The Colorado Health Foundation™

Colorado Fresh Food Financing Fund Supports Revival of Limon Community Grocery Store

LIMON, CO — Limon Stop & Shop Supermarket, in partnership with Colorado Housing and Finance Authority (CHFA) and the Colorado Health Foundation, hosted an open house on Saturday, Aug. 29 to showcase upgrades made with the grant it received from the Colorado Fresh Food Financing Fund (CO4F). One year ago, the Limon community faced losing its only grocery store when under different ownership, it was full of empty shelves and was on the verge of closing. Tony and Trey Ford stepped in and purchased the grocery store, preserving fresh food access for the community and the health of its local economy.

Soon after opening, the Fords were awarded a $100,000 CO4F grant, administered by CHFA, to upgrade the store's freezer units. The upgrades have increased product selection and reduced energy costs, allowing the store to continue to offer competitive pricing to shoppers.

"Tony and Trey Ford and Limon Stop & Shop have created a first class grocery store that continues to expand its options and respond to local citizens' needs," said Limon Mayor Julie Coonts. "The partnership of the Colorado Fresh Food Financing Fund, First National Bank of Hugo-Limon, the State of Colorado, combined with the financial commitment of the Ford family, saved the grocery store. For that, our citizens are thankful."

Upon purchasing the store in the summer of 2014, the Fords were faced with

needing to make many equipment repairs, as maintenance had been sorely lacking. The freezer units were also outdated and unreliable.

“CO4F enabled us to update a piece of the Limon store to greatly benefit both the store and our customers. Because we already had to invest significant resources into bringing the previously neglected store into good condition, these updates would not have been possible for many years without the CO4F grant,” said Trey Ford. “We are so thankful for the grant. The upgrades were needed years ago, so customers really appreciate them.”

Having a quality, full-service grocery store with modern features is vital to the Town of Limon as the nearest source of fresh food is in Hugo, a 30-mile round trip away. During the past year since Limon Stop & Shop Supermarket has been serving residents, surrounding businesses have noticed a positive effect on the area.

“The office of Economic Development for Lincoln County is proud to have Stop & Shop Supermarket and the Ford family as business leaders in Limon. This is a true success story that we have seen unfold over the past year,” said Troy McCue, executive director for Lincoln County Economic Development Corporation. “As a gateway for local shopping, Stop & Shop Supermarket is providing Limon and the greater Lincoln County area with fresh and abundant grocery shopping options. We look forward to their continued success and contributions to our local economy.”

Steve Johnson, community development director for CHFA said, “Limon Stop & Shop Supermarket is a telling example of how CO4F can play a role in strengthening communities. Improving retail food access for residents not only results in important health benefits for residents, but also tangible economic development benefits.” CO4F is the first statewide fund of its kind, with nearly $2

million funded and committed since launching in 2013. The program aims to continue to leverage other forms of investment to bolster construction, expansion, and renovation of grocery stores in underserved areas.

“Limon Stop & Shop Supermarket is a perfect fit for the CO4F, which is designed to improve access to healthy and affordable food in communities across Colorado," said Christopher Smith, senior program officer for the Healthy Living program at the Colorado Health Foundation. “Without access to healthy food, a nutritious and healthy lifestyle is out of reach to many families. We applaud Tony and Trey, who play a critical role in supporting their community with key components of healthy living and economic growth.”

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