

News Release

October 13, 2015

Office of Community and Economic Development awarded \$100,000 USDA grant

FRESNO-The Office of Community and Economic Development (OCED) was awarded a \$100,000 USDA Farmers' Market Promotion Program (FMPP) grant to expand its farmers' market efforts in Fresno and Kings Counties.

The purpose of FMPP "is to increase domestic consumption of, and access to, locally and regionally produced agricultural products, and to develop new market opportunities for farm and ranch operations serving local markets..." (www.ams.usda.gov)

The grant allows OCED to expand its farmers' market efforts to the rural cities of Avenal, Huron and Orange Cove through its "Rural Farmers' Market Initiative: Low-Income and Food Desert Communities".

The focus of the initiative is to build local producer-to-consumer food outlets that will, among other things, facilitate access to fresh fruits and vegetables for residents of disadvantaged food desert communities. Activities will include farmers' market manager training, public health compliance training for prospective vendors, cottage food operation training for local entrepreneurs, and implementation of farmers' market promotional plans. Three local, part-time farmers' market manager jobs will be created through the project.

Established in August 2000, the Office of Community and Economic Development is an on-campus division dedicated to aligning the university's intellectual capacity and innovation-driven economic development initiatives to improve the competitiveness and prosperity of the region. The role of the Office of Community and Economic Development is to be the link between the university and its resources and the needs of the community.

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Contact:

Mike Dozier, Executive Director
559-278-0727
mdozier@csufresno.edu

Office of Community and Economic Development
California State University, Fresno
5010 N. Woodrow Ave., Ste. 200, M/S WC142
Fresno, Calif. 93740