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Produce Grown Here project gets \$400,000 grant

Richard King Mellon Foundation boosts The Progress Fund's local food push

Greensburg, PA – August 22, 2008 – The Richard King Mellon Foundation has awarded \$400,000 to The Progress Fund's new project that will bring the wares of Southwestern Pennsylvania farmers to stores, restaurants, and the plates of area families.

The grant is the largest yet dedicated to the Produce Grown Here, or PGH, project, The Progress Fund announced today. It will ensure the operation of the project that will help area farmers reach local markets.

"This really prepares the soil, so to speak, for the PGH effort," said David A. Kahley, President & CEO of The Progress Fund. "Coming two months after the unveiling of our local food initiative, this grant gives us momentum that we expect to build upon in the coming weeks."

The Richard King Mellon Foundation earlier provided initial seed money which enabled The Progress Fund to retain PGH Project Manager David Eson.

PGH will bridge the gaps between farmers, retailers and consumers that have limited the growth of the local food economy, ensuring a predictable flow of local produce to markets. PGH will also provide marketing muscle to farmers, expanding their reach while allowing them to focus on growing.

PGH builds upon The Progress Fund's experience providing entrepreneurial coaching and loans to agriculture and tourism businesses. For further information on The Progress Fund, call (724) 216-9160, or visit www.progressfund.org.

The Progress Fund is a vigorous non-profit loan fund that creates jobs and improves communities by providing entrepreneurial coaching and capital to small businesses in the travel & tourism industry. The Progress Fund serves 39 counties in Pennsylvania and the entire state of West Virginia. The Progress Fund was founded in 1997, and has made 259 loans totaling more than \$23.8 million to 164 enterprises, creating or preserving more than 1,820 jobs.

The Progress Fund is an equal opportunity provider and employer.