



River Valley Farmer's Market Expansion Project

WHAT WORKS PROJECT 16 IN MONTANA

GOALS AND ACTIVITIES

This project, spearheaded by the Healthy Hardin Community Development Partnership, aims to increase access to local fresh food, promote local businesses, promote physical activity, support community engagement, provide health education, and connect families to needed services.

The River Valley Farmer's Market combines food sales with health promotion in a new way. Activities include fruit and vegetable vendors, baked goods, prepared healthy foods, arts and crafts, community health service representatives, immunizations, dental information, tobacco cessation services, learning and movement games for children, parent supportive activities, acceptance of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, and participation in the Double Your Dollars program. Walking is encouraged by closing the street to car traffic and allowing dogs.

The market is held in the evenings during the months of August and September.

POPULATIONS SERVED

Residents of Big Horn County and Crow Reservation Area

MAJOR PARTNERS AND FUNDERS

Big Horn Valley Health Center, Healthy Hardin Community Development Partnership (HHCDP), Rural Health Initiative, City of Hardin, First Interstate BancSystem Foundation, Big Horn Hospital Association, Big Horn County Health Department, Bighorn Industries, Lift Program Hardin School District Food Corps, Big Horn County Extension Office, Big Horn County Fair Board and City/County Planning Board, and Two Rivers Authority

MAJOR OUTCOMES

In 2017, 24 vendors and public service providers participated. Attendance averaged 250 to 300 visitors a week.

INGREDIENTS FOR SUCCESS

The project used data to inform planning in the following ways:

- The Healthy Hardin Community Development Partnership was formed as a direct result of the community health needs assessment conducted by the local hospital. The assessment identified several issues including high rates of obesity and diabetes and a lack of opportunities to be physically active.
- We regularly seek input from community members in planning and refining the event each year. After each market season, we conduct a phone survey with all vendors to gather feedback on logistics, outcomes, and suggestions for improvement.

ADVICE FOR OTHERS

"Start with a core group of committed people who have successfully worked together in the past and are action-focused. It is easier to attract new energy to an established effort. Creating a shared vision takes time, passion, and a positive outlook."

— Shelly Sutherland, Big Horn Valley Health Center