

LAC recommendations that have been implemented:

- 1) "When leasing property at the Farmers' Market, the S.C. Department of Agriculture should ensure that lease agreements include specific information on when rental payments must be made and recourse for the S.C. Department of Agriculture if rental payments are not made on time."

Lease language has been updated and is being implemented as leases come due.

- 2) "S.C. Department of Agriculture should install a functioning surveillance system at the gatehouse and consider any other necessary locations at the Farmers' Market.
The security system at the gate house has been repaired and is serviceable. A new system for the major sheds has been ordered and is being installed prior to season. Will also determine the need for retaining the Security Company currently under contract. A decrease in hours of service or cancellation of contract will save approximately \$50K per year, depending on the need for this service once cameras are installed. This was put in motion last year but was delayed due to the departure of a staff member who was ordering and installing the new system.

- 3) The S.C. Department of Agriculture should obtain all funds due to it per the agreement between the agency and the restaurant and ensure timely payments are made going forward.

The tenant is current on rent that is due. He is paying quarterly and is within the 2x per year format established in the lease. Income is averaging approximately 1K per month. The restaurant owner has recently opened a new tea room and retail outlet in the old Jacobs Store space, featuring Certified South Carolina specialty food products. We are also having conversations with the restaurant owner to better meet the needs of the middle to lower-income and SNAP recipients that make up much of the surrounding demographics in the area. Other space in building is fully leased to DNR and they are current on rent.

- 4) "The S.C. Department of Agriculture should charge an admission fee or parking fee for attendees of special events hosted at the Farmers' Market."

A parking fee for the Plant and Flower Shows was implemented in Spring of 2016. This was met with resistance from the general public. They were vocal in their displeasure of having to pay to attend a public event at the state farmers market. This also resulted in traffic back up as every vehicle was required to stop upon entry. Parking generated approximately \$10.5K in receipts and did impact overall attendance. For the spring of 2017 P&F Show, we decided to raise vendor rates by \$50.00 per stall, in lieu of a parking fee. We will capture approximately \$7800.00 in additional revenue, and have less manpower cost associated with collecting a parking fee. We will cover the parking income through the fee when considering the cost of having 4 to 6 additional staff, per shift (2 per day), required each day of the four day event. This is in essence saving work time, over a weekend, that will save those associated parking costs.

In addition, we have expanded the area we are using for paid parking of tractor trailers. This has resulted in an additional revenue stream.

- 5) “The S.C. Department of Agriculture should continue to maintain updated policies and procedures for the gatehouse and revenue collection at the Farmers’ Market.”
Have been developed for the gatehouse as recommended. Supervisors have gone over these with gatehouse staff and all is going well.

- 6) “The S.C. Department of Agriculture should implement a plan to better coordinate and communicate with private property owners at the Farmers’ Market.”
As recommended, all private partners are provided a personal visit with information on all upcoming events. This allows them to prepare for any special activities during the event and to adjust logistics as required during high volume traffic periods.

- 7) “The S.C. Department of Agriculture should ensure that covenants of privately-owned properties at the Farmers’ Market site are enforced.”
The department has spoken with landowners in regards to upkeep and maintenance of open areas. There has been an overall improvement in keeping grass mowed and areas free of litter.