

Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship

USDA AMS Agreement Number: 12-25-B-0866

Specialty Crop Block Grant Program Final Performance Report

“Increasing Awareness and Use of Iowa Specialty Crops”

- Iowa State University Research Farms, Practice to Extend the Availability of Fresh Iowa-Grown Raspberries & Blackberries
- Back to Basics Beekeeping Club, Beekeeping 101 (Now final)
- The Entrepreneurial and Diversified Agriculture Program at the Marshalltown Community College
- IDALS, Radio Campaign (Now final)
- Partners of Scott County Watersheds
- Outreach and On-Farm Training for Post-Harvest Handling
- Mississippi Valley Growers' Association
- Iowa Organic Association
- Iowa Farmers' Market Association (Now final)
- Ag Advisory, Ltd. Hazelnut Micro-Propagation Project
- Iowa Fruit & Vegetables Growers Association, Fruit and Vegetable Farmers Symposium: Business and Production Ideas for New Farmers
- Fresh Connections Co-op
- IDALS, Farmers Market Week Promotions
- IDALS, Farmers Market Impact Statement
- Drake Neighborhood Farmers' Market
- Davis County Farmers' Market
- On-Farm Market Improvement Toolkit (Now final)

Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship
Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
Final Report for June 1, 2009 to May 31, 2010 Funds

Practices to Extend the Availability of Fresh Iowa-Grown Raspberries and
Blackberries

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Iowa State University was awarded a 2009/2010 Specialty Crop Block Grant for \$4,000 through the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship. With this grant, research showed increased production and availability of brambles in the Iowa market through season extension when plants are grown in high tunnels. The results from this alternative production system were disseminated to specialty fruit crop producers during grower field days and conferences focusing on additional revenue to the Iowa specialty crop producers, making specialty fruit crops more available in Iowa's markets, and increased consumption of specialty fruit crops by Iowa consumers.

ISSUES

Research comparing primocane-fruiting bramble production systems

Raspberries and blackberries (brambles) are important high-value fruit crops for commercial growers in Iowa. Farmers growing primocane-fruiting brambles want techniques to extend the season of production and produce high quality, sufficient fruit yields before a killing fall frost in Iowa.

High tunnels have the potential to hasten the growing season and increase fruit quality. Hastening flower initiation in the summer, promotes greater potential for high yield during the fall growing season. Tunnel structures used during production can increase berry quality and potentially postharvest berry quality by protecting fruit from wind and rain.

Similar to high tunnels, use of row covers has shown hastened production by warming soil temperatures in the spring. Row covers are generally removed later in the spring for subsequent raspberry plant growth, eliminating protection from rain and wind and reducing the microclimate developed by the row cover.

Availability of Information

Few sources of information on primocane-fruiting bramble comparing high tunnel production to field production are available to growers, especially specific to Iowa. Information gathered from fruit research specific to Iowa needs to be disseminated to growers through field days, workshops, and annual conferences as cost-effective production options for bramble production.

HOW THE ISSUES WERE APPROACHED

Research comparing primocane-fruiting bramble production systems

Two experiments were setup at the Horticulture Research Station to compare bramble production systems on total fruit production and on fruit quality.

Experiment 1: The first experiment was designed with multiple cultivars to extend the growing season and increase fruit yield under different growing conditions. The three

growing conditions included production in a high tunnel, production in the field with row covers, and production in the field with no cover. Primocane-fruiting raspberries cultivars included Autumn Britten, Caroline, and Jaclyn and were chosen to diversify the availability of the fruit through the fall season. The primocane-fruiting blackberry cultivar (APF-45; experimental) was selected to diversify fruit type availability because blackberries are not dependently grown for production in Iowa due to winter injury to the flowering portion of the plant.

In May 2009, soil samples were collected from prospective plot sites for bramble production. The soil samples were evaluated for nutrients and the soil was amended according to recommendations by Gail Nonnecke, ISU professor of horticulture. Plants of primocane-fruiting bramble cultivars Autumn Britten, Caroline, Jaclyn, and APF-45 were planted into the high tunnel and outside plots. Four replications of each cultivar were established for the three treatments 1) high tunnel production, 2) row cover production, and 3) no cover production.

Immediately after establishment, row covers were placed over the four replicated plots of each cultivar for the treatment "row cover." Irrigation was established and plants received one inch of water per week. A pesticide regime was implemented by monitoring the brambles weekly for insects and pathogens. Plots were continuously maintained by irrigating and removing weeds on a weekly basis.

In early July, when the plants had grown to the height of the row cover (aprox. 18 inches), the row covers were removed and the plants were allowed to grow similarly to the no cover production treatment.

Flower initiation began in late July in both the high tunnel and outside plots. Harvesting of fruit from all treatments began in August and ended in the outside plots at frost (Oct. 10). Fruit continued to be harvested in the high tunnel until the end of October. Data variables collected included berry yield, number, and size by date during the growing season for the three treatments. Berry quality of fresh fruit was measured by average berry size, firmness, and soluble solids at harvest from the three treatments. Biomass weight was collected after harvest was complete, which included number of canes and total weight of canes.

Experiment 2: A second experiment observed differences in berry quality when fruit was grown under cover compared to no-cover field production. Berry quality was based on a collective of attributes that evaluated the overall marketability of the fruit. These attributes included average berry weight and diameter, berry moisture content, soluble solids, firmness, and appearance. Berry quality can also change when fruit is stored. These attributes were observed on fresh berries and then after the berries had been stored for 4 days and 7 days.

Primocane-fruiting raspberry 'Heritage' was grown in a mini tunnel and outside with no cover. Three random subsamples were collected from each treatment and stored in a refrigerator at 4°C for four days and seven days to evaluate post harvest berry quality.

Postharvest berry quality was measured by average berry weight, berry moisture content, diameter, firmness, and soluble solids.

Distribution of Information

Information to extend bramble availability was disseminated at the Horticulture Research Station through grower and industry field days and workshops, at the annual Iowa Fruit and Vegetable Growers Conference, and through published form as a progress report in the Horticulture Research Station's Annual 2009 Progress Report. The report is also available electronically on the web at:

<http://www.ag.iastate.edu/farms/>

Tours were given to commercial fruit and vegetable growers, industry leaders, Iowa State University and high school groups, visiting faculty from Nigeria, Africa, and home gardeners. Tours were led by Dennis Portz and Nick Howell, ISU Horticulture Station staff.

GOALS

Research comparing primocane-fruited bramble production systems

The goal of experiment one was to evaluate differences in time (season extension) and total yield of four cultivars of primocane-fruited brambles grown inside a high tunnel, under row covers, and with no cover.

The goal of experiment two was to evaluate fresh and postharvest berry quality of primocane-fruited brambles grown inside a high tunnel and with no cover.

Availability of Information

The goal of this project was to generate research that would be useful to specialty fruit crop growers and disseminate it during field days and the IFVGA conference. Few sources of information on primocane-fruited bramble comparing high tunnel production to field production are available to growers, especially specific to Iowa. Information gathered from the research was analyzed and disseminated to growers through field days, workshops, and annual conferences as cost-effective production options for bramble production.

RESULTS / PROGRESS TOWARD EXPECTED MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

Research comparing primocane-fruited bramble production systems

Experiment 1: Total berry yield, average berry size, and plant biomass of brambles was greater when grown in a tunnel structure compared to field row cover and no cover treatments. The highest yielding raspberry cultivar was 'Autumn Britten.' The raspberry cultivar with the largest average berry size was 'Caroline.' Soluble solids and berry diameter and firmness of the primocane-fruited raspberry were generally not different. Berry size of primocane-fruited blackberries was very large, but total yield was low. Thorns of blackberry plants are very large and made the berries difficult to pick.

Experiment 2: Berries generally retained more water during storage when grown in a tunnel structure than when grown with no cover. There was no difference in soluble solid concentration from berries grown in a tunnel structure compared to no cover. Berry firmness was greater after 4 and 7 days of storage in plots that received no cover. The increase in firmness was visually observed as a negative attribute because the berries were shriveling and desiccating.

Distribution of Information

Approximately 1200 people were introduced to this project at the ISU Horticulture Research Station in 2009. Visitor interest included commercial fruit and vegetable growers, industry leaders, Iowa State University and high school groups, visiting faculty from Nigeria, Africa, and home gardeners. Tours were led by Dennis Portz and Nick Howell, ISU Horticulture Station staff.

The high tunnel was a major highlight at the All-Horticulture Field Day held on Aug. 6. Discussions in the high tunnel during the All-Horticulture Field Day focused on comparisons of fruit and vegetable production in and outside the tunnel. The discussions were led by Linda Naeve, ISU extension program specialist, in cooperation with the ISU Horticulture Research Station intern Samantha Wagner, who collected data on the bramble comparison project.

A high tunnel workshop was held at the ISU Horticulture Research Station on Sept. 29 and Oct. 1. Linda Naeve and Hank Taber, ISU professor of horticulture, led the discussion and it focused on establishing high tunnels and future production in those tunnels (figure 1). During the tour of the tunnels, Dennis Portz discussed the bramble comparison project and answered questions related to fruit production in tunnel structures with workshop attendees.

Seven student interns were encouraged to work in the tunnel structures at the Horticulture Research Station during summer 2009. These students worked with various crops in the tunnel structures, which included learning management techniques for bramble production in tunnel structures. The students found working in the tunnel structures to be a positive experience and were amazed by the earliness and quality of the produce from crops in the tunnel structures.

Research results were published in the Horticulture Research Station Annual 2009 Progress Reports titled "Practices to extend availability of fresh Iowa-grown raspberries and blackberries." It was available in paper form at the Iowa Fruit and Vegetable Growers Conference held Jan. 29 and 30, 2010 and will be available at the Horticulture Research Station. The information is also available on the web at:
http://www.ag.iastate.edu/farms/progress_report.php

Research results were disseminated at the Iowa Fruit and Vegetable Growers Annual Conference held January 29 and 30, 2010. Results were available in paper form via the

Horticulture Research Station Annual 2009 Progress Reports and through a presentation given by Gail Nonnecke and Dennis Portz. There were over 50 people in attendance at the presentation on "Primocane-fruiting bramble production." Another presentation on high tunnel production was lead by Linda Naeve and Nick Howell at the conference and attracted more than 50 attendees, which suggests additional interest in specialty crop (fruit and vegetable) production in tunnel structures.

LESSONS LEARNED

Our research shows greater production of primocane-fruiting brambles can be achieved in a tunnel structure compared to production in a field with row covers or no-cover. An increase in production can stimulate a producer's income and make specialty fruit crop production more profitable.

Data collected also suggest that weather conditions play a major role in production of raspberries when comparing fruit grown in a tunnel structure to fruit that was grown with no cover. Fruit grown under the tunnel structure were large beautiful fruit, while fruit grown without cover were often smaller, misshapen, and not marketable. These results strongly suggest added value of fruit berry quality and marketability into the fall when grown in tunnel structures.

Higher production and better quality of brambles from a concentrated area, such as under a tunnel structure, also reduces crop management inputs. Production in tunnel structures allows a grower to irrigate and apply nutrients in designated areas without concern of runoff or leaching of nutrients. Water management also reduces incidence of weed growth, which is a major pest of bramble production in the field. While conditions in tunnel structures enhance plant productivity, insect and fungal pests become a concern. Through monitoring and timely pest management techniques, insect and fungal pests can be managed.

CONCLUSION

This project completed with assistance of the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship Specialty Crop Block Grant Program has helped identify production techniques to increase productivity and berry quality of bramble crops.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND EXAMPLES

A new project will continue and expand research on fruit production tunnel structures in 2010 under the direction of Gail Nonnecke. Funds from the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, as part of the Specialty Crop Block Grant will support tunnel structure fruit research in 2010. This will be a continuation of comparing tunnel structure fruit production to no cover field production. Research completed in 2009 generated quality data to help support the Iowa fruit industry and increase yield and berry quality for improved marketability.

Financial Report

Expenses	Hours (\$8/hr)	IDALS Expense	ISU HRS Match
Personnel			
Soil sampling and site preparation	8	\$192	
Plant brambles in high tunnel structure	3	\$72	
Plant brambles in field plots	4	\$128	
Place row covers	4	\$128	
Setup irrigation	4	\$96	
Setup trellis and string plants	4	\$20.72	\$43.28
Plot maintenance (weeding and irrigation)	75	\$200	\$2200
Data collection	125	\$200	\$1800
Data entry and analysis	35		\$280
Supplies			
Polyethylene tunnel cover (FarmTek)		\$725.79	
Lumber for trellis construction (Munn Lumber)		\$425.96	
Replacement rope for tunnel (Theisen's)		\$4.34	\$25.41
Fungicide for fruit (Midwest Grower Supply)		\$328.74	
Harvesting containers (Monte Packaging)		\$437.22	
Pruning supplies (Hummert International)		\$135.81	
Soil tests (ISU Plant and Soil Laboratory)		\$144.00	
Fertilizer (Van Diest Supply Co.)		\$54.75	
Fertilizer (L and G Products)		\$104.00	
Drainage tile pipe (Theisen's)		\$158.69	
Irrigation header pipe (Lowe's)		\$59.98	
Irrigation supplies (Hook's Point Irrigation)		\$384.00	
Total expense		4000.00	\$4348.69

Final Report – IDALS Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

Beekeeping 101

Outline of Problem: The importance of honeybees as a key part of Iowa's agro ecosystem is well understood and appreciated. Iowa beekeepers manage around 30,000 colonies of honeybees which produce well over 3 million pounds of honey annually. While the value of honey continues to climb, the bees' greatest value lies in their plant pollination services. Beekeeper-managed honeybees are responsible for the pollination of many Iowa crops. Field and horticultural crops, home gardens and plants eaten by wildlife are dependent on bee pollination for the production of their fruits, nuts and seeds. The economic value of honeybees as crop pollinators in Iowa has been estimated at \$92 million annually.

Honeybees, a non-native species from Europe, are the pollinators of choice because they are easier to manage and are more plentiful – a single colony can contain 50,000 workers. By comparison, a bumblebee colony may have only a couple of hundred worker bees. Honeybees have taken a hit over the years from mites and, most recently, colony collapse disorder. Beekeepers in 2006 began reporting losing 30 percent to 90 percent of their hives. Since then the annual loss rate has been roughly 33 percent, according to government estimates.

The first case of colony collapse disorder was officially reported in Pennsylvania, and Penn State University has been spearheading research. Maryann Frazier, a senior Extension associate at the school's entomology department, said researchers remain concerned about the number and combination of pesticides that have been detected in decimated hives. Native pollinators also are being monitored. The National Academy of Sciences in 2006 found declining populations of several bee species, along with other native pollinators like butterflies,

hummingbirds and bats. The report suggested landowners can take small steps to make sure habitats are more “pollinator friendly,” by growing more native plants.

Funding from the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program enabled 10 perspective beekeepers to set up their initial hives. Classes and demonstrations educated nearly 100 perspective beekeepers and land stewards, giving them knowledge of beekeeping and additionally how to provide appropriate habitat for thriving colonies. Beekeeping is a crucial part of diversified agriculture and its art and science must be passed on to new generation.

Approach to Problem & How Goals Were Achieved: The Back-to-Basics Beekeeping Club sponsored bee-keeping classes for eight weeks beginning in February, 2010. The club coordinated ten \$400 awards given at the conclusion of classes. The Specialty Crops Grant funded the awards. Advertising for the classes was funded by a match from the Iowa Honey Producers Association. Back-to-Basics Beekeeping Club paid for the class instructors. Staff of ISU Extension provided the expertise for the ad content and promotion of environmental education. Vendors participated in surveys to determine any benefits in sales as a result of the promotion.

Results, Conclusions, and Lessons Learned: More than 80 people attended the beekeeping classes held in February. At the end of the 2010 growing season, the number of hives in Marion, Mahaska and Warren Counties had more than tripled from 156 hives to 629 far exceeding the 20% increase projected.

Long Term Progress: Interest in beekeeping in Marion, Mahaska and Warren Counties continues to increase. Classes were held again in the early spring of 2011 with more than 50 residents attending. Additional funding (George Daily Family Trust) has been secured for additional start-up hives in Mahaska County for 2012. Membership in the Back-to-Basic Beekeeping Club has swelled to more than 90 members. A new club has sprouted in Marion

County. Since many of these new beekeepers are under the age of 30, the future of beekeeping in Central Iowa is considerably brighter as a result of grant funding and the educational efforts.

Additional Information: Some economic impact was identified. According to a survey conducted in the spring of 2011, sales of honey have doubled and the average price has increased 50¢ from \$4 to \$4.50 in Marion and Warren Counties. Based on average honey production, the value of honey produced by the increased number of hives in the area would be nearly \$107,000. No data was available for Mahaska County. A copy of the survey and results are available at Google.docs.

In addition to honey production, the best estimate of the value of honey bee pollination in Iowa is \$92 million annually. Honey bees enhance yields of some crops (e.g. soybeans, peas, grapes and peppers), while some crops are almost entirely dependent on bee pollination for the production of fruits (e.g. apples, melons, squash). Because most of this pollination service is provided free of charge in Iowa, the honey and beeswax that the bees produce is the only incentive for beekeepers to raise bees. Although more difficult to quantify, without a healthy beekeeping industry crop production would be damaged. Certainly the increased number of hives and the increased interest in beekeeping that have resulted from the use of grant monies has benefited all of agriculture.

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AN INTERIM PROGRESS REPORT PREPARED
FOR THE
IOWA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND LAND STEWARDSHIP
AND
USDA SPECIALTY CROPS GRANT FUNDS

SEPTEMBER 2009

Iowa Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

Increasing Awareness and Use of Iowa Specialty Crops

USDA Grant Number 12-25-B-0866

Principal Investigator: Norman McCoy, Project Coordinator
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Duration of project: One year.
USDA funds received each year: \$3,895.00

Abstract: A potato digger was purchased with this grant money. The digger will speed the harvest of root crops on the college land, which help farm entrepreneurs gain experience using appropriate technology to make their farm business more efficient. The soil on the college farm is heavy clay, which can make harvesting root crops very time-consuming. The labor saved by this device will enable our students to grow a larger crop of potatoes.

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MCEA Project Nontechnical Summary

Overview

Iowa Specialty Crop Block Grant Program: Increasing Awareness and Use of Iowa Specialty Crops

USDA Grant Number 12-25-B-0866

Principal investigator: Norman McCoy

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The Midwest Center for Entrepreneurial Agriculture is teaching students of all ages how to launch farm businesses growing food for local consumption. A major aspect of the MCEA program is the farmland adjacent to the college campus. This farmland allows the students to practice farming on a small scale, launching their own farm businesses, using the college land and equipment.

One of the prime cash crops for small farms is potatoes. Purchasing a small potato digger will enable our students to understand the capabilities of this kind of equipment and how it can be used to make a small farm operation more efficient.

