



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

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**LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL OFFICIALS OPEN DOORS
TO SUPERMARKET IN BLUE HILL**

Blue Hill, Neb., May 15 – Price's Supermarket officially opened its doors today at a grand opening ceremony attended by Governor Mike Johanns, Nebraska State Director for USDA Rural Development Jim Barr and various key players. The \$650,000 facility stands on the site of the grocery store lost to fire in January 2001. The supermarket will serve the 681 rural households of Blue Hill and surrounding areas with a full line of grocery items.

Governor Johanns stated, "Blue Hill should take great pride in their new supermarket which will impact the lives of many." "I commend the leveraging of local, state and federal funding which made this supermarket come to be. Small commercial businesses are essential to rural Nebraska communities as they diversify the predominantly agricultural rural economy of our state."

The new 5,400 square foot, pre-engineered steel building, custom designed for use as a grocery store is considered an essential business, as it is the only business of its type within a 15-mile radius of Blue Hill. Blue Hill recognized the valuable service the store had brought to their community as reflected in a comprehensive needs assessment survey taken by its residents which identified replacing the grocery store as a number one priority.

"I am pleased to see how USDA Rural Development dollars are at work in rural Nebraska," stated Barr. "USDA Rural Development recognizes the importance of businesses, such as Price's Supermarket, to rural communities as they assist in keeping the local economy strong and the community viable."

Noted benefits to the community of 810 include the availability of a grocery store to a large portion of local residents that are unable to commute 15 miles to the nearest grocery stores. A strengthened downtown commerce as 27 main street businesses benefit from the business traffic generated by the supermarket. An increased workforce as Price's Supermarket added two part-time positions to the retained ten full time positions, thus helping to diversify the economy.

Numerous financial partners provided funding to rebuild Price's Supermarket. Rural Economic Development Loan funds from USDA Rural Development totaling \$46,000 were awarded to the Glenwood Telephone Membership Corporation of Blue Hill, who in turn dispersed the funds to the Blue Hill Community Foundation, Inc. Additionally, the Commercial

Bank of Blue Hill assisted with a \$38,500 loan for tax increment financing. Community Development Block Grant Funds of \$65,000 were provided by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development, with the Winther Foundation adding an additional \$50,000 grant. Local donations were received from the Blue Hill Community Foundation totaling \$93,801 and the Commercial Bank of Blue Hill donated \$25,000. Grocery store proprietors contributed insurance claim proceeds of \$250,000 for interior fixtures, equipment and inventory.

John Weddingfeld, president for the Board of Directors of Blue Hill Community Foundation stated, "This is a day of celebration for Blue Hill as we have triumphed over a devastating loss." "Our success is due to the collaborative efforts of both state and federal officials who assisted us in finding the financial resources that helped us in our time of need. Also, without the strong support of our community the grocery store would not have come to be. We hope that Blue Hill will showcase to other communities what can be accomplished through the teamwork of local, state and federal partners."



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The Blue Hill Community Foundation, a local nonprofit corporation, owns and maintains the grocery facility. The Foundation Board of Directors provides financial oversight and property management of the building. Barnason's Supermarket, Inc. (d.b.a. Price's Supermarket), a Nebraska Corporation owns the grocery business. Marvin and Peggy Price, sole stockholders in the corporation manage and operate Price's Supermarket. The Price family has been in the grocery business since 1892. Marvin and Peggy owned and operated the original Price's Supermarket since 1995.

Price's Supermarket is affiliated with Affiliated Foods Midwest that serves 800 stores in 10 states and offers a broad range of services in a cooperative environment. This enables small, rural grocers to compete, while providing affordable products to their customers. Affiliated Foods Midwest will also enable the Price's to keep abreast of the latest opportunities and strategies in the grocery business.

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