

Federally-Recognized Tribes Extension Program
2008 HIGHLIGHTS

FRTEP UNIT: Arizona

PROGRAM AREA (Ex. Agriculture, Nutrition etc.): Agriculture and Nutrition

PROGRAM TITLE: Shiprock Farmers Market

ISSUE(S) ADDRESSED: Navajo farmers have difficulties in marketing their fresh grown produce. Though, the local flea market existed, they have relied on roadside stands. Most have parked anywhere near the main highways and have caused traffic hazards. Due to these problems, the Shiprock Farmers Market was established in 2006. It was a way to provide a safe and accessible marketing avenue for the consumers. In addition, the farmers have requested formal training to improve their crop and vegetable production. Some young farmers have had the land permits transferred to them and they were not knowledgeable in preparing traditional native foods which was an added value to their production increase.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION: The target audience for the Shiprock Farmers Market is the 934 land use permittees farming along the San Juan River basin in the northwest New Mexico area of the Four Corners region in the USA on the Navajo Nation reservation. This market project addresses the needs of a marketing opportunity outlet for the farmers who grow crops and vegetables and teachings of the traditional native foods preparation. The project goals are to 1) locate a site for all farmers to market their fresh grown produce, 2) implement educational outreach via Master Growers Program with a series of classes for the farmers in the areas of crop and horticultural production, and 3) conduct videotaping of elderlies demonstrating the preparation of traditional native foods utilizing vegetables such as blue corn mush for better nutrition.



PROGRAM IMPACT: The first year of the Shiprock Farmers, there were less than ten growers and the market was conducted for only four weekends. The second year, there were more than ten growers and the market extended its time to eight weekends. The third year, there were more than twenty growers and the market was conducted for ten weekends. The Master Growers Program was implemented for two years with presentations on Entomology, Fertilizers, Prairie Dog Control, Irrigation Management, Pruning, Vegetable Gardening, etc. Each time an evaluation was completed. The presentations were proved favorable for the audience and more was requested. Videotapings of elderlies demonstrating preparation of traditional native foods were conducted and these are being edited. As a result of the abovementioned activities, our farmers have been consulted to provide the vegetables for the local school district for next year's food supply.

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