

# impact

University of Idaho Extension programs that are making a difference in Idaho.

## Tuesday Community Market contributes to increase in economic and social capital

### AT A GLANCE

Mid-week farmers market incubates small business and supports development of economic and social capital.

### The Situation

In 2018, a citizen committee consisting of Moscow Food Cooperative staff, farmers and other stakeholders was interested in collaborating with UI Extension, Latah County to help coordinate a mid-week farmers market that had previously been located in a parking lot and had been relocated around town several times. The market has been identified as an important economic asset, a food access point as well as a small business incubator, and a hands-on learning opportunity for small farmers and other vendors.

### Our Response

With support from the citizen committee and utilizing UI Extension paid staff, interns and volunteer help, the market was relocated once more and hosted at the Latah County Fairgrounds. The market was held once per month from June – Oct. 1 in 2018. Due to the success of the monthly market, it was then offered weekly on Tuesdays from 4-7 p.m. June to October in 2019 and 2021. No market was held in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Each year the market has hosted various produce, craft, youth and non-profit vendors and one local brewery vendor. Additionally, staff recruited a live



Mid-week farmers market helps build social capital, business experience and economic capital for new farmers.

musician or music group and a prepared food vendor for each week. Market volunteers set up tables for a meeting garden/food court where customers could gather and eat dinner.

Over the three-year period, the market expanded in terms of dollars spent and number of vendors.

Year	Number of Markets	Dollars Spent at the Market	Average Number of Weekly Vendors	Staff, Intern and Volunteers Hours
2018	5	\$2,741	9	140
2019	17	\$7,509	7	273
2021	16	\$14,398	12	194

## impact University of Idaho Extension

There were many more volunteer hours in 2019 (93) compared with 2021 (29). Overall staffing became more efficient with a reduction of the hours needed to run the market in 2021. Hosting activities included coordinating with vendors, recruiting musicians, posting on social media and placing signs and posters around town. The market has also regularly hosted a market kids activity with the help of AmeriCorps service members and interns.

Two beginning farmer grants from USDA helped fund educational opportunities associated with the market in 2018 and 2021 such as market management education and booth layout instruction. Intern funding from UI Extension provided a student manager in 2019.

In 2019 UI Extension Food System faculty member, Colette DePhelps and interns conducted a rapid market assessment at two markets. In 2021 a volunteer and intern counted all customers at each market. Also, in 2021 UI Extension Educator Iris Mayes conducted a customer and vendor survey and subsequent vendor booth evaluation. The average customer count was 75 customers per market.

### Program Outcomes

The Tuesday Community Market has served as a business incubator and learning opportunity for new vendors and interns. All regular weekly vendors in 2021 indicated that they would like to have their booth evaluated. Evaluations were then conducted based on a booth photo with a standard market rubric regarding facets such as signage and table layout and provided back to each vendor who made various improvements.

Additionally, some vendors indicated they were interested in entering the larger, Saturday Moscow Farmers Market (MFM) in 2022. UI Extension Educator Iris Mayes attended a MFM City Commission meeting and requested that the jury committee attend the Tuesday Community Market to communicate MFM jury criteria to vendors, which they agreed to do and met with eight different vendors.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Iris Mayes, Extension Educator • University of Idaho Extension, Latah County • 208-883-2267 • imayes@uidaho.edu

36-21-imayes-community-market • 10/21

Vendors included three military veterans as well as youth and others working to establish produce, food and craft businesses.

The meeting garden has served as a social networking opportunity with regular attendance by various groups including:

- Latah County Commissioners; Latah County Fair Board; Eat Local Month Committee; Master Gardeners; WSU and U of I faculty and students in social groups; and various other neighborhood citizens.

Social networking at the market serves to improve and increase social ties, strengthening social capital and thereby increasing community resiliency. Out of 76 customers 20 responded to the market survey. Customers listed many benefits including music, social interaction, consistent fun for kids, meeting farmers and other vendors. One customer said that they benefited from the market due to “more interactions with neighbors, especially after COVID lockdown. We met some vendors from local farms and were able to share and learn from them.”

Dollars spent at the market have helped improve the local economy by being spent with these new local businesses. One vendor from 2018 and 2019 was able to grow their business to sell at the larger Saturday Moscow Farmers Market during 2020 and 2021. Another craft vendor from 2019 was able to open a profitable storefront business in downtown Moscow even during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### The Future

UI Extension Educator Iris Mayes will continue to apply for intern and grant funding to contribute to staff time to run the market. She will also continue to expand the educational facets of hosting the market for beginning farmers. The market will continue to be held at the Latah County Fairgrounds in 2022 and into the foreseeable future.