Detailed Report

Introduction

Vision Within a Larger Program

Marshalltown Community College (MCC), part of the Iowa Valley Community College District (IVCCD), initiated the Entrepreneurial and Diversified Agriculture (formerly Sustainable and Entrepreneurial Agriculture) Program in 2003. This degree program offers students an opportunity to learn diversified agriculture and niche marketing. Its purpose is to serve new farmers, transitioning farmers, and the community through educational assistance that results in economic development, improved food quality and food safety, and a healthier environment. Iowa Valley Continuing Education (IVCE), also a division of IVCCD, has collaborated with the Entrepreneurial and Diversified Agriculture (EDA) program through non-credit courses in diversified agriculture and shared courses with MCC. In relation to the program, IVCCD has set aside agricultural land adjacent to the MCC campus for use as a demonstration farm. It is part of a larger vision known as the Midwest Center for Entrepreneurial Agriculture (MCEA).

Larger Program

The MCEA will provide an opportunity to serve an emerging population of entrepreneurs in both agriculture and related value-added food and fiber businesses. The farm will demonstrate local food production through sustainable farming practices that include diverse crops, rotations and livestock. The center will serve to reconnect the community as a whole to agriculture and its importance in Iowa's economy. The MCEA will be composed of a demonstration farm, a shared-use commercial kitchen and a welding facility to retrofit farm equipment for specialized use. School groups, farm organizations and others will use the facility for education and community building. Crops will be raised by those taking college courses, entrepreneurial farmers (including immigrants) and community gardeners. Raising crops, processing on-site, and using custom fit equipment will show the potential for varied crops, varied products and success in diversified agriculture.

Demonstration Farm Vision

The demonstration farm is an essential component of the MCEA for several reasons. First, is its function as a learning lab for students to gain experience in the practical application of agricultural principles and techniques. This is important for new farmers as well as those experienced in conventional farming, as they explore new and diverse approaches to agricultural practices. The demonstration farm will include commodity crops, horticultural crops, orchards, vineyards, and livestock. It will demonstrate the self-sustaining nature of a complete farm system that builds on soil health as the core of the operation. It will be available to Marshalltown Community College and Iowa Valley Continuing Education students as well as to other organizations through collaborations.

The demonstration farm will serve as a farm incubator. Through the offer of small plots of land and guided management experience, beginning farmers and agricultural

entrepreneurs can develop the ideas and skills they need to succeed. New farmers will need to be more nimble and diversified to survive changing markets and potentially unstable/unprofitable commodity markets. If high prices of land limit the ability of new farmers to rent or buy, the incubator plots can provide access to land on which to learn production techniques and establish a track record for obtaining credit.

In addition, Iowa has experienced significant growth in its immigrant population; 153% in years between 1990 and 2000. Marshall County has the fifth highest Latino population of all of Iowa's counties. Many of these people have agricultural backgrounds and would like to farm here. Providing land and business support to them is essential and their participation will enrich the local foods systems which is an important part of a sustainable farm economy. The demonstration farm can contribute to the food security of Central Iowa by demonstrating the diverse food crops that can be grown and processed here.

Equipment

It is planned that the demonstration farm will have a wide variety of garden tools and farm implements available to train students through hands-on activities utilizing demonstration plots. Some of these tools also will be available for use by community plot renters, as it may be difficult to transport and store these implements at their dwellings in town. Incubator plot renters will be able to use shared tools as well as either rent farm implements for use on site or contract with the MCEA to provide services requiring farm implements. Renters must demonstrate competency in the use of a farm implement before they will be able to operate it independently. Short continuing education courses will be available on the use of different farm implements as well as a semester-long EDA course on the use, maintenance, and retrofitting of a wide variety of equipment. As of September 2009, the MCEA owns a mid-size tractor, a 48-inch tiller, and a potato digger (which was purchased by this grant) as well as various minor farm tools for tilling, irrigation and weed control.

Purchasing the Potato Digger

After researching and interviewing many people that are involved in alternative agricultural operations, it was decided that the Italian-made Checchi & Magli SP100 potato digger would best fit our needs. A dealer in northeastern Iowa was selected, Windridge Implements, L.L.C.

Pricing negotiations brought the price down from an original \$4500 to a final price of \$3895.00 for the digger and a tabletop potato seed preparer. For this reason the matching funds originally planned from another grant were not needed.

The digger was delivered on Wednesday, Aug 26, 2009 by Brian Nordschow of the Windridge Implements company.

Operation of the Digger

A few days later we tried the digger out on some of our students' potato plots. At first we found that it was difficult to get the spade deep enough, even though the potatoes were mounded high. After a couple of days trying various settings, we believe we have determined the optimal settings for our particular soil and the dry-soil harvest conditions at the time of the trials. It was evident that the potato rows need to be longer than the 50-

foot rows of the 2009 crop in order to make mechanical harvesting of the potatoes more efficient. It was also evident that a great quantity of potatoes could be harvested in a very short time with a tool like this. In order to best take advantage of this labor-saving device, a larger crop of potatoes should be planted and a large storage area should be planned.

A manual is being produced that will document the lessons learned by our students

Conclusion

The potato digger has shown itself to be a valuable time-saving device for our students. As the demonstration farm gains new and innovative equipment, it can serve the public by being the place to see alternative practices in agriculture. The farm provides the opportunity to learn how to maximize efficiency and resources while operating a successful business, and the new potato digger has become an important part of that opportunity.

Demonstrations for the community will be performed at various field days, beginning with the Practical Farmers of Iowa field day on September 27, 2009 and continuing yearly after that.

Sponsored by:

Iowa Department of Land Stewardship

and

USDA Specialty Crops Grant

Project Title:

“Increasing Awareness and Use of Iowa Specialty Crops” Radio Campaign

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Final Performance Report

6/15/2011

Project Summary:

The purpose of this grant is to enhance the competitiveness of Iowa’s specialty crops. An imperative part of increasing the purchase and consumption of our specialty crops is through consumer awareness of the seasonality of these products. To accomplish this goal, we created a series of radio campaigns that promote Iowa’s various specialty crops. By making consumers aware of the harvest dates of these crops, we will simultaneously increase the purchase and consumption of Iowa’s specialty crops impacting producers throughout the state.

Project Approach:

Brainstorming meetings were held to try to prioritize the primary goals of this marketing campaign. Two factors were considered significant for this campaign: (1) to get as much coverage statewide as possible radio station wise, and (2) to use the money for purchasing air time for ad vs. hiring an ad agency as the middle man.

This radio campaign built on the program that was started in 2009 targeting strawberries and farmers markets. Thirty second commercials were created highlighting apples, pumpkins and Christmas trees. As a sole source provider, Radio Iowa/Learfield Communications was again contracted to provide these services.

Goals and Outcomes Achieved:

Because apples and pumpkins have similar growing seasons in Iowa, ads were alternated. Christmas trees had their own allocation of air time. The total number of stations airing the promotional messages was 63 (see Example A) reaching into 84 counties across Iowa for Radio Iowa. To expand the audience reach a second station WMT was added to cover the counties in the eastern part of the state not covered by Radio Iowa. The budget was planned to cover 6 weeks of radio airtime at an average of 11 paid messages per week. The contractor was at times able to offer our project some additional exposure at no additional cost which increased the number of weeks and the number of spots of the campaign.

The following is a summary of the total messages aired. (Exhibit B)

Apples – 22 messages per station / 1,408 total local messages

Apples – No additional no-charge messages were available during this segment

Pumpkins – 22 messages per station / 1,408 total local messages

Pumpkins – No additional no-charge messages were available during this segment

Christmas Trees – 22 messages per station / 1,408 total local messages

Christmas Trees – 11 additional no-charge messages per station / 693 total free messages

Campaign exposure equaled for the second campaign: 823,700 net reach (total people reached statewide) with a frequency of 5.1 (average number of times the same person was reached) for a total gross impressions total of 4,210,000 (total number of times the campaign was heard including multiple impressions). To simplify the numbers, we blanketed the state as inclusive as we could with 64 radio stations that broadcast into 93 of Iowa's 99 counties. Each message averaged out to a cost of \$1.86 per station, per mention (includes averages of no-charge messages). Without the no-charge messages offered, the total cost per station would have been \$2.62. The affordable per station/per message cost was attributed to utilizing a news network for distribution which allowed our budget to go nearly four times as far both economically and geographically.

In attempt to bring more awareness to the campaign, emails were sent prior to the launch date to the respective apple and/or pumpkin growers to gauge the status of their crops and prepare them for the projected increase in customer traffic. (Attachment D) At the completion of the radio campaign, this same group of growers was sent a survey to measure the success of this marketing campaign. (Attachment E)

Seven different counties were represented in the feedback. Forty-two percent of the respondents indicated that their customers referenced the commercial(s) with 58% of the growers reporting an increase in sales. The targeted growth of this project was 10%. Forty-three percent of growers reported a 10-25% increase in sales.

Lessons Learned: Radio was a cost effective way to spread the word across the state about the harvest schedule and benefits of purchasing locally-grown specialty crops. Individual growers do not have the capacity to market their products reaching consumers across the state. The benefits of this campaign will continue into the future as consumer's awareness and education of availability and seasonality of Iowa's specialty crops have been increased.

Beneficiaries: Consumers across the state as well as producers of specialty crops benefitted as a result of the projects derived from the radio campaign supported by specialty crop block grant funds. Educating consumers' of the specialty crops available from Iowa producers increased the consumer's purchase and consumption of specialty crops resulting in a financial gain to producers all over the state.

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IOWA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND LAND STEWARDHIP
MARKETING SURVEY – RADIO CAMPAIGN 2009

Last year a radio campaign was launched that promoted Iowa's various specialty crops to increase customer awareness of Iowa's specialty crops, increase consumers awareness of when the specialty crop is available, as well as to increase producer's sales throughout the production season. Eighty-four counties aired messages though out the campaign pertaining to: apples, pumpkins and Christmas Trees.

Please answer the following as it relates to these specialty crop products:

1. What County do you live in? _____

1. Did your customers reference the commercials? Yes No

If yes, was there a particular age group? _____

2. Did you see an increase in sales in the 2009 season compared to 2008? Yes No

3. If you had an increase in sales, what was the approximate dollar amount? _____

4. Please indicate the estimated percentage of an increase below:

Less than 10% 10-25% 25-50% more than 50%

5. In the future, would you like to see IDALS launch another radio campaign? Yes No

Suggestions or advice?

RADIO IOWA



Map includes call signs and frequencies for stations licensed by the FCC. Call signs and frequencies are subject to change without notice by the FCC and the station.

Albia	.....	KICP FM	85.7	Maquoketa	.....	KDIO FM	95.1
Altona	.....	KGOA AM	1000	Mechanicsville	.....	KFJB AM	1230
Altona	.....	KGOA FM	92.7	Mount Pleasant	.....	KLJL FM	1130
Atlantic	.....	KBOY FM	91.5	Mount Pleasant	.....	KLSM FM	105.5
Atlantic	.....	KJAN FM	1220	Nea Hampton	.....	KCTE FM	55.1
Boonville	.....	KDMH FM	156.9	Newton	.....	KCOB AM	1280
Boone	.....	KWBG AM	1000	Newton	.....	KCOB FM	55.7
Burlington	.....	KBLR AM	590	Oakes	.....	KGEL AM	500
Carhage	.....	WDZ AM	590	Oskawilla	.....	KROE FM	740
Charles City	.....	KCHL AM	1023	Ottumwa	.....	KBOE FM	104.9
Charles	.....	KCHE AM	1400	Ottumwa	.....	KRZ AM	1240
Chariton	.....	KCHE FM	99.1	Perry	.....	KDLS AM	1310
Clarke	.....	KROS AM	1340	Red Oak	.....	KOAK AM	1050
Creston	.....	KCZO FM	102.3	Sheldahl	.....	KWLA AM	1450
Creston	.....	KSB FM	101.3	Shenandoah Red Oak	.....	KCSO FM	55.3
Clarion	.....	KSB AM	1020	Sioux Center	.....	KSOJ AM	1000
Clarion	.....	KDSN AM	1550	Sioux Center	.....	KSOJ FM	91.9
Des Moines	.....	KRNT AM	1350	Sioux Center	.....	KHKK FM	105.9
Decorah	.....	WDSD AM	1450	Sioux City	.....	KXYV FM	101.3
Elkhart	.....	KLR AM	980	Spencer	.....	KICD AM	1240
Fairfield	.....	KRGO AM	1000	Storm Lake	.....	KAYL FM	101.7
Forest City	.....	KDGF FM	107.3	Stuart	.....	KKRF FM	107.2
Fort Dodge	.....	KVFD AM	1400	Washington	.....	KCFM	100.1
Grinnell	.....	KGRN AM	1410	Washington	.....	KCA AM	1350
Hannibal	.....	KLH FM	104.9	Wasson Cedar Falls	.....	KCHZ FM	1250
Harris	.....	KHOD FM	105.3	Webster City	.....	KWAC FM	95.7
Humboldt	.....	KHST FM	91.7	Webster City	.....	KQAC AM	1510
Ida Grove	.....	KGL FM	92.9				
Jackson	.....	KGRA FM	62.9				
Jackson	.....	KCKX AM	1210				
Keosauqua	.....	KVA AM	1220				
Le Mars	KLEH AM	1110				
Manchester	KMCH FM	54.7				
Maquoketa	KVWQ AM	1220				

Source: Station
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 515-281-1111, www.iowa.gov

LEARFIELD

CREATIVE SERVICES

IA Dept of Ag-Apples

:30

Taste an apple...in so many ways.

Radio Iowa

JS

(fun, jovial, bouncy music up and under...very kid/family friendly)

Female: Ahh, apples...the crisp, fresh flavor enjoyed so many ways...apple pie, apple juice, candy apples, carmel apples, applesauce, apple cider...apple crisp (sigh, catching her breath) and all created from apples grown right here in Iowa. In fact, this year over 4 million pounds of apples will be harvested here.

Sec. Northey: I'm Secretary of Agriculture, Bill Northey reminding you to choose Iowa.

Visit [choose iowa dot com](http://chooseiowa.com).

Female: Take the family and get some fresh from an Iowa orchard today...with over 140 orchards, you're sure to find one near you.

Sec. Northey: This message funded by a USDA specialty crop block grant.
(10 sec)



CREATIVE SERVICES

IA Dept of Ag-Pumpkins
:30
Life of a pumpkin
Radio Iowa
JS

Male pumpkin: (deep, character type voice...not super upbeat, but likeable)
October... time when us pumpkins really make something of ourselves. Some hope to be a pie; others just want to sit on the porch for decoration. Me.. I've got ambitions to become a jack-o-lantern. The one that family really takes pride in...yep, this is my year.

Anncr: Take the family and choose that special pumpkin. Find a patch near you at Choose Iowa dot com.

Sec. Northey: I'm Secretary of Agriculture, Bill Northey reminding you to

choose Iowa.

Male pumpkin: yeah...choose me.

Sec Northey: This message funded by a USDA specialty crop block grant.
(10 sec)

LEARFIELD

CREATIVE SERVICES

IA Dept of Ag
:30
"Christmas Trees"
Radio Iowa
JS
10/30/09
ISCI: IAAG0910-LFV2

Male: Nothing evokes holiday memories like family traditions...traditions that begin on an Iowa Christmas Tree farm. Each year, families visit the over 100 tree farms and choose a fresh, Iowa grown Christmas tree to take into their home. With a wide variety of trees to choose from, you're sure to find the perfect tree to start *your* family tradition and create holidays to remember.

CLOSE tag: I'm Secretary of Agriculture, Bill Northey, reminding you to choose Iowa. Visit [choose Iowa dot com](http://chooseiowa.com). This message funded by a USDA specialty crop block grant.



Partners of Scott County Watersheds
Scott County Soil & Water Conservation District
8370 Hillandale Rd.
Davenport, IA 52806
Phone: 563-391-1403 Ext. 3
Fax: 563-388-0682

Contact:

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Environmental Concerns

Water Quality in Scott County, Iowa

The water quality in Scott County Iowa is poor especially in the City of Bettendorf and Davenport. Currently Scott County has four water bodies on the State of Iowa's Impaired Waters List. Urban rain water run off is to blame for the bulk of the water quality concerns Scott County experiences.

Dysfunctional hydrology (flash flooding)

A large percentage of the land in Davenport and Bettendorf is impervious surfaces. These surfaces such as roads, roofs and lawns striped of top soil do not infiltrate rain water. These surfaces cause hydrology to be dysfunctional, not following the natural path of the water cycle. Naturally, the water cycle starts with evaporation, condensation or rainfall and then infiltration and groundwater recharge that filters and feed our rivers, streams, lakes and wetlands. In an urban setting the hydrology becomes dysfunctional because there is very little infiltration or groundwater recharge. When infiltration is skipped in the water cycle, so is the natural water cleaning process. Run off water is not filtered before it reaches rivers, streams, lakes and wetlands. Run off water also reaches the streams, lakes, rivers and wetlands much quicker than it would if it had traveled through ground water flow. Because the water is delivered so quickly it is very easy for storms to cause "flash flooding" in creeks.

Lack of Education

Most urban residents do not realize that they are contributing to flooding and the degradation of their water quality. Even if the residents realize they are a negative contributor to water quality they have no idea how to have a positive impact.

Solutions to the Concerns

Implementation

Rain gardens and Soil Quality Restoration were installed at two Habitat for Humanity homes. Iowa Native Nursery Crops were used in each rain garden. Each of these homes infiltrates and treats 1,600 gallons of stormwater during an average storm through rain gardens and soil quality restoration.

Education

Rain Garden and Soil Quality Restoration Installation Workshops were conducted at two Habitat for Humanity homes. During these workshops, participants were taught about historic hydrology, water quality and the use of native Iowa nursery crops to support sustainable landscape and stormwater management. Educational booths were hosted at three area environmental events, two of the booths were hosted at local farmer's markets and the third event was hosted at the Annual Lawn and Garden Show.

Goals

- 1) Promote the utilization of nursery crops, which are native to the Iowa landscape.
- 2) Showcase educational booths at 3 community events.
- 3) Provide education for the implementation and the use of native Iowa nursery crops to support sustainable landscapes.
- 4) Conduct 2 hands on workshops to teach the community how to use native nursery crops to support sustainable landscapes.

Results/ Progress Towards Expected Outcomes

Outcomes were measured by the numbers of attendees at the rain garden workshops, farmers markets and Flower and Garden Show. The first Rain Garden Installation Workshop was held on September 12th, 2009. Twenty people were in attendance. The Second Rain Garden Installation Workshop was held on October 3rd, 2009. Thirty-six people were in attendance. The educational booths were held over the summer of 2009. The booths were used to educate citizens on the use of Native Iowa Nursery Crops for creating sustainable landscape and stormwater management. The booths were also used to promote the upcoming Rain Garden Installation Workshops. The first two booths were held at local Farmer's Markets. The first Farmer's Market was held in Davenport and hosted 1,117 attendees. The second both was held at a Farmers Market in Bettendorf and hosted 418 attendees. The third both was hosted at the Quad City Conservation Alliances' Annual Lawn and Garden show approximately 18,000 people attended the event.

