initiative could expand the reach of those resources. It could also help expand the vendor base at the farmers market.</p>
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An informal curriculum is developed based on the existing Community Agriculture Program (through Grow Appalachia) Dollar amount generated by people who participate in training and workshops

Action 3.3: Provide education and training for small-scale market gardeners who want to expand or scale up.

Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid-term (6 months to 1 year): Develop curriculum • Long-term (1 to 2 years): Small/ hobby farmers are able to scale up and generate revenue
Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harlan County Cooperative Extension • Harlan County Farmers market • Harlan County High School students
Supporting cast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative effort between Pine Mountain Settlement School and Harlan County Department of Agriculture
Costs and/or resources needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location and equipment for demonstrations or classes • Software or equipment to produce demonstration videos • Printing and distribution of educational materials, or development of online materials
Possible funding sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appalachian Regional Commission Local Foods, Local Places implementation funding • Partnerships with regional buyers like Appalachian Sustainable Development for Good Agricultural Practices (organic farming Technical Assistance) • USDA service centers • Kentucky Department of Agriculture • Kentucky Center for Agricultural and Rural Development (Myrissa Christy) • Kentucky Governor's Office of Agriculture Policy • Harlan County Cooperative Extension • Universities and Technical Colleges

Action 3.4: Host cooking demonstrations at the farmers market and Harlan Center.

What this is and why it is important	<p>Many people in Harlan simply do not have experience purchasing, preparing, and eating fresh or healthy foods. Processed foods are often inexpensive and quick to prepare and therefore the preferred option for busy working families. To ensure the long-term sustainability of the local food economy and the success of the farmers market, residents of Harlan could be educated on how to prepare the food they buy in a way that is quick, easy, tasty, filling, and for any size family. Providing cooking demonstrations and distributing recipes and guides for cooking fresh food could help enhance understanding of how to incorporate healthy, local food in families' diets. Small scale demonstrations that do not need a lot of equipment could take place at the market itself. This would also contribute to the overall excitement and interest of the market as an event or something to do for the whole community. More complex demonstrations could take place at the Harlan Center commercial kitchen.</p>
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular classes are occurring

Action 3.4: Host cooking demonstrations at the farmers market and Harlan Center.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants come away with recipes for the food they purchase (that day)
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 months
Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small Business Development Center Pine Mountain Settlement School commercial kitchen workshop for food entrepreneurs
Supporting cast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Harlan County Cooperative Extension Mountaineer Challenges Academy (potentially donating food for the demonstrations) Homemakers club
Costs and/or resources needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercial kitchen Space for demonstrations Food to use in demonstrations Education materials/ recipes
Possible funding sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farm to School junior chef program Donations or produce grown by Farm to School Appalachian Regional Commission implementation grant could be applied towards renovating or upgrading any existing kitchen owned by the city, county, or a nonprofit, to transform it into a community kitchen or value-added processing facility.

Potential Future Action Steps

The following action step was discussed during the workshop and post-workshop calls as a potential idea to explore in the future, but did not make it into this short-term action plan.

- Develop an information packet that describes the commercial kitchen resources available and the requirements for different levels of value-added processing for different products. The Harlan Center has a community kitchen that may be available for use by value-added producers who do not plan to sell their products or who meet a smaller-scale product requirement, such as hard candy. Canning operations and other larger-scale products require production in a certified commercial kitchen, which the Pine Mountain Settlement School is in the beginning stages of creating.

GOAL 4: Revitalize downtown Harlan through food and art.

The contraction of the coal industry has contributed to the decline in Harlan’s economy and its downtown. Downtown Harlan has a 90 percent building vacancy rate, as stated by a local government employee. Except for a few local businesses, downtown is dominated by lawyers’ offices and pawn shops. As Harlan begins its transformation to a diversified economy with a thriving food environment, downtown can be the focal point for growth. The farmers market could act as the southern anchor for downtown, attracting people from residential neighborhoods and from around the county. Increased activity downtown that is focused around food can galvanize further food-oriented growth. Cities across the country are also using art to rejuvenate their downtowns, and with the prospect of a downtown arts center in Harlan, there is ample opportunity for arts-oriented placemaking strategies.

