



DANE COUNTY

Kathleen M. Falk

County Executive

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**Dane County Receives State Agriculture "Buy Local" Grant
\$35,000 Grant to Recruit More Local Farmers, Growers to
Market Produce to Big Institutions**

Dane County has received a \$35,000 "Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin" Grant from the State Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection.

Dane County's grant proposal was one of 75 submitted from across the state and one of only nine projects awarded funding. The dollars will be used to recruit more growers to participate in the county's initiative to increase local food sales. This will enable more local farmers to market their produce to big institutions.

This project, known as the Institutional Food Market Coalition, systematically links local farmers and aggregators with large food buyers like universities, hospitals, hotels, and conference centers. It successfully sold and delivered well over one-million pounds of locally grown products to dozens of public and private sector users in 2009. More than one-million pounds of vegetables, meats, and cheeses was a record for the program and almost four times the total food delivered in 2008.

"We saw record success last year in marketing the healthy and home grown products of local growers and these grant dollars will help us make 2010 even bigger and better," County Executive Kathleen Falk said. "Agriculture is a \$3-billion a year industry in our county and we want to continue our efforts to put locally grown products onto kitchen countertops across our state and the entire upper Midwest."

"Supporting local growers is important because we keep dollars and jobs in our community," said Sup. Kyle Richmond, Environment, Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee chair. "The coalition's work is a direct result of the County's decisions to prioritize economic development and create the Dane County Food Council."

Since the start of the Institutional Food Market Coalition, Dane County has budgeted around \$45,000 for staff to help coordinate the program. Dane County is also a large purchaser of the food locally grown and marketed through the coalition. IFM will be working with numerous key partners including UW Extension in Dane, Jefferson, Walworth, Marquette and Dodge Counties, as well as others, to carry out this work.

The Institutional Food Market Coalition can be found online at: www.ifmwi.org

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