Lessons Learned

Community involvement is priceless. The impact of the Rain Garden Workshops spread much farther than originally anticipated when writing this grant. Originally the target audience was local homeowners. The workshops were also a great opportunity to provide hands on training to local contractors for rain garden and soil quality restoration installation and plant selection. Local government officials, including aldermen and public works directors got involved in the workshops as well. We have also learned that you can never count on the weather! But you can count on the fact that when people are determined, they will do what ever it takes to get the job done. Even if that means placing ply board paths over 6 inch deep mud to gain access to the front yard!

Promotion/advertisement of Project

This project was promoted though local farmers markets, flyers at community events, newspapers (see attached articles) and email lists.

Community Building and Partnerships

The Habitat for Humanity Instillation Workshops was created as a collaborative effort. Partners of Scott County Watershed secured a grant from the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship for \$2,400. Habitat for Humanity of the Quad Cities was approached with the idea of installing rain gardens at Habitat Homes. Habitat for Humanity-Quad Cities, gladly volunteered two homes for Rain Garden Installation and Workshops. As the project was growing Aunt Rhodies Landscape and Design Studio as well as Delf's Landscape and Irrigation agree to donate a crew of works during each installation to help with the excavation of the rain gardens and deep tillage required for soil quality restoration. Quint City Stone offered to donate rock to border the rain gardens. Iowa American Water donated 10 days of free water to help alleviate the cost that are associated with establishing soil quality restoration and a lawn seeding. Quad City Rain Barrels donated a rain barrel and diverter that will capture run off from a small overhang on the roof. The rain barrel will be used to irrigate the family's plants. And JD Stones donated a large stone with the families name engraved on it.

Awards

The Habitat for Humanity Rain Garden Workshops is being honored with a Special Recognition Award by the local Soil and Water Conservation District.

Conclusions

The project conducted with the assistance of the USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant Program has increased awareness for the use and benefits of native Iowa nursery crops to created sustainable landscapes and aid in stormwater management.



First Rain Garden and Soil Quality Restoration Workshop on September 12th, 2009 at 1920 West 2nd Street, Davenport Iowa.



Volunteers and contractor from Aunt Rhodies digging the rain gardens at 1920 W. 2nd St.



A volunteer digs an under ground trench that will connect the down spouts to the rain garden.



The volunteers for the Rain Garden and Soil Quality Restoration Installation at 309 East 15th Street, Davenport on October 3rd, 2009



Volunteers working in the mud.



A finished rain garden at 1920 W. 2nd Street.



The Rain Garden Installation Workshop display that was used at local farmers markets and the Flower and Garden Show.



Finished rain garden at 309 E.15th Street



Habitat home gets rain gardens

Steve Trainor | Posted: Sunday, October 4, 2009 2:45 am

The mud curled up around their shoes. Few wore rain boots but they didn't seem to mind. They were "dancing" in the compost, squishing it into the ground.

About 35 volunteers showed up Saturday morning to install two rain gardens at a Habitat for Humanity house under construction on East 15th Street in Davenport.

"I like to help people," said Ben Pashon.

Kayla Boche added, "And you get a fulfilling feeling, plus you know you're helping everybody."

Emerald Lauer said, "I didn't go to the football game last night to get ready for this." All the teens attend St. Paul the Apostle Catholic Church, Davenport.

The effort of state agencies and local retailers was directed by the Partners of Scott County Watersheds, whose objective is to educate folks on how to be better stewards of our water.

"This property is going to manage

100 percent of the storm water it creates," said coordinator Amy Johannsen.

The front gutters will connect with underground pipes, directing runoff into two rain gardens. Compost was spread over the yard, which will help absorb the rest of the rain.

"It'll save 1,600 gallons of water from going into the river with an average rain storm," Johannsen said. "You don't have to put in irrigation systems or water or fertilize."

That's because compost holds its weight in water and is also great for growing grass, Johannsen said, noting that the Davenport compost facility off Concord Street has "super cheap" prices.

The home's future owners were on hand to help. Roberto and Julia Medrano and two little boys hope to move in next month. "I think it's awesome. I'm very happy, excited, to see so many people here to fulfill my dream. I sometimes cry; it's very emotional," Julia said.

Most of the volunteers came from St. Paul the Apostle church, but Brenda Lee came from East Moline to help and learn how to do her own rain garden. She's close to retirement and is looking for volunteer opportunities. "I love seeing all these people working together and then it has this spiritual side, too," she said.

Scott County Soil & Water Conservation has a program to help residents pay for a rain garden installation.



2009
SCOTT SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION
DISTRICT AWARDS PROGRAM

SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARD

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY
RAIN GARDEN INSTALLATION WORKSHOP

PARTNERS OF SCOTT COUNTY WATERSHEDS

In appreciation of your participation in the rain garden workshops and the community involvement in water quality. You are recognized as a partner in the conservation of our natural resources.

_____, Chairperson
Scott Soil and Water Conservation District

**Fruit and Vegetable Working Group:
Outreach and On-Farm Training for Post-harvest Handling**

USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant

Final Report

submitted to the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship
June 14, 2010

Project Need

Post-harvest handling of fresh produce is a critical issue for Iowa horticultural producers. To achieve viable profit margins and compete with produce from outside the state, producers must deliver high quality produce to markets with superior appearance and shelf life. As new growers enter the market and established growers expand their operations, they will need to invest time and money into developing efficient systems.

Food safety is also an increasing concern due to recent food contamination cases in the U.S. Even food quality problems not associated with fresh produce affect these growers markets, as consumer become wary. Buyers may be requiring verification of handling protocols in the near future. Continuing to educate producers and offer options for good agricultural practices will help them improve their food safety.

Approach and Work Toward Goals

We conducted two on-farm training workshops for farmers that addressed efficient, effective and safe post-harvest handling systems, grading, and packing vegetable for both wholesale and retail, including Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) markets. Workshops were conducted on Sunday afternoon, July 26, 2009 at Rock Spring Farm north of Decorah, Iowa and on Monday afternoon, July 27 at Black Heritage Farm south of Ames, Iowa. Instructors for the workshops were Chris Blanchard, owner and operator of Rock Spring Farm and Noreen Black, co-owner and operator of Black's Heritage Farm. Dr. Sam Beattie, Extension Food Safety Specialist for Iowa State University, also presented information about food safety relative to both harvest and post-harvest handling procedures at both workshops. He also provided safety ideas and insights for packing sheds based on the facilities at hand for each workshop.

Participants were shown cooling, washing, spinning, and packing techniques for bunched greens; loose, leafy greens; bunched carrots; and root vegetables (red beets), at Rock Spring Farm. In addition, Chris Blanchard addressed record keeping, food safety, tracking produce lots, and employee and labor management for the packing shed and post harvest handling procedures.

At Black's Heritage Farm, they were shown techniques for washing, cooling and packing summer squash, tomatoes, peppers and eggplant. In addition, at Black's, participants had the chance to "get their hands wet" and learn the washing and sorting techniques.

Following the workshops in the packing shed, participants were offered tour of the farming operations, both field and high tunnel production.

We also did still photography of post-harvest handling systems for vegetables on two farms to document harvest protocols, washing and processing line set up, equipment used and handling protocols for several vegetables. Farm systems photographed were Rock Spring Farm near Decorah and One Step at a Time Gardens near Kanawha, IA that is owned and operated by Jan Libbey and Tim Landgraf.

Results and Lessons Learned

We reached total of 62 farmers and farm advisors at both post-harvest handling workshops: 42 at Rock Spring Farm and 20 at Black's Heritage Farm. Participant had myriad question during the workshop about equipment, techniques, access to supplies for handling and packaging, harvest, washing and packing techniques, reasonable time commitments for post harvest handling operations, disinfectant and other products suitable for organic production, and many others.

Feedback following the workshops from participants was unanimously positive. Comments included, "The best workshop I've been to in several years!" and "We've never had the chance to see these operations before, this was great!" and "Where can we get to more farms to see these types of techniques?"

Additional questions from participants that arose after the workshops included:

- requests for information about sourcing supplies and equipment for post harvest handling,
- how to train and supervise employees adequately for post-harvest handling
- where to find information about low-cost design for postharvest handling facilities,
- where to get additional information about food safety regulations for small –and mid-scale farms, and
- where to get training for writing food safety plans and undergoing audits for GAP or other food safety certification.

Post-harvest Handling Workshop participants were included in an email survey of all participants in Fruit and Vegetable Working Group meetings, workshops and activities for the first two years of the Working Group. Sixty-one percent of these respondent indicated that they had changed practices as a result of attending Fruit and Vegetable Working Group meetings and workshops.

Additional Outreach and Information

Representative from WHO news in Des Moines attended the workshop at Black's heritage farm and taped an interview with Dr. Sam Beattie. The interviewed aired on the WHO evening news which reaches central Iowa and beyond on July 27. Video from the workshop at Rock Spring Farm are available on the Fruit and Vegetable Working group website at:
www.valuechains.org/fruitvegetable?src=top

Photographs from the farms noted have been integrated into the Post Harvest Handling Decision Tool available on the Fruit and Vegetable Working Group website at:
www.valuechains.org/fruitvegetable/postharvest.htm.

Contact Person

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Value Added Agriculture Program
Iowa State University Extension
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NUTRITIONAL VALUE OF FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES PROMOTION

MISSISSIPPI VALLEY GROWERS' ASSOCIATION, INC.

DAVENPORT FARMERS' MARKET

Jane A. Weber, Executive Director

18591 Criswell St.

Bettendorf, IA 52722

(563)332-5529

farmer71@aol.com

Project Issue

The costs of health care and the high rates of uninsured provide a key incentive for public interest in the benefits of fresh fruits and vegetables. Increased rates of adult and child obesity, especially linked to Type 2 diabetes, provide incentives for consumers to include Farmers' Market in their quest for fresh, nutritious produce. Local ISU Extension research has shown limited resource families did not eat adequate fruits and vegetables.

Project Purpose/Approach

Funding was utilized to advertise four events at the Davenport Farmers' Market that promoted the nutritional value of fresh fruits and vegetables through food preparation and cooking demonstrations. Advertising informed consumers of the events at market as well as the location and times of the Davenport Farmers' Market. Consumers gained knowledge of dietary needs and experienced the value of fresh produce direct from the farm. Cooking demonstrations facilitated the education of consumers on the preparation of fruits and vegetables.

Activities Performed/Goals Achieved

Promoted the nutritional value of fresh fruits and vegetables at a Farmers' Market: The Davenport Farmer's Market sponsored food demonstrations on four market days, one in July and three in August. The Specialty Crops Grant funded the advertising of the events with a match from KWQC-TV and the Mississippi Valley Growers' Association, Inc. paid for the video for the commercial.

Provided nutrition education for consumers through food preparation and cooking

demonstrations at the market: Chef Robert Lewis (The Happy Diabetic) of Happy Joe's in Bettendorf, Chef Joe Godfroy of Des Moines, Amy Greenberg of Davenport, and Chef Jason Gomez of the Isle of Capri/Farraday's provided the expertise for the cooking demonstrations that

imparted nutrition information. Fruits and vegetables utilized in the presentations were donated by growers and the market provided awnings, tables, a grill, and paper supplies for samples.

Increased sales of fruits and vegetables from cash sales and vouchers through nutrition education of consumers: Vendors participated in surveys to determine benefits in sales as a result of the promotions. Customer counts determined an increase in attendance at market during three of the four advertised food demo days when compared to the same days in 2008 with one exception for a decrease on one rainy Saturday.

Results/Conclusions/Lessons Learned

Over 1200 Farmers' Market consumers received education on the nutritional value of fruits and vegetables along with easy preparation ideas. Over 1000 consumers took the opportunity to taste fruits and vegetables that were prepared by the chefs. Over 900 educational handouts were picked up by consumers. The advertising increased the number of consumers attending the markets by 15% on the sunny days making the outreach most effective. However, consumers attending on the rainy day still patronized the demo, tasting the food and picking up nutrition information. Consequently, the sales of vendors also increased by 12% from the previous year.

Long Term Outcomes

The nutritional value of fresh fruits and vegetables promotion provided education that correlated to increased sales and created good will that resulted in the repeat business of consumers. The market continued to build the customer base with more food demos and the consumer continued to increase purchases of fruits and vegetables.

Budget Information/Financial Report

	MVGA via KWQC-TV	Grant	Total
Advertising	\$2,620	\$2,620	\$5,240

Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship
Iowa Specialty Block Grant Program

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Increasing Awareness and Use of Iowa Specialty Crops - through USDA grant 12-25-B-866

Iowa Organic Association Final report:

Project Purpose:

The Iowa Organic Association operated a booth at the 2009 Iowa State Fair held in Des Moines, Iowa in August. The booth show cased organic specialty crops grown and marketed in Iowa. The emphasis at the state fair was to increase the awareness of organic specialty products that are grown in Iowa to the general public.

The association operated the booth to educate the general public about the nutritional value of the organic specialty crops and products. In addition the personnel at the fair discussed and provided general information on both fresh and processed crops as well as where these specialty items could be purchased locally in Iowa. Attendees' geographical information and a brief survey was conducted.

Impact:

This project had a synergistic affect on many levels, one of which was educating consumers on the nutritional value of specialty crops as well as to the locations where these crops maybe purchased in Iowa. The general health benefits of these products and crops were described to the public through literature and interaction of fairgoers with booth personnel at the Iowa State Fair. The fair attendees ask numerous questions of the booth personnel.

Questions included the following: 1) Where can I get more information on growing specialty crops? 2) How can I certify my specialty crops as organic? 3) Where can we purchase specialty crops in my area? 4) How can I get my child's school to start a farm-to-school program that will include specialty crop foods and items made from non-gmo foodstuffs? 5) What does the USDA organic label mean? 6) What are the labeling requirements for the USDA logo? 7) What is the latest research on organic versus non-organic foods.

The Iowa Organic Association booth personnel passed out 50,000 samples of specialty nuts to fair attendees. The samples triggered fairgoers to stop at the booth, review display information and take pamphlets and literature available in the booth. The samples and literature

at the booth stimulate a dialogue with the booth personnel and attendees. There were at least two people manning the fair booth at all times. Often the booth personnel had several fairgoers waiting to ask a question and to receive additional literature at the booth.

In addition, numerous inquires for more information were followed up by the Iowa Organic Association in the weeks following the Iowa State Fair. We believe that we increased the consumer's level of awareness and enhanced their knowledge of specialty crops. The 50,000 samples of a consumable specialty crop as well as the abundance of questions and follow up after Iowa State Fair was overwhelming.

The level of interest, interaction and participation during the 10 day event exceeded the association expectation. Due to the positive feedback and overwhelming response of the fairgoers, The Iowa Organic Association will participate with a booth at the 2010 Iowa State Fair. The Iowa Organic Association has had a very positive presence and will continue to focus on providing reliable and reputable sources of information for attendees at the 2010 Iowa State Fair.

Financial Feasibility:

The Iowa Organic Association requested a Specialty Crop Block Grant in the amount of \$4000.00 to help defray costs for fair booth rental fees, graphic materials, back drop materials, and handout information sheets. The Iowa Organic Association provided the balance of the total cost of the project. It was anticipated that the total cost of the event would be \$7621.00. The actual project cost was \$8348.00. See accompanying budget.

Measureable Outcome:

A listing of attendees' geographical information and specific organic specialty crops requests were collected and provided to the appropriate specialty crop groups and association for further follow up. The Iowa Organic Association collected data from over 1500 participants at the state fair. The survey data and requests were compiled and a presentation of information was conducted in a public event hosted by the Iowa Organic Association in December 2009 at Ames, Iowa. Melinda Hemmelgarn, Food Slueth Nutritionist, was the keynote speaker for the event.

Goal:

The goal of this project was to provide consumer awareness of the general nutritional values of organic specialty crops and products in Iowa and to inform the attendees' where these crops and products may be purchased locally in Iowa. Consequently, the awareness positively impacted the organic specialty crop and product industry by stimulating new growth of these products.

Work Plan:

The Iowa Organic Association Fair Booth Committee began this project in March 12, 2009 with a planning meeting. Graphic design materials, brochure information and etc. were compiled by July 15, 2009. All materials were be printed and collated by the last week of July. The Fair Booth Committee met and set the work schedules for manning the fair booth during scheduled fair hours. On week prior to the Iowa State Fair the committee met to finalize and distribute an activity work sheet and instructions to Fair Day Captains.

The Iowa Organic Association provided personnel at the booth every day from 9 A.M. to 9 P.M. The Iowa Organic Association's Fair Booth Committee met three weeks after the fair to compile and distribute the information that was collected during the Iowa State Fair.

Project Oversight:

The IOA State Fair Booth Chairman and committee members were present for initial setup of the display. The Fair Booth Chairman was available on-call basis to coordinate the booth Day Captains and other personnel. The Fair Booth Chairman and designated personnel took down the booth display on closing day. The IOA members were responsible for the processing, collating and distributing the information and surveys gathered at the fair.

Project Commitment:

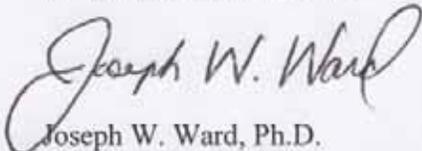
The IOA State Fair Booth Committee and graphic designer held a meeting to discuss, plan, and complete the booth design and informational handouts and survey. The IOA board members and designated members compiled the information and surveys collected for distribution to appropriate specialty crops groups and associations. The web address for the Iowa Organic Association is www.iowaorganic.org.

Budget Information Narrative:

Fair Booth Rental Fee and Equipment.....	\$1100.00
Brochure/Survey Printed Materials.....	\$3001.00
Graphic Design Display and Handouts.....	\$742.00
Display and Back-drop Materials	\$625.00
Iowa Organic Association In-kind Booth Personnel	\$2880.00
Personnel: One Fair Booth Chairman, 10 Day Captains, 20 IOA members for fair booth	

Total Project Expense: \$8348.00

Respectfully submitted,
Iowa Organic Association



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Project Title

Final Performance Report for IDALS USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant 12-25-B-866

The Iowa Farmers' Market Association (IFMA) was awarded a Specialty Crops Block Grant for \$4,000 to fund costs of keynote speakers for the 2011 Iowa Farmers Market Conference.

♦**Note:** IFMA received an extension on the above grant, which was awarded in 2009 for use for the 2010 Farmers Market Workshop, because one of the 2010 speakers could not make the trip to Des Moines due to bad weather.

Project Summary

IFMA presents a workshop each year for farmers market managers and vendors. The workshop's purpose is education and training for managers and vendors. Keynote speaker(s) are hired to present on farmers market-related topics. The speakers are selected because of their experience and knowledge of the topics. In addition, it is a forum to provide information about federal and state activities that affect farmers markets. This information is presented by representatives of the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship. The costs of speakers of national renown have risen. To draw a sizable audience it is necessary to have speakers of national notoriety. Well-known speakers will motivate market managers and vendors to attend the conference and gain knowledge about handling and marketing Specialty Crops.

Input from attendees at previous Workshops showed interest and need for information about pricing/promotion/display for produce. The IFMA Board also noted the increased interest from the public about locally grown Specialty Crops, and its concerns about the safe food handling practices.