Action 4.1: Host pop-up installations and art in vacant storefronts.

<p>What this is and why it is important</p>	<p>Downtown Harlan is characterized by high vacancy rates. Many storefronts are empty and dilapidated. A long-term economic development strategy can help bring new business downtown and revitalize the city center. There are, however, some shorter-term interventions available to beautify blighted buildings. Short-term beautification has two functions: to improve the experience of being downtown for local residents, and to improve the appearance of buildings so that potential buyers and businesses take an interest in locating in downtown Harlan. A creative technique for transforming vacant storefronts is to use them as pop-up art galleries. If building owners are willing to collaborate, local artists can be invited to install their work in empty storefronts to bring color and creativity downtown. This can include visual art, sculpture, video work, light installations, and much more. Less professional installations can also be included, for example, art projects by youth and school kids. This initiative can function not only to beautify downtown, but to promote local arts and artisans as a central aspect of Harlan’s revitalization.</p>
<p>Measures of success</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of vacant storefronts that incorporate successful installations • Number of property owners that agree to participate • Installations are included in the Gallery Hop
<p>Timeframe</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 – 6 months • As soon as artists’ work is available
<p>Lead</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harlan County Tourism • Artist and Artisan Groups • Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College (Robert Gipe)
<p>Supporting cast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building owners • Local officials • Downtown businesses • Local schools: youth artworks
<p>Costs and/or resources needed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low cost – find local artists willing to participate to showcase their existing work. May need to be compensated for time through a stipend. • Art materials and supplies for new art works
<p>Possible funding sources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kentucky Arts Council has some small grants for art outside of traditional locations; individual artists could apply for grants/stipends to cover their time

Action 4.2: Wayfinding: use creative signs that highlight downtown assets and direct people towards the farmers market.

<p>What this is and why it is important</p>	<p>As the farmers market launches in 2017 and becomes a central and permanent fixture of downtown Harlan, it is important that residents</p>
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Action 4.2: Wayfinding: use creative signs that highlight downtown assets and direct people towards the farmers market.

	<p>and visitors know how to navigate downtown and find the farmers market. It is also important that passersby are drawn into Harlan to visit the farmers market and then stay to eat and shop downtown. Wayfinding signs can be a low-cost way to create a sense of direction and place and to advertise downtown assets. A wayfinding system could identify the central downtown axis and boundaries and direct people towards the market. Informal and creative signage could be installed on a short-term basis, potentially with the help of local artists. If successful, signage could be permanent longer term.</p>
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A temporary network of signs is installed downtown, which eventually becomes permanent • Feedback from residents and tourists is positive
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short term (1-6 months): Informal signage installed • Medium term (6 months – 1 year): Permanent signage installed
Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harlan Center • Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College
Supporting cast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County Judge and City Staff (to obtain permission) • Harlan City and County Tourism (Brandon Pennington)
Costs and/or resources needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Materials and printing for signs • Permission for installation
Possible funding sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main Streets or other downtown development grants • U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grants • USDA Rural Business Development Grant; Farmers Market Assistance grant (Myrisa Christy)

Action 4.3: Encourage new businesses to locate downtown.

What this is and why it is important	<p>Activating downtown Harlan with thriving businesses is essential for its future. Filling vacant buildings is a long-term effort that requires the collaboration of local government, entrepreneurs, property owners, and citizens. If one or two major changes can happen downtown, such as the arrival of a new store, the renovation of a building, or the rehabilitation and installation of a Harlan Arts Center, potential entrepreneurs could see that they too can succeed downtown. To kick start the revitalization of downtown, the community can begin by finding funding, staffing, and planning for rehabilitation and renovation. A POWER grant through ARC is currently being pursued to renovate and rehab a vacant building downtown that would be turned into an arts center. Award of this grant could be the first step in turning downtown Harlan into an arts hub.</p>
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A downtown coordinator is hired part time through the city • Key properties downtown are revitalized and occupied by existing or new businesses

Action 4.3: Encourage new businesses to locate downtown.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The POWER grant is successfully utilized to create an arts center
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term: 1 – 5 years
Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor • City Hall
Supporting cast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USDA Rural Development (Barry Turner) • Small Business Development Grants • Kentucky Highlands Investment Corporation
Costs and/or resources needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High cost: salary for dedicated staff, capital costs for acquiring and rehabilitating buildings
Possible funding sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USDA Rural Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Rural Business Development Grant – Incubators, rehabilitation and construction ◦ Community Facilities Grant – Construction • Abandoned Mine Lands (AML) • Appalachian Regional Commission POWER Initiative

Action 4.4: Create a formal role for artists in the farmers market.

