



RD NEWS FLASH

United States Department of Agriculture - Rural Development
World Wide Web: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/vt>

Committed to the future of rural communities.

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COMMUNITY FACILITIES FUNDING OPPORTUNITY For Farmers Markets

Secretary of Agriculture, Tom Vilsack, has identified local farmers markets as a way to stimulate farm business, rural economies and increase awareness and consumption of locally produced food. He identified USDA Rural Development's Community Facility Program as a possible funding source to assist Farmers Market organizations with their facility needs.

Community Facilities

The Community Facilities Program offers direct and guaranteed loans and grants designed to finance and facilitate the development of over 80 different types of essential community facilities serving rural areas. These facilities include, but are not limited to, hospitals, elderly care facilities, child care centers, fire and rescue stations, vocational and medical rehabilitation centers, schools, public transportation infrastructure, and **Farmers Markets**. Eligible applicants include rural communities and non-profit organizations.

Community Facilities Program

Loans are made at below-market, fixed interest rates. Grants are limited to projects with high financial need that serve low income communities. Eligible expenses include land acquisition, construction of facilities, necessary professional fees, and equipment.

The Community Facilities Program has funded the following for Farmers Markets: cement pads, shelter facility with roof, sidewalks, signage for the markets, parking area for facilities that provides sites for farmers to bring in their produce and crops and sell them directly to citizens.

Farmers Market projects must primarily serve farmers -- providing a place to sell their produce, crops and value added products and providing rural residents an opportunity to buy freshly grown products.

Key program points are:

- We do not fund the individual market stalls, tables, or signage for individual farmers. We haven't funded any tents as a part of these projects.
- Community must be under 20,000 in population
- Contact your local RD office regarding grant eligible service areas. Please visit <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/vt/vtstaff.htm> to find an office near you.
- Note: Grants range from 15%-75% and require matching funds. Please visit <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/vt/vtnhcfgranteligibility.htm> to see if your community is eligible for grant assistance. Note: Loan and Loan guarantees are available to all communities of 20,000 or less in population.