Project Approach

Grant Period = July, 2009 through May, 2011

July, 2009 – February, 2010

The IFMA Board of Directors met in July and selected topics for the 2010 Iowa Farmers Market Workshop:

- Handling difficult vendors for Specialty Crops
- Pricing and displays/promotions for Specialty Crops
- Food safety for Specialty Crops during growing and harvest

The Workshop Committee researched speakers for these topics, and three were procured by November. We could not locate a speaker for "handling difficult vendors" and decided the IFMA BOD would form a panel for Q&As on this topic.

Press releases and brochures were created and distributed November, 2009 – January, 2010. In November, 2009, 200 copies of "Good Agricultural Practices/Good Handling Practices Brochure" were requested from the USDA, to enhance the presentation about food safety. We also ordered 200 copies of the Special Farmers Market Edition from Growing for Market to enhance the presentations about promotion and display.

The Workshop was held February 20, 2010. The speaker for pricing and displays/promotions was unable to get to Des Moines due to bad weather. The IFMA BOD used the time for an extended Q&A session.

The Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS) is a significant partner with IFMA and its annual workshop. IDALS provided farmers-market related displays and signage, and information regarding federal and state programs for farmers markets. The Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals provided Robert Haxton, program manager, to answer questions regarding weights, measures, and packaging for Specialty Crops. Harris Seeds sponsored the refreshments for the morning break, and items for door prizes.

March, 2010 – February, 2011

The IFMA Board of Directors met in March and selected topics for the 2011 Iowa Farmers Market Workshop:

- Handling difficult people/situations for Specialty Crops
- Pricing and displays/promotions for Specialty Crops

The Workshop Committee researched speakers for these topics, and two were hired in March. Contracts were signed in April, and information for publicity was received by October.

Press releases and brochures were created and distributed November, 2010 – January, 2011.

We ordered another 200 copies of the Special Farmers Market Edition from Growing for Market to enhance the presentations about promotion and display

We ordered these publications from the National Center for Appropriate Technology, The Attra Project, to provide information about growing and handling Specialty Crops:

Manures for Organic Crop Production
Sustainable Small-scale Nursery Production
Organic and Low-Spray Apple Production
Organic and Low-Spray Peach Production
Paw Paw — A "Tropical" Fruit for Temperate Climates
Herbs: Organic Greenhouse Production
Edible Flowers
Ginseng, Goldenseal, and Other Native
Companion Planting: Basic Concepts & Resources
Mushroom Cultivation and
Post-harvest Handling of Fruits and Vegetables
Flame Weeding for Vegetable Crops
Market Gardening: A Start-up Guide
Scheduling Vegetable Plantings for Continuous Harvest
Specialty Vegetables
Start a Farm in the City
Green Markets for Farm Products
Adding Value to Farm Products: An Overview
Growing Your Range Poultry Business: An Entrepreneur's Toolbox
Keys to Success in Value-Added Agriculture
Small-Scale Egg Handling

Edamame: Vegetable Soybean
Sorghum Syrup

The Workshop was held February 12, 2011.

The Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS) is a significant partner with IFMA and its annual workshop. IDALS provided farmers market-related displays and signage, and information regarding federal and state programs for farmers markets. Drake University provided use of one of its parking lots to augment the Workshop venue's parking. Harris Seeds sponsored the refreshments for the morning break, and items for door prizes. Pens and note pads were given by MetaBank and Holiday Inn Express. Door prizes were also provided by Beautiful Land Products; Casey's General Stores; Kum & Go; Our Iowa Magazine; QuikTrip; Stokes Seeds, Inc.; The Machine Shed Restaurant.

Goals and Outcomes Achieved

Adequate funds allowed IFMA to hire speakers who had an impact on the growers and marketers who attended to better market their Specialty Crops. In addition, the market managers who attended will share the information with their Specialty Crop growers/vendors. The education of Workshop participants was measured by the information they provided on the evaluation form (see attached). 130 market managers and specialty crop growers/vendors attended the 2011 Workshop. 110 marketers attended the 2010 Workshop.

Goals

1. To promote farmers markets in Iowa at an educational event:

IFMA sponsored an Iowa Farmers Market Workshop on February 12, 2011.

2. To provide marketing education for Specialty Crops to participants of the Iowa Farmers Market Workshop:

IFMA hired two speakers for the Workshop.

Jeff Cole, Exec. Dir., Massachusetts Federation of Farmers Markets presented "Farmers Market Disturbance — handling difficult situations & the people behind them"

Total evaluations for this presentation rated the value of its content to help market Specialty Crops at 18% for 8, 8% for 9, and 10% for 10 (on a scale of 1 to 10, 1 representing poor).

Mary Peabody, Director, Women's Agricultural Network for Vermont; Specialist, Community & Economic Development, University of Vermont Extension, presented "The Art & Science of Direct Marketing"

Total evaluations for this presentation rated the value of its content to help market Specialty Crops at 32% for 8, 24% for 9, and 28% for 10 (on a scale of 1 to 10, 1 representing poor).

Beneficiaries

Workshop attendees were Specialty Crop growers and vendors, and farmers market managers. The presentations provided education to the attendees to improve skills for promoting and selling Specialty Crops.

IFMA expected that marketers could learn at least two new ideas from a speaker. Attendees reported getting at least five new ideas from each speaker. For example, from the presentation regarding handling difficult people and situations, two ideas are "Ask 'What do you need?'" and "Prevent conflict by building confidence through experience and positive reinforcement." Ideas learned from the speaker on display/promotion include "Hit as many of the five senses as you can" and "Make sure the customer knows you are the farmer who grew the Specialty Crop".

Lessoned Learned

Sufficient funds to hire national keynote speakers positively affected Workshop interest, attendance, and education.

The IFMA BOD learned that it is vital to stay on top of the audio system.

We also learned that the experience and knowledge base of a person does not always translate to a good presentation.

Contact Person

Virginia Gieseke, President, Iowa Farmers Market Association
515 277 6951
vrgieseke@q.com

Additional Information

Attachments: 2010 and 2011 Workshop brochures, Workshop agendas

Financial Report for Specialty Crops Project

Speaker Fees for 2011 Workshop	\$2,200
Speaker Fees for 2010 Workshop	<u>\$ 736</u>
Total	\$2,936
Grant	<u>4,000</u>
Funds to be returned from IFMA	\$1,064

Evaluation

Thank you for attending the 13th annual Iowa Farmers Market Workshop.

Will you please help us continue to provide quality and informative sessions? Just complete this brief evaluation, and leave it in your seat. Your contact information is optional.

1. Rate the value of the presentation, “Farmers Market Disturbance: Handling difficult situations and the people behind them”. Circle one number. 1 = poor; 10 = best.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2. Rate how much the information from this presentation will help you handle Specialty Crops at farmers markets (whether you are a vendor or market manager). “Specialty Crops” are Iowa-grown fruits, vegetables, nuts, flowers, plants, and honey. Circle one number. 1 = poor; 10 = best.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3. Rate the value of the presentation, “The Art and Science of Direct Marketing”. Circle one number. 1 = poor; 10 = best.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

4. Rate how much the information from this presentation will help you handle Specialty Crops at farmers markets (whether you are a vendor or market manager). “Specialty Crops” are Iowa-grown fruits, vegetables, nuts, flowers, plants, and honey. Circle one number. 1 = poor; 10 = best.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5. Rate the venue and accommodations. Circle one number. 1 = poor; 10 = best.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Please add your comments about today’s workshop:

Thank You!

Hazelnut Micro Propagation Project
Final Report
May 31,2010

Project Purpose:

Hybrid hazelnuts are a new crop in Iowa. Commercialization of this specialty crop has been hampered because the majority of the trees now being grown for production are open pollinated crosses from a segregating population. These trees lack the uniformity of maturity and plant type necessary for mechanical harvest. The purpose of this project is to evaluate a micro-propagation technique that allows many plants to be developed from a single selected plant having all the preferred characteristics. The improved uniformity of plants developed from this procedure will allow more rapid commercialization of this specialty crop as it will allow for more efficient mechanical harvest.

Approach to the Issue:

The first objective was to select the best genotype or genotypes to be micro-propagated. This was accomplished by statically analyzing the data collected on approximately 350 hazelnut trees over the past five years. Trees were evaluated for plant health, nut size, yield and a mechanical harvestability. Based on this data two genotypes were selected as being the best candidates for micro-propagation.

The second objective was to obtain juvenile plant tissue to use for the micro-propagation material. To accomplish this, new growth scions were grafted on established root stocks. This was necessary to obtain plant tissue most likely to be successful with the micro-propagation technique. These plant materials were then transported to Knight Hollow Nursery laboratory for the micro-propagation procedure to be accomplished.

Achievement of Goals:

One goal of this project was to select one or more genotypes of hybrid hazelnuts that would perform well in commercial plantings. This goal was successfully met as two genotypes were found that provided consistently high yields for the past three years. They appeared to have excellent disease resistance and vigorous growth. The plant types were of medium height with sturdy upright branches. This type of plant structure would be a preferred type for mechanical harvest. The nut and kernel size were appropriate for commercial production. The nut size was evaluated by two commercial buyers and was found to meet their standards.

Another goal of this project was to develop plant material suitable for use with the micro-propagation procedure. This proved to be more challenging. The new growth on the mature trees was not juvenile enough for the micro-propagation technique to be successful. Two alternatives were available to overcome this challenge. One method was to cut the tree off at the base and use the sprouts that would grow from the cut off

tree. This method sacrifices all production from that tree for several years. Another method is to graft new growth to root stock and use the new growth as a source of rejuvenated plant material for micro-propagation. The later method was chosen to provide the plants necessary to take to Knight Hollow Nursery.

The final goal of this project was to develop viable micro-propagated plants. In order to have a successful commercial micro-propagation system, multiple steps in the protocol have to be developed and optimized:

1. Isolation: remove non-endophytic microbes and initiate growth from buds.
2. Stabilization: finding conditions to provide continuing and uniform shoot growth (usually involves some time factor).
3. Optimization: rapid and uniform multiplication of vigorous shoots
4. Rooting and acclimation of micro cuttings
5. Placement of plants into field ready containers and develop stabilized growth.

To accomplish this final goal Knight Hollow Nursery of Madison Wisconsin was contracted to do the work. Juvenile plant material from two genotypes was delivered to the Knight Hollow Nursery laboratory for micro-propagation. The need for juvenile plant materials from mature trees resulted in a delay in the projected timeline for receiving rooted and stabilized micro-propagated trees from Knight Hollow Nursery. However, the process is now progressing as expected. The rooted plants will be delivered as soon as they are field ready.

Lessons Learned

It proved to be very difficult to obtain viable juvenile plant tissue from mature nut bearing trees. In order to best select the appropriate tree to be propagated it needs to be at least six to seven years of age. This provides adequate time for traits such as yield and nut size to be evaluated. Once a tree has reached this degree of maturity the newest growth on the tree is where the nut production occurs. This tissue is unacceptable for use in micro-propagation. In order to obtain juvenile tissue the tree must be cut off at the base which will allow new juvenile growth to emerge. This new sprout, through a process called mound layering can be made to develop new roots. The sprout can then be cut off and used to develop tissue suitable for micro-propagation. This then puts the tree out of production for several years. It was decided that this sacrifice of a valuable tree was not acceptable in this situation. However, it is a very viable method for obtaining clones of hazelnut trees.

Another method of developing juvenile tissue from a mature tree is to graft selected scions to a sturdy root stock. This procedure proved to be very difficult. Using the latest technology in grafting techniques, one hundred and eighty scions were grafted to root stocks. Only two survived to become live plants suitable for micro-propagation. It was determined from this experience that grafting of hybrid hazelnuts was probably not an economically viable method to propagate these trees. However, it was an acceptable method for obtaining suitable material for micro-propagation.

Progress Towards Expected Measurable Outcomes

As a result of the development of a reproducible hazelnut variety, orders for approximately four thousand trees have been placed. Six additional new growers have expressed interest in planting one or more acres of the new trees. New requests continue to come in. This has exceeded the anticipated new grower interest and number of trees to be added to the Iowa landscape.

Conclusion

This project conducted with the assistance of the USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant Program has established the foundation for the development of micro-propagated hazelnuts adapted to the Middle West. It is making possible a viable new specialty crop for Iowa and the Middle West.

Budget

Financial Report:

Funds Expended	Item	Grant Funds	Matching Funds	Total
Ag Advisory Ltd.	Labor		3470.00	3470.00
Ag Advisory, Ltd	Travel expense		840.00	840.00
Ag Advisory, Ltd	Supplies		623.72	623.72
Susan Wiegrefe	Grafting Contractual		160.10	160.10
Knight Hollow Nursery, Inc	Contractual	<u>4000.00</u>	<u>1000.00</u>	<u>5000.00</u>
Totals		\$4000.00	\$ 6093.82	\$10093.82

Fruit & Vegetable Farmers Symposium: Business and Production Models for New Farmers
Final Report

Contact Information:

Greg Rinehart
President, IFVGA

Dorothy Ohl Lewis
Exec. Sec., IFVGA (thru 12/31/2009)

Dal Grooms
Current Exec. Sec., IFVGA

Project Title and General Description:

Fruit and Vegetable Farmers Symposium: Business and Production Ideas for New Farmers

The Iowa Fruit & Vegetable Growers Association proposed a symposium about business and production models for new fruit and vegetable growers. New growers were defined as those that had been in business for less than two years. The symposium was held during the IFVGA's annual conference because it would also give beginning farmers a chance to meet more experienced growers during plenary sessions. A separate track was held for beginning farmers during concurrent sessions that addressed the business and production models.

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Issues

Beginning farmers, particularly those in specialty crops, must have a good understanding of market and distribution potential as well as risk management, production techniques, post harvest crop handling, and many other topics, if they are to be successful in developing a thriving enterprise.

Data from the most recent Census of Agriculture (2007) suggest the fastest growing segment of Iowa farmers includes those reporting sales of \$1000 or less; the second fastest growing segment includes those reporting \$2500 to \$10,000 in sales. A substantial number of these new farmers are likely to be involved in specialty crops and represent the target audience for an educational program designed specifically with the industry newcomer in mind.

How the Issues Were Approached

Using models from other states, the Iowa Fruit & Vegetable Growers Association planned and conducted a conference with a special track for beginning grower workshops. The conference was billed as a special symposium as part of the association's annual two-day educational conference held on January 29-30, 2010.

In addition to the beginning farmer sessions, the conference included plenary sessions of general interest and appropriate to all levels of farmer experience, and three additional tracks focused on fruit production, vegetable production, and agritourism. All four tracks and general sessions were open to beginning farmers.

In total there were 32 track sessions and nine plenary sessions offered over the two days of the conference. Eight tracks were specifically designated for beginning farmers.

In addition to educational sessions, a trade show was held in conjunction with the conference and included product vendors and service providers.

The conference was marketed via direct mailings to lists of likely participants provided by the Iowa Department of Agriculture. The list also included members of the Iowa Fruit & Vegetable Growers Association, Visit Iowa (the agritourism interest group), participants in Iowa State University's Value-Added Agriculture events, and many others. The Beginning Farmer Program at ISU was notified of the program as well as other ISU departments with subject areas overlapping fruit and vegetable production.

In addition to direct marketing, news releases were sent to media outlets targeting those strongly focused on the fruit and vegetable industry or general agriculture.

Other associations were asked to include conference information in their newsletters and publications. Websites at ISU and the Iowa Fruit & Vegetable Growers Association were also used to promote the event.

Goals

The goal of this project was to provide an educational program that would be beneficial to beginning farmers specializing in fruit and vegetable production. The focused educational program of the symposium emphasizing critical business and production models has the potential to increase the profitability of beginning farmers' early efforts and help them develop sustainable farm businesses.

As a measureable outcome we expected the beginning farmer symposium to attract 30-50 self-identified beginning farmers defined as having been active in fruit and vegetable farming for less than two years. As a result of attending these specialized sessions, we anticipated beginning farmers would express intention to put newly acquired knowledge into practice in their enterprises.

Results/Progress toward Measurable Outcomes

The program for the beginning farmer symposium was developed with the assistance of members of the Iowa Fruit & Vegetable Growers Association, faculty from Iowa State University, and specialists from the Value Added Agriculture program at ISU, all of whom are knowledgeable about beginning farmer education and fruit and vegetable production. In addition, the planning committee looked at similar programs from surrounding states. The resulting beginning farmer program included faculty, experienced growers, industry specialists, and growers in fruit and vegetable production as speakers. Among others, the topics covered acquiring land and resources, farm and food safety issues, financial planning, production, and agritourism. In addition to the sessions in four tracks, the plenary sessions included speakers well-versed in topics applicable to both beginning and experienced fruit and vegetable growers.

One of our goals was to reach 30-50 beginning farmers. Despite broad-based promotion of the beginning farmers symposium through direct mail and through news releases to trade and industry outlets, out of 190 participants, only 13 registrants self-identified as beginning farmers. It may be that beginning farmers are not connected to traditional communication channels that more experienced farmers utilize nor are they on established lists of growers. As a consequence, our conference promotion did not come to their attention.

Novice farmers may also not recognize the need for additional educational experiences or may believe those experiences can be delayed until their operation is up and running. Financial factors may also play a part in lower than expected interest in that beginning farmers may be: 1) unable or unwilling to pay registration, travel and other costs associated with attending a conference; and 2) unable to attend conferences due to constraints imposed by primary employment off the farm.

Finally, other organizations including Practical Farmers of Iowa have programs for beginning farmers and may have been competing for the same audience.

Nonetheless, attendance at the sessions in the beginning farmer track suggested more farmers were interested in the topics than those for whom the program was specifically designed or who had identified themselves as beginning farmers. During breakout sessions, attendance fluctuated between tracks, but with few exceptions each track maintained a substantial portion of the total audience.

Another goal was to affect positive change in how beginning farmers operate. Evaluations from the program and comments directed to conference personnel and board members suggest the conference as a whole was well received. In addition, attendees were asked to evaluate each session they attended--both plenary and track sessions--by responding to three statement outlines:

- Prior to today's program, indicate your level of knowledge about _____.
- After today's program, indicate you level of knowledge about _____.
- After today's program, how likely are you to incorporate knowledge learned about _____ into your enterprise?

Attendees could choose one of five answers: Very Likely, Likely, Unsure, Unlikely, and Very Unlikely. (The Evaluation instruments are included in "Additional Information.")

Across the board, for all beginning farmer track sessions as well as other tracks and general sessions, the prior knowledge responses were consistently in the low to mid level of the scale for prior knowledge. For post session knowledge the scores were correspondingly on the mid to high level of the scale indicating a growth in knowledge as a result of the session.

The difficulty is in interpreting the responses of the final question regarding how likely participants are to put their newly acquired knowledge into practice. There were scores at both ends of the scale. This may have resulted from 1) actual intent of participants not to put new knowledge into practice for undetermined reasons, or 2) confusion resulting from a reversal of the rating scale on the third question. At best, we can conclude that some participants have good intentions of putting their newly gained knowledge into practice.