What this is and why it is important	<p>The Local Foods, Local Places Advisory Council indicated during the workshop that arts-oriented placemaking is a major strategy for revitalizing downtown Harlan. Integrating the local foods economy, local art and artisans, the farmers market, and growth downtown would ensure a creative, holistic approach to revitalization. Including local artists in the development of the farmers market is a technique that can benefit both parties – the market benefits from the vibrancy and energy that local artists and performances bring, transforming the market into a community event, and the artists benefit by showcasing their art and potentially generating revenue as market vendors. The relationship between the two can be formalized by having local artists design farmers market branding, signs, logos, and merchandise. In this way, art becomes central to the market, as the market becomes central to downtown.</p>
Measures of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local artists become well known in the county through their work presented and sold at the market • A diverse selection of artisanal products are available at the market including artistic farming tools • Branding and logos for the market are designed by local artists • There is a regular schedule for performances at the farmers market
Timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid Term: 3 – 9 months
Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmers Market Advisory Council • Local artists and artisans
Supporting cast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts department and students from local community college • Local schools and school kids

Action 4.4: Create a formal role for artists in the farmers market.

Costs and/or resources needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Possibly provide art supplies or stipends to participating artists• Budget and printing for branding materials
Possible funding sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Appalachian Regional Commission POWER Initiative• First Impressions• Small Business Development Center• Promise Zone• Visit Vendor Program• Kentucky Arts Council• Kentucky Foundation for Women

Implementation and Next Steps

Three post-workshop conference calls were held during June, July, and August 2017, following the workshop. The calls were held with the Local Foods, Local Places steering committee and a few additional stakeholders whose interest was cultivated during the workshop. They worked to refine the action plan and add clarifying language. Some of the key actions and post-workshop developments included the following:

- The Harlan County Farmers Market launched on June 10, 2017. On opening day, eight vendors participated, and 180 customers came out to the market.
- The farmers market continued to have successful sales and participation, with 6-8 regular vendors, who sold out by 11am each market day. The market averaged \$900 of sales each week over the summer of 2017.
- The Mountain County Health Corporation expanded the Farmacy program to 25 initial participants, up from 20.
- The Farmacy Program launched successfully, with around 7 participants per week, purchasing about \$150 worth of produce through the program per week.

Appalachian Regional Commission Implementation Assistance

The Appalachian Regional Commission provided an opportunity for each of the 2017 Local Foods, Local Places communities in its service area to apply for an implementation grant of up to \$20,000. The funding is intended for the implementation of specific actions identified in the workshop and post-workshop action planning effort. The community identified Construction of a permanent farmers market facility and storage unit for this funding assistance.

The local steering committee identified a permanent farmers market structure as a priority action towards ensuring the long-term sustainability of the market. A permanent structure could include a shaded pavilion with a storage facility, part of which would be cold storage for produce. This would help vendors by providing a space to safely hold their produce that has been harvested prior to market days. The space would also provide storage for tables and chairs for vendor booths. The community feels that a permanent structure will help with long-term sustainability of the market and give a sense of permanence to the vendors and customers of the market. During the off-season for the market, the pavilion could be used by the Harlan Center next door for events so that the pavilion is used year-round.

The \$20,000 ARC implementation grant could be used to leverage further funding from the KY GOAP, Kentucky State University, USDA RBDG, and USDA FMPP, to the value of an additional \$35,000. The USDA Agricultural Marketing Service also offers assistance towards designing the structure.

Appendices

- Appendix A – Community Data Profile
- Appendix B – Workshop Participants and Contact List
- Appendix C – Workshop Photo Album
- Appendix D – Workshop Feedback and Documentation
- Appendix E – Funding Resources
- Appendix F – References