Establishing An Urban Farmers’ Market
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Introduction
Establishing a Farmers’ Market where no market existed in a rural farming community has been an incentive to assist local farmers in increasing their personal incomes. Marketing their locally grown produce from a market location within the community serves to provide residents a means to acquire fresh vegetables at a reasonable cost. Additionally, the market is located in an area of the community that has been identified as a food desert.

Objectives
To provide a market for local small and beginning farmers to increase their incomes by marketing their locally grown produce.
To provide residents of the community that has been identified as a food desert a means to acquire fresh vegetables within one mile of their homes at a reasonable cost.

Methods
County Extension Staff with an Advisory Committee of small farmers discussed the needs of small farmers and the possibility of starting a Farmers Market. A community based non profit organization with space for a potential market agreed to provide the space needed for a market and assistance in overseeing the operation of the market. Guidelines for the market were established and a market manager was named. The units of local government provided some necessary amenities to the market site. The local Chamber of Commerce provided resources needed to publicize the market.

Outcomes and Impacts
A Ribbon Cutting for the Farmers Market was held on May 3, 2012. This very young market is in the process of establishing itself in the community with produce vendors who are small or beginning farmers. Farmers are increasing their personal incomes by marketing their locally grown produce from a location within the community. The market is open on a weekly basis. Community residents are visiting and making purchases from the market and some are returning as repeat customers. It is estimated that farmers marketing produce at the local market on a weekly basis can add an additional three to five thousand dollars to their household income annually.

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