Lessons Learned

- For future programs for beginning farmers, it will be necessary to adopt different strategies to reach them. They may not be affiliated with associations or other communications channels that more experienced growers participate in. One method that might generate better participation would be to contact farmers' market managers and county Extension Service offices to assist in identifying new fruit and vegetable farmers. Association members might also be enlisted to identify new growers in their areas.
- Growers of all experience levels may need "beginning" educational experiences as they become more aware of issues and in response to changes in the industry. Attendance in the beginning farmer sessions included more than those individuals who identified themselves as beginners and the movement of individuals from one track to another indicates farmers self-select sessions of particular interest despite any designation applied to the sessions or tracks or to their own experience level. It may not be necessary to have a beginning farmer symposium, but instead have a broad array of tracks covering topics that any grower might need to be more successful. An excellent program may meet the needs of all audiences.
- Better design of the evaluation instrument and improved instruction to session moderators is critical to obtaining informative conference evaluations. By attempting to be environmentally conscientious by using a single sheet evaluation for all sessions each day of the conference, we did not get a good return on evaluations. In addition, a simple misdirection of a response scale resulted in data that cannot be easily interpreted.

Moderators could have assisted in preventing misinterpretation and increased the number of evaluations returned had we 1) provided them with better instruction, 2) pointed out the problem in the scale as soon as it was identified and 3) used a separate sheet for each session collected as participants leave the room.

Conclusions

- The beginning farmer symposium was successful despite not meeting the original goals. The sessions were well attended though not necessarily by the anticipated audience.
- Participants indicated they had learned something of interest in the sessions and some planned to put that knowledge into practice.
- Beginning and more experienced farmers will self-select into tracks and sessions meeting their educational needs.
- General sessions can be used in cases where the conference planning committee feels the topic is of such high interest or importance to the industry that all participants should attend.
- Attracting beginning farmers to educational events will require different methods of recruitment.

Budget:

The chart shown below shows the original grant allocation and the 20% reallocations made to adjust for changes in costs associated with speakers, marketing, and printed materials. The third column shows the actual amounts spent on each of these three categories for the conference.

Beginning Farmer Symposium Grant

	As written:	As reallocated 20% max	Total Conference Expense
Speaker fees/honoraria	\$1,200	\$1,200	\$4,350
Speaker expenses	\$1,200	\$800	\$798
Registration	\$200	\$-	
Printed materials	\$400	\$1,000	\$1,111
Total	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$6,259

Additional Information

The following pieces of information follow:

News release

Use of news release by news media

IFVGA Newsletter

Conference program

Sample evaluation

List of payees and itemized amounts



IOWA FRUIT & VEGETABLE

Growers Association**News Release**

Contact: Dorothy Ohl Lewis, Executive Secretary, 515-232-5801, ifvga@q.com
or, Greg Rinehart, IFVGA President, 515-290-3925, grinehart@hughes.net

IFVGA annual meeting welcomes beginning farmers, agritourism interests

The past decade has delivered some changes in Iowa agriculture, including more farmers being involved in fruit and vegetable production. That's why the Iowa Fruit & Vegetable Growers Association will include a distinct track for beginning farmers during its 2010 annual meeting and conference, Jan. 29-30 at the Holiday Inn - Des Moines Airport/ Conference Center.

The conference is being held jointly with the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship and Iowa State University Value-added Agriculture Program's Visit Iowa Farms project. Both are providing funds and staff to help educate beginning farmers about the opportunities in fruit and vegetable production.

The conference theme, *Sustaining our Environment, our Livelihoods, and the Future of our Industry*, includes the educational track for beginning farmers, sessions on both fruit and vegetable production issues, food safety, marketing produce, and marketing experiences by creating farmer-to-consumer relationships.

Ann Dougherty, an agri-culinary tour operator from Rockford, IL, is one of the keynote speakers on the morning of Jan. 29. Dougherty organizes food tours through six states in the Midwest that show links between farming, cooking and the environment.

The second keynote on Friday morning is Chris Blanchard of Rock Spring Farm in Decorah. Blanchard managed vegetable farms from Wisconsin to California before settling in Northeast Iowa to start an organic vegetable farm. His topic is business plans for short and long-term goals.

On Saturday morning, the keynote speaker is Darlene Knipe, marketing specialist at the University of Illinois. Knipe is founder of the Food MarketMaker program, an Internet portal that helps value-added ag producers find their markets. Her topic is capitalizing on changing consumer demands.

Farmers who plan to participate in the 2010 Farmers Market Nutrition Program can attend the mandatory training session offered by the Iowa Departments of Public Health and Agriculture and Land Stewardship on Friday evening.

-more-

Information about the conference is online at www.iafruitvegetablegrowers.org. Register by calling Dorothy Lewis, IFVGA Executive Secretary at 515-232-5801.

Funds for the beginning farmer track of the conference were provided by the USDA Specialty Crops Block Grant Program through the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship. Additional funding was provided by Hy-Vee and Iowa Farm Bureau Federation.

-30-

A schedule of keynote speakers:

Friday, Jan. 29 at the Holiday Inn - Des Moines Airport/ Conference Center

- 9:00 a.m. Six Requirements for Successful AgriTourism
Ann Dougherty, Rockford, IL
Ann is a agri-culinary tour operator in the Midwest
- 9:45 a.m. Business Analysis and Planning for Short and Long Term Goals
Chris Blanchard, Rock Spring Farm, Decorah
Chris has managed vegetable farms from Wisconsin to California, and currently has an organic vegetable farm.
- 1:30 p.m. Changing Climate in Iowa – Implications for Fruit & Vegetable Growers
Gene Takle, Iowa State University
Gene is a Professor doing research in Global Climate Change
- 2:15 p.m. What are Distributors Looking For?
Panel discussion of speakers from Hy-Vee, Loffredo Produce and ISU Dining

Saturday, Jan. 30 at the Holiday Inn - Des Moines Airport/ Conference Center

- 8:30 a.m. Capitalizing on Changing Consumer Demands
Darlene Knipe, Marketing Specialist, University of Illinois
Dar is the founder of the Food MarketMaker program
- 9:30 a.m. Farm Succession – Getting Into and Out of Business
David Baker, ISU Beginning Farmer Specialist
- 1:15 p.m. A Case in Progress: Six Years and Counting
Laura Frerichs, Hutchinson, MN
Laura has been operating Loon Organics for six years as a CSA.
- 2:00 p.m. Report on Beginning Farmers Study
Margaret Smith, ISU Value-Added Agriculture Program
The Fruit and Vegetable Working Group at the Leopold Center has been studying opportunities for beginning farmers in fruit and vegetable production.
- 2:30 p.m. Making Your Farm More Accessible to Visitors
Angie Plager, Cambridge, IA
Angie is Ms. Wheelchair Iowa 2009

-30-



IFVGA Annual Meeting Welcomes Beginning Farmers, Agritourism Interests

Iowa Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association annual meeting is set for Jan. 29-30 in Des Moines.

Compiled by staff

Published: Jan 23, 2010

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LEARN WHERE WE'RE INVESTING TO MEET LONG-TERM DEMAND FOR POTASH...

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The conference is being organized jointly by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship and Iowa State University Value Added Ag Program's "Visit Iowa Farms" project. Both are providing funds and staff to help educate beginning farmers about the opportunities in fruit and vegetable production.

The 2010 IFVGA conference theme is "Sustaining Our Environment, Our Livelihoods, and the Future of Our Industry" and the conference includes the educational track for beginning farmers, sessions on both fruit and vegetable production issues, food safety, marketing produce and marketing experiences by creating farmer-to-consumer relationships.

A number of topnotch speakers and presentations on tap

Ann Dougherty, an agr-culinary tour operator from Rockford, Ill., is one of the keynote speakers on the morning of Jan. 29. Dougherty organizes food tours through six states in the Midwest that show links between farming, cooking and the environment.

The second keynote speaker on Friday morning is Chris Blanchard of Rock Spring Farm in Decorah. Blanchard managed vegetable farms from Wisconsin to California before settling in Northeast Iowa to start an organic vegetable farm. His topic is business plans for short and long-term goals.

On Saturday morning, the keynote speaker is Darlene Krips, marketing specialist at the University of Illinois. Krips is founder of the Food MarketMaker program, an Internet portal that helps value-added ag producers find their markets. Her topic is capitalizing on changing consumer demands.

Farmers Market Nutrition Program training session offered

Farmers who plan to participate in the 2010 Farmers Market Nutrition Program can attend the mandatory training session offered by the Iowa Departments of Public Health and Ag and Land Stewardship on Friday evening.

Information about the conference is online at www.iowafruitvegetablegrowers.org. Register by calling Dorothy Lewis, IFVGA executive secretary at (515) 232-5801.

Funds for the beginning farmer track of the conference were provided by the USDA Specialty Crops Block Grant Program through the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship. Additional funding was provided by Hy-Vee and Iowa Farm Bureau Federation.

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EVENTS:

IOWA FRUIT &
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CONFERENCE
JANUARY 29-30,
2010

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IOWA FRUIT & VEGETABLE GROWERS ASSOCIATION 515-232-5801 IFVGA@Q.COM

IOWA FRUIT & VEGETABLE
GROWERS & MARKETERS CONFERENCE
JANUARY 29-30, 2010

The 2nd annual Iowa Fruit & Vegetable Growers and Marketers Conference will be held on January 29-30, 2010. Please watch your mail for registration materials coming your way soon.

The theme of the conference will be **Sustaining our Environment, our Livelihoods, and the Future of our Industry**. In addition to our traditional production and technical fruit and vegetable breakout sessions, we will host speakers who will share ways we can think about sustainability across many different aspects of the fruit and vegetable industry.

Within the overall theme, we will also be sponsoring two new special topics tracks: **Beginning Farmer** and **Agritourism**. With the addition of these two tracks, the conference will offer both beginning farmers and seasoned professionals the opportunity to select those topics of greatest interest and to customize the conference to meet their needs. Check out some highlights of the 2-day program on pages 3 and 4.

Joining us as partners this year is Visit Iowa Farms. Assisting with support and financial assistance are the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation, the Iowa State University Value Added Agriculture Program, and Hy-Vee. In addition, funds for the conference speakers and marketing are being provided by the USDA Specialty Crops Block Grant Program through the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship.

New Location:

This year we will be meeting on Friday and Saturday at the Holiday Inn Airport/Conference Center on Fleur Drive, opposite the Des Moines International Airport. Why not call the Holiday Inn 515-287-2400 today to reserve your hotel room. The conference rate of \$89 plus taxes will be available until January 15, 2010. Just mention the conference name to get the discount.

2009 Iowa FARMERS' MARKET CUSTOMER SUMMARY

Check out these interesting results released by National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), Iowa Field Office, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture:

http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Iowa/Publications/2009CustomerSummary.pdf

http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Iowa/Publications/2009VendorSummary.pdf

**Iowa Fruit & Vegetable Growers and Marketers Conference
Program Evaluation
January 29 - 30, 2010**

Thank you for helping to improve future programs by completing this survey. Participating in this survey is completely voluntary and you may skip any questions you do not feel comfortable answering. All individual responses will be kept anonymous and only used in combined data.

FRIDAY - GENERAL SESSIONS

Please circle the best response for the following questions

<u>Prior</u> to today's program indicate your level of knowledge about:	Low Level 1	2	3	4	High Level 5
Requirements for a successful agritourism enterprise	1	2	3	4	5
Scaling up to meet local food demand	1	2	3	4	5
Climate change impacts on fruit and vegetable production in Iowa	1	2	3	4	5
Working with food buyers and distributors	1	2	3	4	5

<u>After</u> today's program indicate your level of knowledge about:	Low Level 1	2	3	4	High Level 5
Requirements for a successful agritourism enterprise	1	2	3	4	5
Scaling up to meet local food demand	1	2	3	4	5
Climate change impacts on fruit and vegetable production in Iowa	1	2	3	4	5
Working with food buyers and distributors	1	2	3	4	5

<u>After</u> today's program how likely are you to incorporate knowledge learned into your enterprise?	Very Likely 1	Likely 2	Unsure 3	Unlikely 4	Very Unlikely 5
Requirements for a successful agritourism enterprise	1	2	3	4	5
Scaling up to meet local food demand	1	2	3	4	5
Climate change impacts on fruit and vegetable production in Iowa	1	2	3	4	5
Working with buyers and food distributors	1	2	3	4	5

What specific topics would you like to see addressed in upcoming conferences?

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SATURDAY – GENERAL SESSIONS

Please circle the best response for the following questions

<i>Prior</i> to today's program indicate your level of knowledge about:	Low Level 1	2	3	4	High Level 5
Changing consumer demands	1	2	3	4	5
Farm succession	1	2	3	4	5
Making your farm more accessible to visitors	1	2	3	4	5
Starting a vegetable farm from scratch	1	2	3	4	5
Start-up vegetable operations – Value Added Agriculture	1	2	3	4	5

<i>After</i> today's program indicate your level of knowledge about:	Low Level 1	2	3	4	High Level 5
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Start-up vegetable operations – Value Added Agriculture	1	2	3	4	5

What specific topics would you like to see addressed in upcoming conferences?

Fresh Connections

Final Report

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Outline of Project Need

The purpose of this project was to promote specialty crops available in Kossuth County, Iowa and the surrounding area. Fruits, vegetables, honey, maple syrup, roasted soybeans, and flowers are all available within the county; but many local consumers have been unaware that the products are available or how to purchase them.

Project Approach

Fresh Connections Co-op is a community-owned, local and natural foods grocery store located in downtown Algona that opened June of 2009. The mission of the co-op is three-fold:

- Connect local producers and consumers
- Provide educational opportunities
- Enhance the local food economy

By partnering with local producers and the Kossuth County Farmer's Market, Fresh Connections Co-op served as a resource for local foods and learning opportunities regarding Iowa-grown specialty crops.

This project, overseen by Fresh Connections Co-op staff and volunteers, partnered promotional/marketing activities with a consumer education program that highlighted locally-grown, specialty crops for the purpose of increased consumption of these local crops. Specific activities included classes that taught consumers how to cook with locally-grown foods, sample days that highlighted specialty crops that were in season, and a marketing campaign featuring local producers.

Project Goal Achievements

The intended beneficiaries of this project were local farmers and local consumers. Farmers benefited from the public's increased awareness of their products, both through the marketing

campaign and educational classes made available through Fresh Connections Co-op. Also, farmers selling at area farmers markets as well as selling products through the co-op saw an increase in sales in 2009. Consumers benefited as well from the increased information about where to find and purchase specialty crops, which crops to expect during certain times of the year, and how to utilize these products.

This project positively impacted at least 14 producers, as well as consumers throughout Kossuth County (approximately 16,000 people), and at least 120 people through the classes offered at Fresh Connections Co-op (with an average of 10 people per class with twelve classes offered).

Education is often what consumers need when trying to make healthy lifestyle choices such as consuming more locally-grown produce or simply including more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains in their diets. One of Fresh Connections' objectives was to offer twelve classes on various topics with special focus on locally-grown, specialty crops; and we were successful in achieving that goal.

Classes offered included:

- 1) Spring Greens, *June 16th*
- 2) Marinade Madness and Succulent Salads...part 1, *July 14th*
- 3) Marinade Madness and Succulent Salads...part 2, *July 28th*
- 4) Living and Eating Gluten-Free, *August 11th*
- 5) Canning 101, *August 25th*
- 6) Tomato Tasting, *September 22nd*
- 7) From Pumpkin to Pie, *October 26th*
- 8) Food Storage Techniques, *November 7th*
- 9) Gift Jars, *November 14th*

10) Holiday Recipe Rescue, *December 19th*

11) Refresh and Renew with Green Foods, *January 10th*

12) Herbs and Spices, *February 6th*

We had an average of ten people attending our classes, which had been our targeted goal. Those attending the classes learned to utilize local foods in new, healthy recipes. Classes also brought a variety of people together to network and discuss food-related issues, all of which are outcomes Fresh Connections had hoped for and accomplished. All ages attended, which was excellent as well! Please see the attached photos of one of our classes for reference.

Since opening in June, Fresh Connections Co-op was also able to promote local producers who provided the following specialty crops:

Popcorn	Tom Decker	Rockwell City
Honey	Ingall's Honey	Bancroft
Maple syrup	Melvin Faber	Burt
Tosteds (roasted soybeans)	Laura Foods	Corwith
Produce	Scuffham's Garden	Algona
Produce	Bode Farms	Algona
Produce	Kirsch Gardens	Wesley
Produce	Lotts Creek Produce	Fenton
Produce and dry beans	Glean Acres Farm	Burt
Beef	Silver Maple Farms	Algona
Pork	Iowa Farm Families	Marshalltown
Buffalo	Brass Lady Buffalo	Algona
Chicken	Mel Haler	Wesley
Beef and pork	Iowa Supreme Meats	Burt
Breads	Daily Bread Bakery	Algona

From June to December 2009, approximately 15% of total inventory purchases at Fresh Connections Co-op went to the purchase of locally-grown, specialty crops. This generated a return of \$14,000 to our local producers! As a result, area consumers had increased access to fresh and local foods.

Grant funds were utilized for advertising, signage, equipment and display materials, and general promotion of our local producers and their products through 'Sample Saturdays.' We utilized print and radio advertising, printed brochures, as well as email updates, website postings, printed

newsletters, and in-store signage and displays for producer promotion. We also constructed a large wall map of Iowa with the location of and information about each local producer to encourage awareness of where our customers' food comes from. Additionally, in order to further increase local product awareness in the store, we designed a local product shelf label. An example is attached.

Conclusions

One way Fresh Connections can sum up what we've learned from our past year promoting Iowa grown specialty crops is "taste and see." Consumers, when given the opportunity to sample the fresh, delicious food available, are often loyal customers. The sample days, such as our local watermelon sample day, were very successful and the ads promoting local farmers also helped draw attention to the local products available.

Two main lessons we learned were that the promotion of local foods requires a very quick turn around when it comes to advertising. This requires pre-planning for the ads to be done on time. For example, we waited until strawberries were in our produce case in the co-op from a local producer, then created radio ads, recorded and ran the ads. By the time the ads were on the air, the large crop of local strawberries was nearly gone. This lesson taught us about the importance of running timely ads when promoting seasonal foods. Also, we learned we need to spend more time and marketing dollars on increasing awareness about seasonal foods. Consumers aren't always aware of what foods are in season, and the growing season is a bit different in varying regions of the state. Continuing education regarding what is available throughout the entire growing season (April through November) could be a big part of marketing fresh, local foods to our consumers in north central Iowa.

Long-term Outcome Measures

The best form of measurement for Fresh Connections Co-op is the amount of money spent on local foods. Consumer surveys and opinions are helpful and offer insight, but the main

measurement is whether or not people buy the local products. Luckily, this is an easy thing for Fresh Connections to track through our cash register and is included on our monthly financial report.

Project Contact Information

Sara Hanson
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Fresh Connections Co-op
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Algona, Iowa 50511
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jroepkebode@yahoo.com

Project Title: Farmer Market Week Promotions

Project Summary: The purpose of the National Farmers Market Week/Iowa Farmers Market Week Promotional Event was to increase consumer awareness, knowledge and use of Iowa specialty crops and farmers markets.

