impact

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

Fresh food access increased due to grant from Latah County community foundation

AT A GLANCE

Grant support was used to purchase extra produce at the end of 20 farmers markets increasing revenue for farmers, reducing food waste and providing healthy food at six county food pantries/banks.

The Situation

Latah County faces several issues including food insecurity, access to fresh and locally grown food in smaller communities and economic support for small-scale agricultural producers. Rising food costs and limited access to fresh produce can create challenges for individuals and families, particularly in rural communities. At the same time, local farmers and market vendors may have surplus products that remain unsold at the end of market days.

Our Response

UI Extension, Latah County applied for a $3,000 grant to purchase surplus produce at the end of each Tuesday Market that would then be delivered to food pantries/food banks around Latah County. This program addresses challenges by improving connections between local producers and community food assistance organizations.

Program Outcomes

By purchasing surplus food from Tuesday Market vendors, the program provides additional income for farmers, reduces food waste and increases the availability of nutritious, locally produced food at six food pantries and food banks serving Latah County.



During a 2025 Tuesday Market we displayed a thank you sign for the grant from the Latah County Community Foundation.

The program also supports University of Idaho Extension's mission to strengthen communities, support local agriculture, and improve quality of life through community-based partnerships and educational outreach.

The program made a difference for both local agricultural producers and community members experiencing food insecurity. Participating farmers and Tuesday Market vendors received additional income for surplus products that may otherwise have gone unsold, providing an incentive to continue growing and marketing locally produced food. For food pantry and food bank patrons, the program increased access to fresh, locally

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grown fruits and vegetables, eggs and other farm products. An estimated 750 pounds of food were distributed through six food assistance organizations throughout Latah County, providing additional food resources for approximately 75-100 families. The program also strengthened relationships among local producers, University of Idaho Extension and food assistance organizations, creating new opportunities for community collaboration and a more connected local food system.

This program assisted in strengthening our local food system by improving food security and building relationships between UI Extension, Latah County, producers and food pantry staff and patrons.

An important outcome of this project was demonstrating how farmers markets can serve as a connection between local agricultural producers and community food assistance organizations. The program benefited both producers, through additional sales opportunities, and community members, through increased access to fresh, locally grown food. The relationships established through this project provide a foundation for continued collaboration and future food recovery efforts.

Overall, the Latah County Community Foundation (LCCF) grant helped build stronger connections between UI Extension, Latah County, local agriculture, and com-munity food assistance. By turning surplus food into meaningful donations, the project supported local producers, reduced food waste and helped address food insecurity across Latah County.

Community partners included West Side Food Pantry and St. Mary's Food Bank in Moscow, Troy Food Bank, Potlatch Food Pantry, Deary Food Bank and Juliaetta-Kendrick Good Samaritan Food Bank. These partnerships helped ensure that locally produced food reached individuals and families throughout Latah County while strengthening connections between local agriculture and community food assistance networks.

Table 1. Project outcomes and accomplishments from receiving a grant.

Project outcomes	Accomplishments
Grant funds received	$3,000
Number of markets	20
Estimated food donated	750 pounds
Types of food	Vegetables, such as salad greens, herbs, zuchini, squash, onions, garlic, cabbages, as well as berries, pears, apples and eggs
Food pantries/food banks served	6
Estimated number of families served	75-100
Geographic area	Latah County

The Future

UI Extension Educator Iris Mayes will continue to apply for grant funding. We hope to use this pilot program to apply for additional funds from LCCF again and other granting agencies. We hope to inspire other organizations to match our program when relevant and potentially expand this program to other markets.

Cooperators and Co-Sponsors

The program was made possible through collaboration among University of Idaho Extension, Tuesday Market vendors and local agricultural producers, and six food assistance organizations throughout Latah County. Tuesday Market vendors cooperated by providing surplus produce and farm products for purchase at the end of market days, while University of Idaho Extension coordinated the program and facilitated the distribution of food donations.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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University of Idaho, U.S. Department of Agriculture and Idaho counties cooperating.
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