

## **Supporting Community Health and Sustaining Agriculture through the Purchase of Locally Grown Produce**

**Agricultural Development Office - County of Halifax, VA** received \$10,645 to provide bi-weekly consumer-based educational programs at the Downtown South Boston Farmers Market; purchase equipment to enhance market operations; and improve market visibility through promotional activities and an advertising campaign. Funds were used to pay for educational classes at the market; storage, processing and waste management equipment; and promotional advertisements and brochures.

### **Final Report**

## *Farmers Market Activities 2008 - 2009*

Downtown South Boston Farmer's Market, FMPP Final Report  
09/02/2011

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- 2/14/2008 – EFNEP got a “Volunteer Master Cook” grant. This will allow EFNEP/SCNEP (Expanded Food Nutrition Education Program/Smart Choices Nutrition Education Program) to train volunteers. These volunteers will then put on demonstrations at the local South Boston Farmer's Market to demonstrate different locally grown vegetable uses/recipes. In Planning District 13, there has been an expressed interest and need in volunteers being stationed at the farmer's market for fruit and vegetable demonstrations, and at food distribution sites for recipe dissemination for those odd foods that people may not know how to prepare.
- 2/29/2008 - Downtown South Boston Farmers' Market membership voted to support the USDA Coupons, and Extension will pursue with the Agency on Aging.
- 3/5/08 – Inquired with Agency on Aging to participate in the Farmers Market Nutrition Program in Halifax County.
- 3/10/08 – Letter of support from Virginia Cooperative Extension Service (VCE). VCE will provide educational programming in the area of Marketing and Nutrition.
- 3/14/08 – Letter of support and need from the “Downtown South Boston Farmers Market” requesting refrigeration, to expand to promote more young growers, women, and limited income small farmers.
  - May 23- Keeping Leafy Vegetables Crisp & Fresh – prepared handouts for use at the market.
  - June 20 – Cooking Tips For Fresh Vegetables – Master Food Volunteers (4)
  - July 4 - Easy Recipes For Good Health – prepared handouts for market.
  - July 12 – Seasoning Without Salt – Fresh Herbs
  - August 1 – Cooking with Fresh Tomatoes – Master Food Volunteers (2)
  - August 15- Fruits & Nuts For Healthy Eating – prepared and handed out brochures
  - August 29- Home Canning & Freezing - Ellen Smith VCE-FCS Agent
  - June – August - Two MG volunteers running the Master Gardener Help Desk at the Market every Saturday in these three months.
- 10/15/08 – Introduced 23 FM vendors on the Farmers Market Nutrition Program requirements for Vendors; held at VCE in the auditorium. (FMNP through Dept of Aging in Richmond)

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- 10/17/08 – Met with representative from the Buckingham County Farmers’ Market to give her pointers on starting a market and letting her see our market in action as well as the physical property and equipment in use.
- 12/4/08 – 18 vendors in attendance. Two part Marketing training by Denise Mainville, and Bill McCaleb from VCE. " **Marketing the Market**" & "**Your Integrity Goes Home With The Customer**"
- 12/7/08 – Met with representatives from Charlotte County looking to start a FM at Charlotte Courthouse.
- 2/4/09 – 2500 Farmer Market Rack Cards ordered and received advertising the Downtown South Boston Farmers’ Market.
- 2/6/09 – 6 vendors signed up and attended on-line program “Vegetable Production & Marketing for Vendors” at VCE auditorium.
- 2/17/09 – Press release on the new building/refrigeration/equipment for the DSBFM sent to the Gazette-Virginian and The News & Record.
- 2/26/09 – 12 vendors in attendance. “Marketing Yourself & Your Product”. Four hour training put on by Bill McCaleb and Denise Mainville at the Halifax VCE office. Training to teach methodology on produce display techniques.
- 3/10/09 – 12 vendors & 1 Virginia Cooperative Extension employee in attendance. **Market Managers Brainstorming Session**, put on by VT, in Chatham VA. Market President and VP carpooled to training with Bill McCaleb. Mileage paid for by VCE.
- 3/17/09 – established a \$value for the South Boston Farmers Market and equipment for inclusion under the VML insurance. Value of equipment, refrigeration, and building addition established at \$10,000
- 4/8/09 – 11 vendors/potential vendors in attendance. **Why Sell At A Farmers’ Market** training (4 hours) Bill McCaleb (VCE), Dr. Walker (VCE), Theresa Nartea (VSU).
- 4/16/09 – Announced the approval for Halifax County funding (\$10,050) for the FM Senior Nutrition Program through the Lake Country Agency on Aging, a division of the Virginia Agency on Aging.
- 4/18/09 –16 vendors in attendance. 2 hour training held for vendors to be approved for inclusion in the FMSNP. Training provided by Stan Duffer of the Virginia Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services.
- 5/18/09 – 14 vendors/potential vendors in attendance. 3 hour training on “Market Displays That Make the Sale” Presented by Theresa Nartea, Cliff Somerfield, Bill McCaleb. Open to vendors and potential vendors as well as those wanting to start a ‘farm market’.
- 6/6/09 – Downtown South Boston Farmers’ Market opened with 35 permits sold of which 30 where produce vendors.

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- 6/13/09 - 9/12/09 – VCE Master Gardeners manned the “Help Desk” at the South Boston FM every Saturday through the season, with 138 hours of volunteer time contributed. 234 contacts were made (Questions/Inquiries taken care of). 18 referrals for research; 24 soil test kits distributed. VCE Food Volunteers put on three separate demonstrations during the season highlighting locally grown vegetables; squash, cucumbers, melons, tomatoes, radishes, carrots, turnip greens, mustard greens. Samples were prepared and available at each demonstration along with printed recipes for the dishes prepared.
- 8/8/09 – canning demonstration by VCE FCS agent.
- 11/13/09 – Annual meeting held. The president reviewed with the membership, a very successful year, and went over results of the survey the vendors filled out daily throughout the growing season given out regarding totals for the season by each type of vegetable.

### Summary:

These programs were held as informational and education programs for vendors and guests at the Downtown South Boston Farmer’s Market in Halifax County, VA. These programs were funded in part by USDA and in part by presenters and speakers. Guests learned a variety of information including health benefits, how-to’s, etc. Each speaker did a wonderful job of teaching and explaining and participants were thrilled with information taken away. This grant helped to make the educational seminars and additions of practical and integral parts to the Farmer’s Market possible.