Project Approach: The project funds were used to provide coupons and funds to redeem the coupons; to help pay for a specialty crop cooking demonstration or a tasting booth; and for printing and shipping expenses associated with the project. Market tote bags with "Freshness Is Our Specialty" (left over from the Specialty Crop State Fair event – a prior grant), and Eat Fresh Recipe packets (left over from a previous specialty crop grant) were provided as giveaways to the partnering markets.

Announcements/guidelines requesting markets to apply to partner with IDALS were sent to 220+ farmers' market contacts in May 2009. Sixty markets responded to the request to partner with IDALS to host a special event at their farmers' market showcasing Iowa specialty crops during the Iowa Farmers Market Week/National Farmers Market Week designated as August 2 – 8, 2009. (See Exhibit A Guidelines document)

The project funds allowed for twenty (20) markets to participate as partners. To select twenty markets out of the sixty requests to partner, and to ensure that the project was represented statewide, the five Iowa congressional districts were used for representation. (See Exhibit B Congressional District Map). Markets were notated as to which district they were in and vied for selection only among the markets in their district. Four markets from each of the five districts were drawn from a hat arriving at the 20 partnering markets.

Nine weeks of weekly e-mails (for the 17 on-line partners and printed for the three who were not on the internet) provided the information, instructions, templates, encouragement, and assistance to the market contacts to prepare for the event. Any questions or communications from the partners was answered immediately by IDALS.

Templates, coupon design (Exhibits C, D, E) and printing of coupons were prepared in-house. Coupons were stylized with the market name so redemption could only be at that market. Two weeks prior to August 1, boxes of tote bags, recipe cards and coupons were packed and shipped; checks were issued and mailed to market contacts. E-mail communications continued with partners and they were also emailed the Shopper Questionnaire and the Vendor Questionnaire (Exhibit F & G).

Within two weeks following August 2- 8, markets sent their results of coupon redemption, shopper questionnaire results, vendor questionnaire results, photos, and any other related materials they felt appropriate.

Participating market managers were cooperative and eager to undertake and perform the responsibilities outlined in the Partner Duties/Responsibilities, and without the partners, this project would not have been viable. Their enthusiasm for the project was remarkable, and nearly all indicated they planned to incorporate this annual celebration into their market season.

Goals and Outcomes Achieved: The activities performed to achieve the performance goal were the consumer public questionnaire and the cooking demonstration/tasting booth of specialty crops. The consumer public questionnaire was the instrument to find out if the event increased shopper awareness and knowledge and use of Iowa specialty crops.

Awareness may not translate to attendance – however, attendance does translate to awareness. If a person is attending something they had to be made aware of it. For farmers' markets, an event is a good activity to increase attendance at a market, and provides a larger universe to measure.

To enhance the attraction to the market – shoppers were offered \$1.00 coupons redeemable towards purchasing specialty crops and a free market tote. Discussion of these offers follows in Lessons Learned.

To determine the first benchmark of the potential universe - participating markets were asked to provide their average number of shoppers on a typical market day during this season. They were then asked to provide their shopper counts on the day of the event. The total number of shoppers pre-event at the 18 markets totaled 4,502; the number of shoppers the day of the event totaled 7,494; a raw increase of 2,992 shoppers, or a 60% increase in shopper numbers at these 18 markets (greater than the 5-10% as estimated in proposal). Three markets had heavy rains the day of their event: two indicated they lost shoppers on the day of the event because of rain and one indicated a slight gain in shoppers.

The shoppers attending the event day farmers markets became the universe of the measurement. The Shopper Questionnaire – shoppers interviewed were asked several quick questions regarding shopping attendance and specialty crop knowledge. The results were:

Q: Have you been to our market before? 82% of the shoppers interviewed said yes, the remaining 18% were new to the market.

Q: Did your visit to our tasting booth/cooking demonstration provide you with information about the produce availability or a new way to prepare produce? It was estimated that 5-10% of the shoppers would increase their awareness, knowledge of

availability and use of specialty crops. Yet results showed nearly 71% of shoppers interviewed answered yes to an increase in awareness, knowledge of availability and use of specialty crops.

A secondary affect of the Iowa Farmers Market Week/National Farmers Market Week project was the increased sales for the market vendors. Managers asked their vendors if they experienced an increase or decrease in sales for that day. Increases ranged from 5% to 100%, while the average increase was 14%-30%. Only one market indicated that vendors took a slight loss the day of their event and that was due to heavy rains and reduced attendance.

An additional secondary affect is an indication that shopper attendance will increase. In the Shopper Questionnaire, shoppers were asked if they would be shopping at that market in the future. Over 93% indicated they would be shopping at the market again. Of the less than 7% who answered no, most indicated they were from out of state or out of town or did not know if they would shop again.

The Iowa Farmers Market Week/National Farmers Market Week project met its goal of increasing consumer awareness – a 60% increase in shoppers to markets; 18% were new shoppers; increasing knowledge and use of Iowa specialty crops by 71%. The project also provided secondary measureable increases in sales for vendors and attendance at future markets.

Lessons Learned: Farmers markets are the ideal venue to showcase specialty crops and market managers/organizers are more than eager to promote and increase the competitiveness of Iowa specialty crops via promotion at the markets.

Given the opportunity, many more markets would like to participate in planned activities to promote their farmers markets and Iowa specialty crops. With a planned activity and guidance, inexperienced and experienced market contacts are willing to move out of their comfort zone to undertake a multi-activity event giving them the opportunity to undertake new skills that will help to benefit their markets. Market contacts were also very appreciative of the help IDALS provided.

\$1.00 coupons redeemable only for Iowa specialty crop products and market tote bags made from recycled material were used as enhancements to attract shoppers to the market. The redemption rate for the coupons was 63%, but vendors reported they did not think the coupon was a major factor in increasing the sales of specialty crops. They indicated they felt the increase in sales was due to the overall promotional campaign. Vendor comments indicate they are supportive of events to promote and attract shoppers to the market.

Beneficiaries: The consumer public, the specialty crop producers, the market contact, the markets, the community and IDALS all benefited from the National Farmers Market Week/Iowa Farmers Market Week Promotional Event.

The consumer public derived benefits by: an increased knowledge of availability and use of Iowa specialty crops (via the cooking and tasting demonstrations and recipe packets); and, an increase in the awareness of their local farmers market.

The specialty crop producers benefited by: an increase in exposure or awareness of their specialty crops to additional/new/increased number of consumer public; specialty crop producers realized an increase in sales of their specialty crops on the day of the promotion; the specialty crop producers (as well as other market vendors) realized what an event could do to increase consumer public traffic (increased awareness of markets) to the market and for increased sales due to increased consumer public traffic. (See selected comments from vendors in Additional Information)

Several of the market contacts indicated they benefited by: moving out of their comfort zone to attempt a multi-activity promotion – giving them additional organizational skills; e.g., recruiting volunteers, dealing with the media, working with city/county officials and other members in the community to participate in the market. Even experienced market contacts expressed they, too, learned additional skills by participating in the promotional event.

Market contacts also indicated that the outline of the plan can easily be adapted to undertake other promotional efforts they attempt; the event provided visible and statistical proof to them and to their vendors and sponsors that increased consumer public awareness of specialty crops does increase market traffic and vendor sales.

The market as a whole benefited by the specialty crop promotion: increased consumer public awareness of the market and increased attendance; sales increased for vendors; consumer public indicating they will return to shop the market; gained a stature of importance as a selected partner with IDALS to hold the event; media coverage of the market gave it a status of importance within the community; recognition by community leader/government that the market is a viable and contributing entity.

The communities benefited by: attracting more consumer public to their city area and possibility generating sales/business in other businesses in town; and having the status of a community with a successful farmers market;

IDALS benefited by the celebration of National Farmers Market Week/Iowa Farmers Market Week: there were numerous events that took place all over Iowa; not just in one location; for one week, every day of that week there was a celebration of specialty crops somewhere in the state; it also demonstrated to IDALS that there are many markets and market contacts wanting to improve their markets (usually by increasing public awareness and shopping consumers) and wanting to learn how to do promotions.

Contact:

Tammy Stotts, Marketing Specialist
Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship
502 E 9th Street
Des Moines, IA 50009

Attachments:

Exhibit A - Outline of Market Partner Responsibilities	Exhibit E - Press Release	
Exhibit B - Iowa Congressional District		
Exhibit C - Coupon	Exhibit F - Customer Questionnaire	
Exhibit D - Proclamation Template	Exhibit G - Vendor Questionnaire	
<table border="1"><tr><td>Iowa Farmers Market Week/National Farmers Market Week Special Event – Outline and Partners' Duties/Responsibilities</td></tr></table>	Iowa Farmers Market Week/National Farmers Market Week Special Event – Outline and Partners' Duties/Responsibilities	Exhibit H - Photos from markets
Iowa Farmers Market Week/National Farmers Market Week Special Event – Outline and Partners' Duties/Responsibilities		

Date of Event: Your usual market day during the week of August 2 - 8, 2009

Scope of project: To increase the awareness, knowledge and use of specialty crops available at farmers markets by creating an event to celebrate Iowa and National Farmers Market Week and showcase specialty crops.

This one market day event will consist of:

- Shoppers using their \$1.00 coupons to purchase Iowa grown fruits and vegetables at your market;
- Hosting a cooking demonstration or sampling/tasting booth at your market;
- Distributing free re-usable market tote bags; Distributing free recipe cards; and
- Asking shoppers to complete a short survey about the special event

What your market will receive from IDALS:

- A \$200 check will be provided to each partner market:
 - \$150 dollars of the \$200 provided is to reimburse the specialty crop vendors who redeem the coupons.
 - \$50 is to help with the cost of a cooking demonstration(s) or a sample/tasting booth of specialty crops during the market day.
IMPORTANT: All funds must be spent on the day of the event for coupon redemption and cooking demonstration(s) or sample/tasting booth only.
- 150 coupons valued at \$1.00 each; Method of distribution is up to the market manager or market sponsor (consider your community and get your creative publicity juices flowing!);
- 150 re-usable, market tote bags for you to distribute throughout your market;
- Recipe cards to make available during the cooking demonstrations or at the sample/tasting booth; and
- Preprinted surveys

Partner Duties/Responsibilities:

1. Agree to the Duties and Responsibilities
2. Distribute coupons throughout your community - your choice of distribution (we can offer suggestions)
3. Pay vendors for coupon redemption

4. Report how many coupons were redeemed and return redeemed coupons (by Aug. 22, 2009) – Coupons will be good only for Iowa grown fresh fruits and vegetables and valid only during the week of Aug. 2-8, 2009.
5. Administer a short survey the day of the event to shoppers
(The survey is the measuring tool to see if the event increased the awareness, knowledge and use of Iowa specialty crops)
6. Send completed surveys to IDALS (by Aug. 22, 2009)
7. Distribute re-usable market tote bags; Distribute recipe cards
8. Take photos of event – send me some photos (by Aug. 22, 2009)
9. Host a cooking demo with market produce or sample/tasting booth
10. Send a press release to your local newspaper announcing the event
11. Request your mayor to do a proclamation for the market
12. Provide a normal market day estimated average shopper attendance and; Provide an estimated shopper attendance on the day of the event
(We need a starting number for estimated shopper attendance so when you send us the estimated shopper attendance on the day of the event we can determine if there was an increase in attendance or not)
13. Ask all vendors if they experienced an increase in sales because of the event and let me know results (e.g., 6 of the 10 vendors said they had a 10% increase)
14. Send redeemed coupons, completed surveys, vendor comments and any photos to IDALS by August 22, 2009

What IDALS will provide:

1. A \$200 check
2. 150 , \$1.00 coupons
3. 150 re-usable market tote bags
4. Recipe cards
5. A template for the press release to stylize with your market information for you to send to your local newspaper/media
6. Send a press release to statewide Iowa media about the project
7. A copy of the Iowa Farmers Market Week Proclamation
8. A copy of the National Farmers Market Week Proclamation
9. A template for a local Farmers Market Week Proclamation
10. Additional market posters to advertise the event, if you need them
11. Pre-printed surveys
12. Use the information provided by the managers in a report to USDA
13. Guidance and support throughout the entire Special Event project!

Iowa Farmers Market Week/National Farmers Market Week
August 2 — 8, 2009
Celebrating Iowa's Specialty Crops at Farmers Market



\$1.00 Fresh Coupon

Redeem this coupon towards your purchase of
Iowa's specialty crops
(fresh, Iowa grown produce and honey)
at the
ROLFE FARMERS MARKET

**CELEBRATING IOWA'S SPECIALTY CROPS
AVAILABLE AT FARMERS MARKETS
"FRESHNESS IS OUR SPECIALTY"**

Offer to redeem good only on Iowa specialty crops (fresh Iowa grown produce and honey) purchased at the market above, no cash value. Not good on prior purchases.

Sponsored by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship www.IowaAgriculture.gov
Funded by AMS/USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

Each market's coupons were stylized with the name of their market. This prevented redeeming the coupon at a market that was not selected as a partner – since non-participating markets would not have grant funds to reimburse the vendor.

FARMERS MARKET PROCLAMATION

DECIDE – whether you want a Week long or a day proclaimed

For your proclamation – decide if you want the week proclaimed or if you want just a day proclaimed. You can approach it as “Knoxville Farmers Market Day” as part of the Iowa Farmers Market Week / National Farmers Market Week; or “Knoxville Farmers Market Week” (as part of the IA Farmers Market Week....)

By having it as a day, it's a built in reason to go all out on one day. If your market is held more than once a week, you may opt for going with a week proclamation to cover all your market days in a week. Think ahead – your market day/market week could be the start of a yearly event for your market!

Whether you have a week or a day proclaimed is up to you.

WRITE THE PROCLAMATION

Read over the Proclamation Template and pick out all the points you want: use them as is, re-word them, write your own, however you want to do it, then finalize it with your closing. Usually a proclamation has 6-7 WHEREAS phrases and then the statement to proclaim. The mayor or county supervisor may have their own proclamation verbiage they insert as the last line, but put one in anyway, just in case they don't.

REQUESTING THE PROCLAMATION

Are you a city market or a county market (for those of you who have County in your market name; e.g., Clarke County Farmers Market)? Depending on the one government entity you use for the proclamation: Check with your City Clerk or County Clerk to see if the Mayor or a County Supervisor can issue a Proclamation. Do this well in advance (early July) since you may have to have the Proclamation Request item put on a City Council/County Supervisor meeting agenda for consideration. Ask if they need proclamation points and offer them the Proclamation that you wrote. Ask if they have a formal document that is issued and if so, will you or can you get a copy. If possible, at your market put the Proclamation up for all the people to see.

Invite the Mayor or County Supervisor to attend your market and make a presentation. (Be sure to include this information in your press release – that the city or the county has recognized and proclaimed your market day/week and that the mayor or county supervisor will be attending your market for the presentation).

CREATE YOUR OWN PROCLAMATION

PROCLAMATION TEMPLATE

The following are ideas for wording in a proclamation that you create yourself. You just use regular white paper, the mayor/supervisor office usually will put it on a nice paper with a seal of the city/mayor/county/supervisor and their signature.

You can use these statements verbatim, re-word, stylize with your market name and/or write your own to submit to your local government for your proclamation.

1. A proclamation usually has 6-7 items. Pick the 6-7 WHEREAS statements you want.

2. Select one closing. Those are the NOW THEREFORE sentences. Don't worry if the mayor/supervisor has their own set closing language they would prefer to use. Be sure to let them know if it is a proclamation for a week or for a day.

#1. + #2. = You have put together your own Proclamation.

If you have any questions email me at Barbara.lovitt@iowaagriculture.gov or call 515-281-8232.

WHEREAS, Summertime in (Iowa - or this could be your city _____) offers warm days with plentiful sunshine and an abundance and variety of locally-grown, fresh fruits and vegetables; and

WHEREAS, the _____ Farmers Market is an important outlet for providing those high quality, farm fresh, nutritional foods; and

WHEREAS, the _____ Farmers Market serves as an integral link between urban and rural communities, affording farmers and consumers the chance to interact; and

WHEREAS, the _____ Farmers Market is one of over 218 farmers markets in the State of Iowa; and

WHEREAS, the _____ Farmers Market supports this community by providing access to nutritious foods, providing a community people gathering place, and enhancing the local economy; and

WHEREAS, the _____ Farmers Market gives our new and small scale farmers an outlet for their products; and

WHEREAS, the citizens of (name of your city or county) are encouraged to recognize the importance of the bountiful production of our local producers, we applaud the efforts of the those who work to keep this market operating, and the contributions the _____ Farmers Market adds to our community; and

WHEREAS, the _____ Farmers Market contributes to _____ (name of your community) economy and overall health of its citizens; and

WHEREAS, our citizens are encouraged to recognize the bountiful production of our farmers and their contributions to our state by providing wholesome, nutritious foods; and

WHEREAS, the _____ Farmers Market participates in the Iowa Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) offering affordable and Iowa grown produce to nutritionally at-risk Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and Senior residents; and

WHEREAS, the _____ Farmers Market is an appealing destination for both vendors and shoppers by offering quality Iowa agricultural products, activities and services, and promoting Iowa agriculture; and

WHEREAS, the _____ Farmers Market contributes to the economic and social vitality of this community, creating a positive social experience, and educating consumers about their food and where it comes from; and

**You can use either of these closings or make up your own, or, the governmental entity that is issuing the proclamation may have their own they prefer.

NOW, THEREFORE, as Mayor of the City of _____, I do hereby proclaim August 2 – 8, 2009 as Farmers Market Week in _____ (name of your community).

NOW, THEREFORE, as Mayor of the City of _____, I do hereby proclaim August _____, 2009 as Farmers Market Day in _____ (name of your community).

For Immediate Release

Contact: Your Name
Phone: Your Phone Number
Email: (if applicable)

Date (date you send the release)

(Suggestions for a title, adapt, or write as needed – center this on the page in **bold type face**)

- (1) _____ Farmers Market Celebrates Iowa/National Farmers Market Week
- (2) August 2 – 8, 2009 Proclaimed_(name of your market)_ Farmers Market Week
- (3) Aug. (day) Proclaimed_(name of your market) Farmers Market Day

(Your market name) Farmers Market is celebrating the 10th Annual Iowa Farmers Market Week/National Farmers Market Week Aug. 2-8, 2009 as recognized by Mayor _____ who kicked off the local celebration of the State and National observance when she/he proclaimed (Aug 2-8, 2009; or the day) as (your market name) Week/Day.

(Your name name) is partnering with the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS) as part of a USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant Program project to celebrate Iowa Farmers Market Week/National Farmers Market Week. Iowa Farmers Market Week/National Farmers Week showcases the contributions and importance of farmers markets in the fabric our community, and our local grower's bountiful production of fruits and vegetables available for sale at the market. There are 219 farmers markets in the State, and, as one of the 20 markets selected to partner with IDALS in this project, (your market name) is excited about our special observance of (name of your market observance).

