

Idaho's Bounty Cooperative Project

The majority of foods produced in Idaho are marketed out-of-state while much of the food consumed locally is imported. The small farming and ranching businesses in our region are struggling because they have lost their value-added niche. Additionally, they are responsible for marketing and distributing their own products, further eroding their competitive edge.

To help these small local producers the Wood River RC&D successfully wrote two grants to support Idaho's Bounty Cooperative (IBC). The goal of IBC was to develop a virtual marketplace and distribution system where



member buyers and sellers can increase the production and consumption of local foods to bolster the rural economy in south-central Idaho. One grant was through the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service's Farmers Market Promotional Program (FMPP), and the other grant was a Western SARE Professional + Producer Grant.

The FMPP grant helped develop IBC's business plan; design and field test an online ordering system; and conduct a pilot distribution system. This project supports local consumption and encourages sustainable practices by developing a thriving market for local goods produced in alternative agriculture systems and minimizing transportation costs.

The Western SARE Professional + Producer Grant addresses producer's needs for marketing assistance such as website design and packaging and pricing of goods. Two hundred small-scale farmers and ranchers will be taught basic marketing through workshops, trainer visits and consultations. To see the new website visit us online at <http://www.idahosbounty.org>.

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