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FEATURED

Fair Grove market has 2 new buildings via a USDA grant

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Reflex photo by Paul Campbell

A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held Wednesday, June 27 for the two new buildings at the Fair Grove Farmers Market. The money came from a \$30,000 USDA grant to the Fair Grove Historical & Preservation Society. From left: Greg Bramwell, specialist and Mark Hultgren, area director for USDA Rural Development; market manager Debi Phillips; Leon Beaty of historical society.

Storage building and cooler

constructed



Thanks to a \$30,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture that was 100 percent paid by the USDA, the Fair Grove Farmers Market has two new buildings and equipment for vendors to store their products, tables and other items.

The grant was actually to the Fair Grove Historical & Preservation Society.

This includes a storage building and a cooler structure that also has a freezer for meat. Both are just west of the concession stand and were dedicated at a ribbon-cutting event Wednesday, June 24. The market is open every Wednesday afternoon from April to October, starting at 3:30 p.m.

USDA Rural Development area director Mark Hultgren, on behalf of state director Janie Dunning, attended the ribbon cutting to celebrate the completion of the Rural Business Enterprise Grant project.

“Access to local foods and products is good for everyone,” Dunning said. “Providing a location to feature locally-grown produce and locally-made products presents an opportunity for farmers, ranchers and artisans to expand their market and contributes to local community and economic development.”

She said that by purchasing the cooler/freezer and storage building Fair Grove Farmers Market will increase the length of time for producers and vendors to offer their produce.

“This may also allow for the expansion of the type of produce and products offered, which may result in increased consumer traffic,” she said. “Fair Grove recognizes the positive impact access to local goods can have on a community’s economy.”

Debi Phillips, who has been manager of the Fair Grove Farmers Market for the past three years, gave a lot of credit to Leon Beaty and Carl Buckner of the historical society for obtaining the grant and for the continuing work on the project.



Addition of the cooler/freezer assists by expanding the storage, distribution and marketing of produce, bakery, egg and meat products. Greater quantities can be supplied to the market, kept in cold storage and sold throughout the day without spoilage. The storage building offers on-site storage for vendors' tables, chairs, signs, grills and miscellaneous items. Keeping their equipment on-site, the businesses will be able to bring in additional food products for purchase at the market.

The Fair Grove Farmers Market was named "Market of the Year" in 2010 and 2012 by the Missouri Department of Agriculture. Currently, vendors from Greene, Dallas, Polk, Webster and Cedar counties participate in the market at Fair Grove.

