



Committed to the future of rural communities.

Arkansas—Rural Housing Service

Local & Regional Food Systems

Grant Funded Farmers Market Promotes Locally Grown Produce

Outline Of Need:

The City of Newport approached Rural Development about a grant to help them build a more secure, visible, and covered pavilion for their Farmers Market.

How Rural Development Helped:

Rural Development was able to secure Community Facilities grant funds in the amount of \$19,000. With the grant funds from Rural Development and the grant funds in the amount of \$25,000 from Arkansas Economic Development Commission, \$5,400 from Arkansas Department of Agriculture, and the City of Newport contribution of \$5,400 which came from fundraising, the city was able to add an asset to the community for many years to come.

This project is located in Jackson County, which is a part of the “Strike Force Initiative”. This project also is a “Know Your Farmer Know Your Food Initiative” which has helped promote the local food system and has spurred economic opportunities for small and limited resource farmers.

The Results:

The City of Newport has had a farmers market in place since 2007, but it was lacking several things that were keeping it from



Saturday Morning at the Newport Farmers Market.

succeeding. It was on an asphalt parking lot that tends to be hot during the summer. It also was under temporary canopies, which is very susceptible to rain and wind.

The vendors would be scattered all over the parking lot so there was no flow to the market, which caused some vendors to lose sales. But one of the major problems was the visibility of the project. On a typical Saturday morning at the farmers market they would have only about 8 vendors.

Since the city was able to secure the grant funds from USDA Rural Development they were able to construct a large pavilion in a high traffic area. The new pavilion provides a one stop covered pavilion on a larger site that has higher visibility. Since the construction of the pavilion the amount of vendors have now doubled. Now on a typical Saturday morning they have approximately 18 to 20 vendors. Some vendors have indicated that their sales have increased by as much as 50%. This has enabled the citizens of Newport and surrounding rural areas to have high quality homegrown and safe supply of fresh produce. With the produce being locally grown the citizens are more confident that the products are safe and fresh, while stimulating the economy by spending money locally. With this being in Jackson County which is a “Strike Force Initiative” County, every dollar spent locally is of great benefit to the community.

Fast Facts

Program: USDA Rural Development Community Facilities

Investment: \$19,000 Grant

Congressional District: AR-01

Partners: Arkansas Economic Development Commission, Arkansas Department of Agriculture, Ozark Foothills RC&D Council and the City of Newport

Demographics:

Population of Newport-7,811

Impact:

- Increase in the number of vendors participating
- Some vendors have increased sales of produce by as much as 50%
- Farmers Market is a one stop shop for the citizens to buy produce from a trusted source

August 2011