



**Healthy Community Grant Program Level II
for The Wellmark Foundation of Iowa**

Gary Olsen
Executive Producer
563-564-1992
olsega@mchsi.com

**Letter of Interest - Required Elements submitted by
Dubuque Main Street LTD, 1069 Main Street, Dubuque, IA 52001 (563)588-4400**

A. ISSUE STATEMENT

Presently there are approximately 225 farmers' markets in Iowa. However, only 20% of the food we serve on our tables is sourced in Iowa. That means 80% of the food Iowans buy comes from out of state and out of the country. There are efforts going on right now throughout the state to improve the opportunities for growers to access local markets for their products. A growing number of consumers, enthusiastic about buying local foods, account for the increased number in farmers' markets that put local growers in direct contact with their customers. Even though farmers' markets have been around for a long time, new generations have yet to discover the joys of buying fresh produce, cooking from scratch and gardening.

However, these trends in promoting local food sources, though encouraging, still have a long way to go to actually impact the diets and nutrition of Iowa families. Obesity and the diseases it causes are highest among populations in the US and Mexico than nearly every other nation in the world. In the US, lifestyles have favored prepared, processed and convenience foods over more natural, healthy foods.

Gardening, growing one's own food and preserving one's bounty are in danger of becoming a novelty of past generations of Americans, and gardening techniques could become a lost art, especially among our growing urban populations.

In an effort to call attention to the problems of poor nutrition plaguing Americans, First Lady Michelle Obama planted the first vegetable garden at the White House since Eleanor Roosevelt in the 1930s. There has never been a better time to start gardening. Advances in gardening tools, techniques and technology now make gardening more accessible through innovations such as raised beds, easy-to-apply organic fertilizers, environmentally sustainable pest management and other advances.

We need a way to encourage and share the knowledge of the joys of gardening, locally grown foods and how to prepare natural dishes with fresh, natural ingredients with our younger generations. This is an educational process that is best advanced by the medium of television.

Our project represents a public education effort in a compelling, entertaining format designed to

1. Educate consumers, specifically those ages 12 – 45, to the availability and wholesomeness of locally grown food.
2. Educate growers to the viability of local markets for food production.
3. Educate the general public on the virtues of gardening and growing one's own food.

Our plan is to launch our program on KWWL Television that serves Eastern Iowa and where nearly half of Iowa's farmers' markets thrive. The series would feature farmers, chefs, artisans and shoppers in a weekly broadcast called Farmers' Market Live TV.

Our project is designed to create a continuous and sustainable means of communicating the virtues of gardening, preparing, preserving and consuming locally grown food.

Farmers' markets have grown in size and numbers, especially in Iowa. Farmers' markets have become gathering places and venues for entertainers, craftspeople, and artisans. They have taken on the cultural identity of their communities showcasing local talent. Farmers' markets have become a profound source of pride for a community. Our series intends to explore and feature these sources of community pride.

B. COMMUNITY NEEDS/ASSETS

1. People Necessary for Our Success

- a) Local Farmers and Producers – We engage them by giving them the opportunity to develop show content – and give them creative input in what is presented in each episode. Also they are given a “stage” on which to present their products to a larger audience.
- b) Dubuque Main Street, LTD. (and similar organizations in other communities in eastern Iowa that sponsor farmers' markets) - We engage them by giving them an opportunity to promote their communities' features and attractions. Community development organizations are uniquely poised to take advantage of such opportunities.
- c) Local Chefs have the opportunity to showcase their talents and specialties while simultaneously demonstrating to consumers how to effectively and conveniently use fresh produce to prepare extraordinary, easy and healthy meals.
- d) Children and youth – Through our affiliation with Iowa State University Extension and the network of 4H Clubs they support, we will involve children on both sides of the camera in features within each weekly episode. One of our goals is to make our show its own 4H chapter.

2. Stakeholders

- a) Local Farmers and Producers
- b) Consumers
- c) Children and Youth
- d) The Health Care System
- e) Downtown Merchants and Residents
- f) Regional Iowa 4H Clubs
- g) KWWL Channel 7
- h) Dubuque Community Schools
- i) Dubuque Main Street and similar organizations throughout eastern Iowa

C. DESIRED RESULT

We have two goals for this project. First is to build an audience through the medium of television, while simultaneously building a brand (Farmers' Market Live TV) that people naturally associate with solid ideas on how to live a healthy lifestyle.

Secondly, we want to promote the virtues of locally produced foods which not only correlates to good nutrition but promotes local economic development.

D. STRATEGIES

To produce a show of this caliber, we are investing in cameras and the necessary broadcast equipment that feature portability and rapid deployment. The technology will allow us to produce high definition television content that will be broadcast on KWWL Channel 7.

We have a signed letter of intent to broadcast our series on KWWL, Channel 7 starting in the spring of 2012. KWWL provides excellent coverage of Eastern Iowa (350,000 households) and where half of the state's farmers' markets are located.

We are committed to 26 shows the first year, 13 episodes in the spring and early summer and 13 episodes in the late summer and fall. KWWL has also offered us the opportunity to produce segments for their news programs that would be branded with our Farmers Market TV logo and hosted by our show's staff. Episodes will be broadcast at other times throughout the week. Plus the shows will be available on our exclusive Web site, www.farmersmarketlivetv.org. The site has already been established and has been running for the past year.

E. BUDGET PLANNING

Equipment for our production will cost approximately \$200,000. Of this amount, \$150,000 is for necessary equipment to support the series including a switcher, audio console, wireless intercom system, 3 high definition cameras equipped with wireless HD transmitters and receivers, a wireless microphone system, and Steadicam support system. Our request for funding from the Wellmark Foundation is for our broadcast equipment. \$50,000 budgeted for the production vehicle that will be custom fitted and serve as our mobile studio is coming from another funding source.

After careful research we learned that renting or leasing the necessary equipment was not a viable option. Our production is further ahead buying the equipment since we are going to need it year round to produce various elements that are part of the series. Plus there are year-round and winter farmers' markets we can cover. These capital funds will reside with our partner organization, Dubuque Main Street, LTD and executive director Dan LoBianco. All other costs of producing the series will come from other local underwriters and some national sponsors.

Project Board of Directors

Dr Darryl Mozena

Ste 100, 1515 Delhi Street
Dubuque, IA 52001-6320
563-557-9111

Residence
900 W 3rd St.
Dubuque, IA 52001

Shannon Gaherty

Greater Dubuque Development Corporation
300 Main Street, Suite 120
Dubuque, IA 52001
(563) 557-9049

Residence
6459 Torrey Pines Dr.
Dubuque, IA 52001

Kimberly Feltes

Residence
2425 Spires Court
Dubuque, Iowa 52001
(563) 552-1585