

Small Farms Marketing Assistance Project (M.A.P.)

Farmers markets are often a good way for farmers to sell their produce and receive a close-to-retail price for their products. Farmers markets are often a challenge for small farm operations however, many of which have trouble meeting official market certification requirements given their limited resources. In south Fresno, a marketplace assessment found that consumers lacked local food shops offering quality produce. When asked about the possibility of buying produce from outdoor farmers markets, 48 percent of surveyed Fresno consumers were accustomed to the idea and considered them an acceptable location to purchase food. The goal of this project was to assist in the establishment of an “ethnic” farmers market; the resulting market gave local African American, Asian, and Latino farmers a means to increase their sales while offering consumers a venue to buy fresh produce.

Project Impacts:

- The Golden Westside Farmers Market (GWSFM) was established and operated for nine months. The market was subsequently moved to a temporary location at the Thyme for Tea Teahouse.
- A Harvest Festival took place in the fall of 2006. Over fifty residents of southwest Fresno attended the event. A Spring Festival was also held the next year at the market's new location.
- Volunteers conducted a survey of consumers attending the Harvest Festival to determine consumers' unmet need for fresh produce and how the farmers market could best serve the community. The survey concluded that 35 percent of those attending the Harvest Festival could not afford healthy food in their household and that 11 percent of those surveyed attended the farmers market regularly.
- Richard Molinar, farm advisor for Fresno County, gave two presentations at farmers market events. Market attendees and farmer vendors learned how to grow oyster mushrooms in plastic bags during his first presentation. His second presentation focused on organic certification and what benefits organic produce has for consumers.
- GWSFM committee staff are engaged in business development with a local CSA distributor to begin CSA delivery to west Fresno residents.
- GWFM committee partners applied for Food Stamp vendor status for the market to facilitate resident participation.



Selling medicinal herbs at the Golden Westside Farmers Market

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