In celebration, the (your market name) will be distributing \$1.00 coupons to shoppers to redeem toward a purchase of locally grown, fresh produce; 150 shoppers will receive a free, reusable market tote; recipes packets will be available and a (cooking demonstration/tasting booth) will be featuring fresh produce available at the market.

At the signing, Mayor _____ said the (name of your market) Farmers Market is an important part of (your town or county name)'s economic and social well being. "All during the summer our market (or the name of your market) provides our residents with direct access to the freshest, affordable, and delicious produce our friends and neighbors grow, and creating a great community event for all to enjoy."

"We are in peak season, we are excited about celebrating (name of your market) Week/Day and we invite everyone to come and enjoy the day and shop the market", said Market Manager (your name).

The (your market name) Farmers Market is open every (day, location, time).

####

CUSTOMER QUESTIONNAIRE

**IOWA FARMERS MARKET WEEK/NATIONAL FARMERS MARKET WEEK
AUGUST 2 – 8, 2009**

Name of Market _____ Date _____

Have you been to our market before?

YES

NO

How did you hear about our market?

Radio

TV

Newspaper

Family/Friend

Poster

Other

Did you use the \$1.00 coupon today?

YES

NO

Did your visit to our tasting booth/cooking demonstration provide you with information about the produce availability or a new way to prepare produce?

YES

NO

Will you be shopping at our market in the future?

YES

NO

Vendor Questionnaire

Do they think they increased their sales for that day and if so, what percent increase would they guess that to be?

Do they think the event helped increase the number of shoppers?

Did the vendors have any problems with the coupons?

If possible I could use a couple of statements about the effect of the event for your vendors – and, for that matter, any comments you would like to make about the event.

The Official Newspaper of Manchester and Delaware County, Iowa

Search the Manchester Press!

This week in the NEWS . . . **Wednesday, August 5, 2009**

Manchester Farmers' Market celebrates Iowa/National Farmers' Market week

by Shandra Waugh

The Manchester Farmers' Market is celebrating the 10th annual Iowa Farmers' Market Week, Aug. 2 - 8 as recognized by Mayor Milt Kramer who kicked off this celebration with the proclamation that the Manchester Farmers' Market will participate in this celebration on Saturday, Aug. 8.

The Manchester Farmers' Market is partnering with the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS) as part of a USDA Specialty Crop Grant Program project to celebrate Iowa Farmers' Market Week/National Farmers' Market Week. This special week showcases the contributions and importance of farmer markets in the fabric of the community and the local grower's bountiful production of fruits and vegetables available for sale at the market. There are 219 farmers' markets in the state and one of the 20 markets selected to partner with IDALS in this project. The Manchester Farmers' Market is excited about their special observance that is to be held Aug. 8 from 7-11 a.m. at the 100 block of South Tama Street by the Delaware County Courthouse.

In celebration, the Manchester Farmers' Market will be distributing \$1 coupons to redeem toward the purchase of locally grown fresh produce.



City of Davenport Iowa

PROCLAMATION

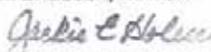
- Whereas: The Davenport Farmers' Market is one of 218 farmers markets in the State of Iowa that serves as a local outlet for providing high quality, farm fresh and nutritional foods; and
- Whereas: The Davenport Farmers' Market is as an integral link between urban and rural communities, affording farmers and consumers the chance to interact; and
- Whereas: The Davenport Farmers' Market participates in the Iowa Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) offering affordable and Iowa grown produce to nutritionally at-risk Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) and Senior residents; and
- Whereas: The Davenport Farmers' Market contributes to the economic and social vitality of this community, creating a positive social experience, and educating consumers about their food and where it comes from.

Now, Therefore, We, Bill Gluba, Mayor, and the City Council of the City of Davenport, Iowa, ask the community to join in recognizing the bountiful production of the Davenport Farmers' Market and in applauding the efforts of those working to keep this market operating, and now, do hereby declare August 2 – 8

Farmers' Market Week 2009




WILLIAM E. GLUBA, MAYOR


JACKIE E. HOLECEK, CMC, DEPUTY CITY CLERK

Mayor Declares Today Cherokee Area Farmers' Market Day

Thursday, August 6, 2009



Cherokee's Mayor, Pam Pierce, recently issued a Proclamation to declare Aug. 6 as Farmers Market Day in the City of Cherokee. This proclamation corresponds with National Farmers Market Week, Aug. 2-8, 2009

Cherokee Area Farmers Market is celebrating the 10th Annual Iowa Farmers Market Week/National Farmers Market Week August 2-8, today as recognized by Mayor Pam Pierce, who kicked off the local celebration of the State and National observances when she proclaimed today as Cherokee Farmers Market Day.

At the signing, Mayor Pierce said the Cherokee Area Farmers Market is an important part of Cherokee's economic and social well being.

"We are in peak season, we are excited about celebrating Cherokee Farmers Market Day, and we invite everyone to come and enjoy the day and shop the market," said Market Manager Jim Adamson.



Brenda Medick, 4-H Youth Coordinator, left,

along with Jim Adamson, Cherokee Area Farmers Market Manager, are pictured at the Cherokee Depot planning the activities for today's celebration of Cherokee Farmers Market Day. Photo by Mike Leckband [\[Click to enlarge\]](#)

Cherokee Area Farmers Market is partnering with the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS) as part of a USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant Program project to celebrate Iowa Farmers Market Week/National Farmers Market Week.

Iowa Farmers Market Week/National Farmers Market Week showcases the contributions and importance of farmers markets in the fabric of our community, and our local grower's bountiful production of fruits and vegetables available for sale at the market. There are 219 farmers markets in the State, and, as one of the 20 markets selected to partner with IDALS in this project, Cherokee Area Farmers Market is excited about the special observance of Cherokee Farmers Market Day.

In celebration, the Cherokee Area Farmers Market will be distributing 150-\$1 coupons to shoppers to redeem toward a purchase of locally grown, fresh fruit, vegetables or honey, plus 40 Cherokee Area Farmers Market coupons good for baked goods at the market and 150 shoppers will receive a free, reusable market tote bag. Recipes pamphlets which use locally grown food items will be available during a cooking demonstration/tasting booth inside the south end of the depot with fresh produce available at the market and prepared by the Cherokee County Mill Creek Valley and Country Pioneers 4-H clubs.

During the 4-H cooking demonstration, Denise Wyland, ISU Family Nutrition and Health Specialist, will have a booth featuring "Spend Smart, Eat Smart" and food preservation. Also the 4-H will be providing pressure-canning testing. People are encouraged to drop off their pressure gauges and members of the ISU Extension Office will test the gauges and will be available to be picked up the following week.

"This is the way were celebrating National Farmers Market Week along with the help from the state" added Adamson.

The Cherokee Area Farmers Market is open every Thursday June through September from 4 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at the restored, historic Cherokee Railroad Depot, 119 S. Fourth St., Cherokee.



Tasting Booth



Market Tote



Cooking Demonstration



Education



Shoppers



Manager, Vendor – Fun at the market!

Surveyor, Market



Mayor reading Proclamation

Farmers Market Impact Statement – Final Performance Report

Project Summary The growth of the number of farmers markets in Iowa is well documented but the actual sales and economic impact are more difficult and costly to document. A bench mark was set in 2004 when the National Agricultural Statistics Service/Iowa Agricultural Statistics Service surveyed the Iowa markets in 2004 and Dan Otto from Iowa State University performed the data analysis. In 2009 a second survey and analysis was completed by the same entities. The purpose of this project was to print and distribute the information involving the 2009 survey and the compare and contrast changes from 2004. The information compiled regarding the economic impact of farmers markets on Iowa's economy is a valuable tool that can be used to strengthen current markets, as an incentive to encourage the establishment of new markets, and to garner support for markets at local, state and national levels. This project compliments and enhances a previously funded project (Farmers Market Survey SCBG 12-25-B-0788) by taking the survey information and analysis and making it available as a tool to enhance the direct marketing efficacy of farmers markets and increase the sales and competitiveness of Iowa's specialty crop producers.

Project Approach This project was initiated by Barbara Lovitt, IDALS Marketing Specialist. The actual survey information and analysis this project depended on was not completed until late in 2009 just prior to Ms. Lovitt taking retirement. Paul Ovrom, IDALS Program Planner, assumed the project shortly thereafter, and with the help of Shauna Humrich, IDALS Information Technology Specialist, designed a one-page color brochure to highlight the survey and analysis information, a cover for the full 13 page report, and composed an introductory letter for Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Bill Northey. Mr. Ovrom was re-assigned to another bureau in early April of 2010 and Mike Bevins, IDALS State Horticulturist, assumed the project. Competitive printing bids were solicited through the Iowa Department of Management procurement system. The printing purchase orders was posted on the state website, first to Targeted Small Businesses, and a week later to other interested bidders. The reference to this project being funded by the SCBG program was included in both the brochure and the full survey. The successful bidder printed 3,000 copies of the brochure and 400 copies of the full survey. A press release giving selected highlights was issued by the IDALS on April 28, 2010. Katie Steinlage, IDALS intern, mailed 207 full survey reports and 2070 brochures to the market managers in early June. The full survey and summary brochure were posted to the IDALS website at http://www.agriculture.state.ia.us/Horticulture_and_FarmersMarkets/farmersMarketAssistance.asp.

Goals and outcomes achieved

Preliminary survey results were presented to farmers market managers and representatives during the annual meeting of the Iowa Farmers Market Association on February 20, 2010. The information in the press release generated 27 documented newspaper articles and three magazine articles. Five newspapers contacted the department to request additional information for more in depth or continuing articles. Three of the markets managers requested additional copies of the survey information to distribute to customers, potential sponsors, or the city council. There were three e-mail requests to have copies of the survey information mailed to in-state addresses. There was a request for the information from the Maryland Department of Agriculture, the Washington State University Small Farm program, and the Iowa State University Sociology Department. Three radio stations requested and aired interviews with a department representative to discuss the survey information and talk about the success of farmers markets. The full report was posted to the website in April of 2010. Unfortunately a new server was being used which did not start tracking the number of web hits until January of 2011. There were 97 hits in January, 81 in February, 78 in March, 49 in April, and 68 in May.

Beneficiaries It would be very difficult to determine the number of people who heard or read about the economic impact of farmers markets in Iowa or to say that the exposure to this information would translate into increased visits or sales of specialty crops at farmers markets. The number and length of newspaper articles and radio time generated by the farmers market survey press release was unusually high for a press release of this type and may be attributed to the survey results (sales had nearly doubled in five years) or the current high interest in local foods and farmers markets in general. The published statistically accurate numbers evidence the impact and scope of farmers markets on Iowa's economy. The results will provide leverage to garner additional support at the market level, the local, state and possibly the national level to enhance this direct marketing outlet increasing the competitiveness of Iowa's specialty crops.

Lessons Learned Since this project went through three different IDALS staff members before completion, the need for a well documented work plan and time line is critical to communicate the activities and achieve the goals. What may seem like a simple project at inception may become more difficult if significant staff reductions occur over the timeframe of project completion.

Although the printed survey results were not distributed to legislators or academia, the exceptional response from the media in publishing and airing the survey results and economic impact information provided greater exposure to reach more consumers. Printed materials are necessary but the best way to increase consumer awareness, vendor sales, and overall competitiveness of specialty crops is through media exposure.

Contact Person Mike Bevins, 515-242-5043,
mike.bevins@iowaagriculture.gov

Additional Information Iowa Farmers Market Economic Impact Study and summary brochure attached. Online information is at http://www.agriculture.state.ia.us/Horticulture_and_FarmersMarkets/farmersMarketAssistance.asp. Copies of newspaper articles or other materials are available upon request.

Final Report for IDALS Specialty Crop Block Grant Program 2009

Drake Neighborhood Farmers Market was awarded a Specialty Crops Block Grant for \$4,000. The grant funded the Specialty Crops Promotion Project. The project energized the Market through the promotion of specialty crops. The project increased Market attendance and sales of specialty crops through radio advertising and events that promoted specialty crops.

Project contact: Virginia Gieseke, 515-277-6951; email: vrgieseke@q.com

ISSUES

Radio Advertising

The Drake Neighborhood Farmers Market continually seeks to increase public awareness through news releases and community calendars, due to budget constraints that prohibit paid advertising. Radio advertising on popular stations will inform and remind the public about the Market.

Coloring Contest for Children

Health and nutrition studies show that children should eat more fruits and vegetables. A coloring contest will have "market money" prizes good only towards the purchase of specialty crops. The winners will learn about specialty crops available at the Market and their spending of the "market money" will also benefit specialty crop vendors.

Cooking Demonstration

People tend to buy a few certain fruits and vegetables on a regular basis because they can be eaten "as is", and they are familiar foods. A cooking demonstration, with free and easy recipes, will show how to use a variety of produce available at the Market.

Sweet Corn Festival

Iowans love fresh, locally grown sweet corn. A festival offering fresh roasted sweet corn at no charge will benefit a local grower, provide a sample taste, promote sweet corn sales, and boost attendance at the Market.

Coupons

Shoppers at the Drake Neighborhood Farmers Market represent a wide range of economic groups. Coupons providing a discount on specialty crops at the Market will be a purchase incentive.

Harvest Festival

Apples are an abundant Iowa specialty crop. A Harvest Festival will celebrate the varieties of apples, plus close the Market season with free apple pie and cider. The festival will promote the Market, increase attendance, and benefit a local apple grower.

HOW THE ISSUES WERE APPROACHED

Radio Advertising

The Drake Neighborhood Farmers Market purchased 6, one-minute advertisements on a popular radio station June 24 through August 12. We also purchased 2, half-minute spots on another popular radio station for the same time period. Each week the spots highlighted that week's special activity(s).

Coloring Contest for Children

The Market sponsored a coloring contest for children. The contest began June 17 and closed July 15. The contest had three age categories: 5-8, 9-12, 13-18. Members of First Christian Church and the Drake Neighborhood Association judged the entries. Each category had three winners: \$25 "market money" for first place, \$15 for second, and \$5 for third. The "market money" was valid for purchases of specialty crops at the Market July 22 through September 30. Specialty crop vendors were reimbursed for the "market money".

Cooking Demonstration

Chef Joe Godfroy was hired to give cooking demonstrations at the Market on July 22. He purchased produce ingredients from Market vendors, demonstrated how to prepare various vegetables and fruits, and provided free recipes and samples.

Sweet Corn Festival

The Market hired a sweet corn roasting machine and operator for July 29, and purchased 55 dozen ears of sweet corn from a local grower. The church's youth group served the corn, and received over \$200 in donations for their mission trip.

Coupons

The Market created coupons worth 50 cents towards the purchase of specialty crops. The coupons were distributed to shoppers weekly June 17 through September 30.

Harvest Festival

Apple pie and cider were purchased from a Market vendor, who grows the apples, and makes the pies and cider. Free pieces of pie and cider were given to shoppers.

GOALS

The goal of the Project was to increase Market attendance and sales by 10%.

RESULTS/PROGRESS TOWARD EXPECTED MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

Sales and Attendance

Sales and attendance increased in the 2009 season, as a result of radio advertising, specialty crop coupons, and specialty crop promotions.

Attendance during this Market season increased by 16%, compared to 2008.

Vendors of specialty crop and other products enjoyed increased sales. Sales by specialty crop vendors were increased by 74%, compared to 2008. Sales by non-specialty crop vendors were increased by 35%, compared to 2008.

Cooking Demonstrations

Chef Joe used produce available at the Market, and prepared easy, delicious recipes with unusual combinations of fruit and vegetables. 30 free recipes were taken by the demonstration audience.

Sweet Corn Festival

Attendance on July 29 was 885, and sweet corn sales for that day were 13% of the season's total.

LESSONS LEARNED

Results of a dot survey showed that radio advertising informed more people about the Market than any other publicity method (newspaper article, poster, TV), except for "word of mouth".

Lesson learned – Raising public awareness is vital.

Distribution of the specialty crop coupons was a success for those vendors affected.

Lesson learned – People want to eat better and to buy locally.

Although the Coloring Contest was well publicized, only seven children entered.

Lesson learned – Adults and children to not read posters and announcements; face-to-face with children was the best method to promote the Coloring Contest.

All Coloring Contest entrants were winners, but they didn't spend all the "market money".

Lesson learned – The perceived value of the “market money” was not great enough to ensure that it was all spent by some of the winners.

Attendance on Sweet Corn Festival day was greater than on any other Market day.

Lesson learned – People appreciate free food and a festive atmosphere.

CONCLUSION

The Specialty Crop Promotion Project of the Drake Neighborhood Farmers Market increased sales of specialty crops and other products, and increased attendance at the Market.

Financial Report for Specialty Crops Project

June – September, 2009

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>
Coloring Contest		
first place \$25, second place \$15, third place \$5 @ category;		
3 categories @ \$45 in "market money"	\$ 135*	\$57
Printing coloring pages and rules	3	3
Cooking Demonstration		
Chef Joe Godfroy @ \$100	100	100
Produce and ingredients	20	20
(see purchase order attached)		
Sweet Corn Festival		
Howard Porter, roaster rent and labor	200*	200
Deardorff Sweet Corn	160*	156.75
Supplies (butter, salt/pepper, napkins, foil wraps)	40*	58.24
(see purchase orders attached)		
Harvest Festival		
Iowa Orchard apple pies, 5 @ \$25	125*	125
Iowa Orchard apple cider, 8 gal. @ \$4	32*	32
(see purchase order attached)		
Coupons		
Coupons for specialty crops, 50 x 16 weeks x \$.50	400	400
Printing coupons, 200 copies (4 @ page) @ \$.05	10	10
Advertising		
KIOA and KRNT		
6, 1-minute radio spots, 8 weeks (June 24 – August 12)	3,000	3,000
KFMG		
2, .5-minute radio spots, 8 weeks, @ \$25	400*	400
Salary		
Virginia Gieseke		
Procuring items and arrangements for festivals; managing		
coloring contest, writing radio spots, producing coupons,		
record keeping; 25 hours @ \$15	375	375
Total	\$ 5,000	\$4,937

* complete or partial funding from First Christian Church

Drake Neighborhood Farmers Market

Sales data shows that non-specialty crop vendors also benefited from the Specialty Crop Promotion Project. 2009 sales increased 35% over 2008. Those vendors include kettle corn, poultry and eggs, crafts, and prepared food.

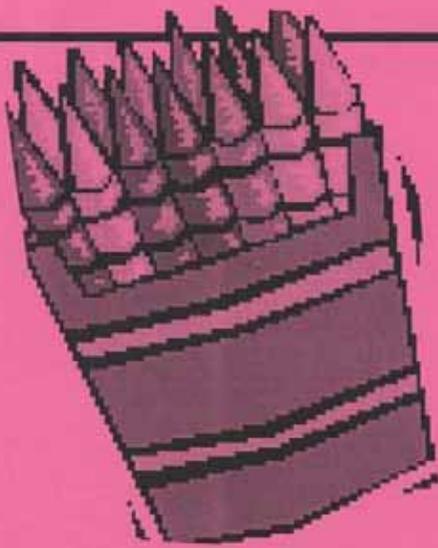


The cooking demonstration by Chef Joe Godfroy showed how easy and tasty it is to prepare dishes with fresh Iowa-grown produce.



