

For immediate release

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## **Press Release - Post Oil Solutions Awarded USDA Rural Business Development Grant**

Brattleboro, VT - In July, the USDA awarded a Rural Business Development Grant to Post Oil Solutions on behalf of the Brattleboro Winter Farmers' Market. The purpose of the grant is to fund a feasibility study that will help to inform market organizers in making decisions about the future of the market. Specifically, the grant project is intended to evaluate the needs of the market regarding optimal size, scope, and location to best serve the long-term needs of the market and its customers.

The Brattleboro Winter Farmers' Market has been in operation since November 2006. Over that time we have grown from a two-month market open only in November and December, to a five-month market open every Saturday, November through March. For many of our vendors, the growth of this direct market outlet has provided a steady source of income during what might otherwise be a lean time of the year.

However, along with that growth has come crowding, particularly in the early part of our season. This poses challenges for our vendors, many of whom have more product for sale than space allows -- and for our customers as well. We are well aware that these crowded conditions are not welcoming to families with children or those with mobility challenges.

The River Garden has been a great home for the market to begin and to build during our first 12 years. Now it is time to consider what would best serve the long-term growth needs of the market, our vendors, and our customers.

The market Steering Committee is currently using an RFP process to engage a professional consultant to take a look at the future of our market -- the optimal size, scope, and location with an eye toward a stable future for the Brattleboro Winter Farmers Market. Stay tuned for opportunities to share your thoughts on these questions, via community surveys and focus groups.

If you have any questions or would like to know more about this project, contact us at [brattwintermkt@gmail.com](mailto:brattwintermkt@gmail.com) or call 802-387-2624. The RFP can be found in the Site News section of the Post Oil Solutions website - [www.postoilsolutions.org](http://www.postoilsolutions.org). Post Oil Solutions is an equal opportunity organization.