



MINUTES
Foothills Farmers' Market Steering Committee
Monday, March 9, 2009 – 3 PM
Cleveland County Extension Center

Present: Daniel Shires, Tim Crotts, Greg Traywick, Loyd Lewis, Christy Underwood, Wade Nichols, Jackie Sibley, Anne Short, Shannon Hovis.

Greg Traywick called the meeting to order and led the committee in discussion and decision-making around five key issues.

- 1. Web Site and Logo Design Services** – Greg provided a bid for website and graphic design provided by Christine Rimay with Littlefish Marketing. Ms. Rimay has provided quality services for like-minded organizations, including:

Foothills Fresh (<http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/lincoln/foothillsfresh>)

Davidson Farmers' Market (<http://www.davidsonfarmersmarket.org/index.php>)

Grateful Growers, Inc. (<http://www.ggfarm.com>)

After consulting privately with Wade Nichols and Jackie Sibley, Greg contracted with Ms. Rimay for logo design, with the fee to be paid from NC Cooperative Extension's budget. Jackie Sibley indicated that she could pay for website design, provided the web site include the Cleveland County Chamber logo and a link to the visitor information web site. After some discussion regarding the quality of her work, her prices, and our need for a quality public image, Jackie Sibley moved to contract with Ms. Rimay for the Web Premium Package. Loyd Lewis seconded and motion carried unanimously.

- 2. Plastic Mulch Laying Machine** – Daniel Shires reported that proceeds from his recent plant sale would be used to purchase a machine for installing plastic mulch and drip irrigation tape. This machine would be made available to small-scale producers (Farmers' Market vendors and others) who cannot justify the cost of the equipment for limited acreage. He touted several benefits from using the system for vegetable production, including: reduced fertilizer leaching, reduced evaporation, cleaner product, reduced weed problems, earlier crops, and increased yields. The machine will be ordered this week, and availability will be promoted to Extension audiences.
- 3. WIC Vouchers** – Anne Short reported that she had provided Greg Traywick with the procedure and contact information for permitting the use of WIC vouchers at the market. Greg will pursue permits and report at the next meeting.
- 4. Mobile Farm Stand** – The committee fully endorsed the concept for the mobile farm stand to be operated at the Cleveland County Health Department. Anne Short's recommendation to operate the stand beginning in May on Tuesdays from 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. or sellout was approved. Anne indicated space for 4 or 5 vendors under the covered entry, and indicated that additional vendors could sell provided they supply their own tents, which could be set up in the parking area or grass. The Health Department would also block off one row of parking spaces on market days to accommodate the parking needs of vendors. Daniel Shires will work to gain commitments from potential vendors and will look at any operational guidelines that may need to be established. Daniel will report on his progress at the next meeting.
- 5. Community Kitchen** – Greg Traywick reminded the committee that one issue raised during the SWOT analysis conducted in February 2008 was the need for a certified community kitchen that vendors could use for generating value-added commodities. Greg and Wade Nichols noted several obstacles they encountered in early efforts to secure grant funding to support the effort.

Jackie Sibley reported that she had met with Jeff Adams, manager at the Harvest Works facility on Post Road. Harvest Works houses a commercial kitchen facility, and Mr. Adams was open to the idea of making it available for community use. A subcommittee to be headed by Jackie Sibley and to include Greg Traywick, Christy Underwood, and representatives from Cleveland County Environmental Health and/or NC Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services was formed to investigate this potential opportunity.

6. **Market Coordinator** – Greg Traywick reported that the position announcement for the market coordinator had been sent to Gardner-Webb University and Cleveland Community College in hopes of attracting a student intern. With a posted deadline of March 15, no applications have been received. Christy Underwood noted that the early opening date and extended season makes it difficult for students to commit, especially on Wednesdays. Anne Short suggested sending the announcement to the Neal Senior Center in Shelby and the Patrick Senior Center in Kings Mountain to reach potential retirees. The committee also encouraged advertising via the Shelby Shopper and extending the application deadline to March 27. Greg agreed to coordinate these efforts.
7. **Agritourism Workshops** – Jackie Sibley announced that the Agritourism Networking Association will be conducting several workshops across the state during March and April for those interested in rural tourism and agritourism farms. To find out more, visit <http://www.ncagr.gov/markets/agritourism/>. She plans to attend the April 2nd session in Mocksville, and can provide transportation to anyone who wants to join her. Greg Traywick will inform Shelby Corn Maze about the workshops.
8. **Next Meeting** – The next Steering Committee Meeting will be held **Monday, April 6 at 3 PM**. A meeting of all vendors will follow at 5 PM to include a meal. Location for the vendor meeting will be announced (the Extension auditorium is not available).

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:45 PM.