Sales by specialty crop vendors were increased by 74% by the Specialty Crop Promotion Project.





Kids!

Enter the
Farmers Market

Coloring Contest

You could win \$25
in Market Money!

- Contest for kids ages 5–18
- Contest begins June 17,
and ends July 15
Winners announced July 22!
- Get your entry at the
Farmers Market

(at the First Christian Church table)



**DRAKE NEIGHBORHOOD
FARMERS MARKET MONEY**

\$1

Valid for lowa-grown fruits, vegetables, nuts,
flowers, plants, or honey **ONLY**.
Valid July 22 through September 30, 2009.
Not redeemable for cash.

This project is supported in part by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship and USDA Specialty Crops Grant Funds.

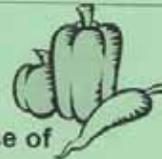
**DRAKE NEIGHBORHOOD
FARMERS MARKET MONEY**

\$2

Valid for lowa-grown fruits, vegetables, nuts,
flowers, plants, or honey **ONLY**.
Valid July 22 through September 30, 2009.
Not redeemable for cash.

This project is supported in part by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship and USDA Specialty Crops Grant Funds.

Drake Neighborhood
FARMERS MARKET COUPON



This coupon is good for 50 cents toward purchase of

50¢

lowa-grown fruits, vegetables, nuts,
flowers, plants, or honey **ONLY**



Valid June 17 through Sept. 30, 2009.
Not redeemable for cash.
One coupon per vendor.



This project is supported in part by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship and USDA Specialty Crops Grant Funds.

Davis County Farmers' Market**Market Manager:** Patsy Boas**Address:** 24153 Monarch Trail
Bloomfield, Ia 52537**Phone:** 641 459 3387

RECEIVED
JUN 28 2010
Organic Agriculture

Final Report

Need for project: To provide an organized market for local people to purchase or sell locally grown produce. To establish a Tuesday market to go along with the Saturday Market we already have. This provides the opportunity for consumers to have fresh locally grown produce mid-week and provides a second outlet for local producers, as most crops must be picked at least twice a week.

How the problem was approached: To start a Tuesday farmers market and increase the overall market, with increased advertising and publicity/promotion.

How the Goals were achieved: The first part of April posters were put up in greenhouses advertising for venders. Five weeks before the opening of the Davis county Farmers' Market advertisements for venders were put in the Tri- County Shopper. Two weeks before the opening day posters were put up in public places, advertising the Market days and times, in Bloomfield and the surrounding areas and towns. The week of the Market opening an advertisement was put in the Bloomfield Democrat and on the cable news. The Davis County Farmers Market opened Saturday, May 16 and Tuesday, May 19. Signs were put up each market day at the north side of town and on the square in the main traffic area. After receiving the grant in June weekly advertisements were put in the Tri- County shopper and the Bloomfield Democrat. The first part of June a display was put in the window of an empty building advertising the market, which

stayed up all season. Surveys were distributed and collected the first part of the season and again towards the end of the season. The first of August 100 - \$.50 coupons were distributed among local businesses to be handed out to their customers, to be redeemed at the market. The middle of August posters were distributed advertising a special event at the market where recipes and tasting samples were handed out the last Saturday in August and the last Tuesday in August cooking demonstration, tasting samples and recipes were handed out. Post cards were handed or mailed out informing all venders of a meeting to be held. October 24 and end of the season vender meeting was held, gross sales were handed in.

Results, conclusions and lessons learned: Main Street's budget was cut so they were not able to contribute the \$300 as planned, but more venders participated than expected so that covered the shortfall. When putting the advertisement in the Tri-County shopper we received a discount and when putting the advertisement on the cable news it cost less to run the ad continuously all month rather than twice a week, which enabled us to put weekly advertisements in the Bloomfield Democrat newspaper. Of the 100 coupons distributed only 16 were redeemed, next time they need to be in a larger denomination.

Tuesdays averaged 6.3 venders per week, our goal was 5. There was a 23.5% increase in the number of venders attending the markets over last year. Yearly gross sales increased 28.5% over last year, our goal was 10%. Of those who returned surveys, 18% were first time shoppers.

The Tuesday Market was well received by customers as well as venders. We have heard many good remarks about both markets. Besides the regular market season we held two special markets, one in November and one in December which were well attended.

We will continue to put out surveys to get the public's input for improvements in the market and continue to monitor the yearly gross sales to measure the "health" of the market. We are constantly on the watch for new venders. Information about Davis County Farmers' can be found on Bloomfield Main Street's web site at www.BloomfieldMainStreet.com

Budget: Expenses

Miscellaneous		Advertising	
Ia Farmers market workshop	\$80.00	Tri- county Shopper	\$697.25
Demco (3 signs)	643.41	Bloomfield democrat news p	648.31
Ia Farmers Market Ass.	20.00	cable news	36.00
Patsy Boas (menards mats)	42.71	<u>coupons redeemed</u>	<u>8.00</u>
Buy/Fresh Buy/Local membership	50.00	Total Advertising expense	\$1389.56
Get To-gather room rental	55.00		
<u>Postage & cards</u>	<u>22.75</u>		
Total Miscellaneous expense	\$913.87		
Total Expense \$2303.43			

Names and Addresses of businesses

Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship 502 east 9th ST. Des Moines Ia 50319

Demco 4810 forest Run Road, Madison, Wisconsin 53707-7488

Buy/Fresh Buy/Local c/o NRCS 1805 W Jefferson, Fairfield, IA 52556

Get To-gather Room c/o Lynch Realty 103 E Franklin, Bloomfield, IA 52537

Tri-County Shopper PO Box 168 (Hwy 63 North) Bloomfield, IA 52537

Bloomfield Democrat & Cable News 207 S Madison, Bloomfield, IA 52537



Window Display

DAVIS COUNTY
FARMERS MARKET

TUESDAYS
 3P.M. TO 6P.M.

SATURDAYS
 8:30A.M. TO 11:30 A.M.

SUPPORTED IN PART BY THE
 IOWA DEPARTMENT OF
 AGRICULTURE, LAND
 STEWARDSHIP & USDA
 SPECIALTY CROPS
 GRANT FUNDS

Tri-County Shopper

F A R M E R S'

M A R K E T

Tuesdays, 3 p.m. - 6 p.m. Saturdays, 8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

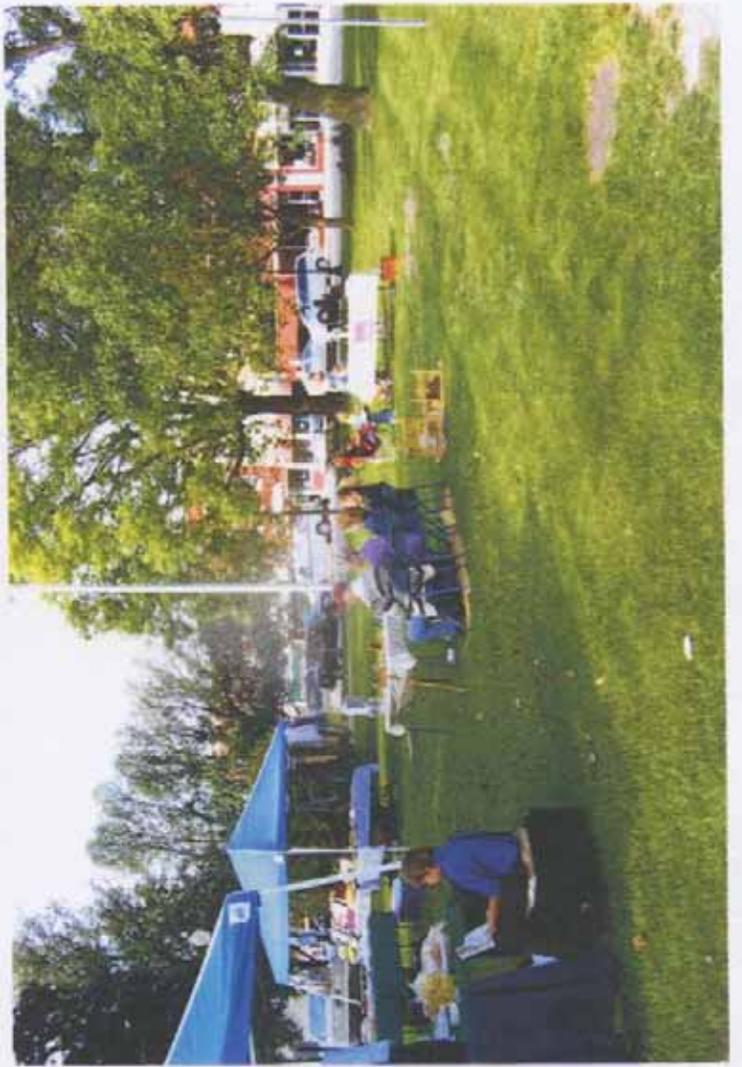
North Courthouse Lawn

Supported in part by Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship and USDA Specialty Crops Grant Funds.

Democrat

Bloomfield Democrat







Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship

State Point of Contact: Tammy Stotts

USDA AMS Agreement Number: 12-25-B-0866

Specialty Crop Block Grant Program Annual Performance Report

July 22, 2011

“Increasing Awareness and Use of Iowa Specialty Crops”

Project Title: On-farm Market Improvement Toolkit

Project Summary: Marketing options for Iowa's specialty crop growers is often times overlooked due to the additional expenses involved and lack of budget to support it. By offering specialty crop farm operators an on-farm Market Improvement Toolkit, we can give them the tools to help them enhance their current operation and marketing skills to draw more customers.

Project Approach: Discussions with specialty crop producers targeted areas that could be strengthened by the use of an on-farm market improvement toolkit. Issues such as curb-side appeal and displays, road-side signs and food safety were among the items listed. IDALS staff worked to seek information that could address these areas to farmers in different stages of business development. Books were ordered as well as food safety articles and posters. In addition, harvest calendar magnets and road side sign information provided by the Department of Transportation were gathered.

These materials were offered in an attractive "marketing toolkit". One hundred toolkits were made available at events targeting specialty crop producers. A survey was included with each toolkit to assess the benefit derived from this project.

Goals and Outcomes Achieved: People were very receptive to the toolkits. Survey results showed that most growers indicated a growth of between 5-10%. It is very difficult to attribute growth in a farming business when most variables are out of the growers control (weather, disease, pests). The economic goal of this project was a 10% increase. Another measure of success was the number of changes that the growers planned to add or change in their current business based on the information made available to them through the toolkit. Surprisingly, an average of five categories were selected as areas of change or improvement. Growers commented on the benefits of having this resource available in one place as a quick reference. In addition, some growers thought the materials in the toolkit could be used to strengthen other marketing avenues such as Community Supported Agriculture (CSA).

An anticipated increase of 15% in existing farm stands or on-farm stores was expected as a result of providing this resource. Surveys were included with each toolkit. It was also anticipated that many of the toolkits would go to producers that did not have an established on-farm business. The reality of this is that many of the toolkits did go to veteran growers that were seeking to increase their business. That coupled with the fact that we have contracted with a company to create a new self-enrollment directory that will be launched in January of 2012 and therefore did not update the 2010 directory, makes it difficult to measure this goal. Utilizing other established directory resources along with the survey results, there are 27 on farm markets not previously accounted for.

Lessons Learned: In 2006, there were 96 farm stands or on-farm stores registered in our directory. The creation of 100 toolkits seemed adequate to target this audience. More growers seem to be seeking to diversify their markets and are not focusing on one method of sale but are branching out and selling at multiple venues and markets.

The primary distribution of these toolkits occurred at an evening “round table session” during the Iowa Fruit and Vegetable Growers’ Annual Conference. Not enough toolkits were made available for this group and additional toolkits were delivered at the conference the following day. In addition, Rural Conservation and Development (RC&D) offices holding grower group meetings requested toolkits for distribution at their meetings as well. Future projects should take into consideration that regardless of time involved or experience, many growers are still seeking new marketing approaches to expand their current operations. Additional marketing campaigns should be geared toward more growers.

Beneficiaries: Producers of specialty crops throughout the state benefitted as a result of the information found in the On-Farm Market Toolkit. While the toolkit targeted on-farm markets, the promotional material as well as website and email information proved beneficial to growers in a vast number of customer-oriented markets.

Contact:

Tammy Stotts, Marketing Specialist
Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship
502 E 9th Street
Des Moines, IA 50319

Attachments:

- Exhibit A: On-Farm Market Toolkit Design
- Exhibit B: On-Farm Market Improvement Toolkit content list
- Exhibit C: Grower letter
- Exhibit D: Survey

On-Farm Market Improvement Toolkit

**Funds for On-Farm Market Improvement
Toolkit were provided by a USDA Specialty
Crop Block Grant**



On-Farm Market Improvement Toolkit

Exhibit B

In this On-Farm Marketing toolkit you will find a variety of resources that should aid in the marketing of your products and produce/fruit.

The funding for this toolkit is received from a USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant. In order to obtain future funding, we are required to provide measurable outcomes. Please complete the enclosed survey and return it to our office within six months of receiving the toolkit. An e-mail reminder will be sent to you.

Resources Available in Toolkit:

1. Transport Storage Requirements for Produce (Poster)
2. Food Safety Begins on the Farm (book)
3. ISU Publications/Articles
 - a. Writing Material for Promotion
 - b. Creating a display
 - c. Creating a website
 - d. Promoting Your Business
 - e. Marketing on the Internet
 - f. A Marketing Primer for start-up businesses
 - g. Direct Marketing- Getting started
4. Entertainment Farming and Agri-Tourism
5. MU: Selling Strategies for Local Food Producers
6. Jane Eckert: Fresh Grown Promotions (book)
7. Harvest Magnet
8. TODS (Tourist Oriented/Directional Signing)- Guidelines for Signage
9. Other Brochures
10. Survey

Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship
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Bill Northey, Secretary of Agriculture

Dear Fruit and Vegetable Producer:

Last year you received an On-Farm Market Improvement Toolkit. This On-Farm Marketing toolkit provided resources such as a “Transport Storage Requirement” poster and a book on food safety and Fresh Grown Promotions by Jane Eckert. This kit was designed to aid in the marketing of your on-farm fruit and vegetable market.

We hope that you have found the information contained in this toolkit useful. Funds for this project were received from a USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant. Each year the Iowa Department of Agriculture has the opportunity to apply for grant funding to help increase the competitiveness of Iowa specialty crops. In order to continue to apply for this funding, we need to be able to measure the success of our projects. As a recipient of a toolkit, we ask that you complete the survey provided to you in the toolkit and return it to us as soon as possible. A survey has been attached for your convenience.

Please send completed surveys by fax to: 515-281-6178 or mail them to:

IDALS
Tammy Stotts
502 E 9th Street
Des Moines, IA 50319

Thank you for your help!

Tammy Stotts
Marketing Specialist
Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship
515-281-7657

On Farm Market Improvement Toolkit Business Strengthening Survey

For the purpose of this survey, please use 1 as an indicator of low approval and 5 as the highest or most favorable mark.

Please rate the overall content of the toolkit 5 4 3 2 1

The use of this toolkit helped me to:

Increase my ability to create eye-catching displays 5 4 3 2 1

Increase my marketing through website/media 5 4 3 2 1

Increase my awareness of TODS (directional signs) 5 4 3 2 1

Increase the marketing tools used (i.e. now offer coupons...) 5 4 3 2 1

Did your business realize increased sales as a result of any of these changes? Yes No

If yes, what is an appropriate estimate in the increase? 1-5% 5-10% More than 10%

Please indicate what tools you plan to add to or change in your current business

Merchandising tips	Parking Changes	Changes to Store Structure/grounds
Insurance	Safety Tips	DOT Signs
Marketing/Instructional Sign	Web Page	Coupons
Comment Cards/suggestions	Email-lists	Other _____

What could have been added to this program to make it more beneficial to you?

Other comments:

To monitor the growth your business achieves an additional survey will be sent to you in approximately 6 months. Please answer the following questions regarding your current business so we may monitor the potential impact the information provided in the toolkit may have on existing businesses

How long have you operated an on-farm store/stand? First year 1-5 years 6-10 years

Current number of customers per week (please approximate) <10 11-30 31-50 50+

Approximate money received per week during peak season <\$50 \$51-\$250 \$251-\$500 over \$500

Please note: Your prompt response is essential in the completion of the grant requirements.

Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship

State Point of Contact: Tammy Stotts

USDA AMS Agreement Number: 12-25-B-0866

Specialty Crop Block Grant Program Final Performance Report

October 12, 2011

“Increasing Awareness and Use of Iowa Specialty Crops”

Project Title: Supplemental Chapter Funding

Project Summary: Schools are not immune to the effects of the financial crisis. Continued budget cuts impact choices they, along with parents, are able to make for our school-age children. With unforgiving budgets, providing students with fresh, locally-grown fruits and vegetables may be a hard choice to make. By offering established Farm to School Chapters funds to procure locally-grown fruits and vegetables we are also providing our local specialty crop producers with another marketing opportunity and spreading the awareness of Iowa's specialty crop industry to students and parents throughout our communities.

Project Approach: Emails were sent to the ten established chapters offering them funds of \$900 to be used solely for the procurement of locally-grown fruits and/or vegetables for use in school meals or as part of a snack offered during the school day. In addition to a one-page application, chapters were sent a financial and performance report so we could track the impact of this opportunity.

Each chapter was given a deadline of May 1 to complete their purchases. Funds were offered in August, allowing chapters the opportunity to procure a variety of specialty crops available throughout the fall and a few additional crops that are available in the spring, impacting a wider range of specialty crop producers.

Goals and Outcomes Achieved:

We had a goal of impacting at least 6200 students with this one-time funding opportunity. We are happy to report, that this funding opportunity far exceeded our expectations. One school district alone with a population of 6500 students served all students, those eating hot lunch as well as those that brought their own lunch that day, locally-grown lettuce during a "Spring Greens Day" campaign. Prior to this event, local community members, school administration and food service employees went to tour the farms before procuring lettuce. The educational experience and related media surrounding this event may have proven the most valuable part of this event.

In addition to the "Spring Greens Day" completed surveys showed that all schools had an interest in purchasing local produce again. In addition they all indicated these purchases would not have been possible without this funding. Purchases were made from more than seven growers that had not worked with a school in the past. Well over 7,000 students were served fresh fruits or vegetables from local growers spanning from one occasion to over several months.

Lessons Learned: Schools were very receptive to this initiative. Offering them funds for the sole purpose of procuring locally grown specialty crops simplified things and proved to be a great learning opportunity. The Iowa City school district that embarked on the Spring Greens Day has shown an interest in continuing to procure from Iowa growers. This event is also serving as a model for others around the state. If a district with 25 schools can pull off an event like this and source the amount needed to feed 6500 students, it opens the door for many smaller schools to do the same.

Beneficiaries: Producers of specialty crops throughout the state benefitted as a result of this activity as well as the more than 7,000 students that got to eat fresh, healthy fruits and vegetables grown in or around their communities.

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