

The Columbus Dispatch

Vinton County to regain a full-service grocery after 3 years

Tuesday

Posted Jan 3, 2017 at 12:01 AM

Updated Jan 3, 2017 at 10:55 AM

McARTHUR - Vinton County is getting a supermarket - big news in this part of Appalachian Ohio where people have been driving an hour round-trip to buy groceries. Campbell's Market, a fourth-generation family grocery with stores in Zanesville and Duncan Falls in Muskingum County, plans to break ground in March for a full-service grocery store in McArthur. It's expected to open in August.

By Mary Beth Lane, The Columbus Dispatch

McARTHUR -- Vinton County is getting a supermarket -- big news in this part of Appalachian Ohio where people have been driving an hour round-trip to buy groceries.

Campbell's Market, a fourth-generation family grocery with stores in Zanesville and Duncan Falls in Muskingum County, plans to break ground in March for a full-service grocery store in McArthur. It's expected to open in August.

The recent announcement is welcome news in the impoverished, rural county of about 13,200 people about 75 miles southeast of Columbus. The county has had no supermarket since the **SuperValu in McArthur closed in 2013**. People have been driving about 30 minutes from McArthur to shop at Wal-Mart or Kroger stores in Athens, Chillicothe, Logan, Jackson or Wellston.

"Hallelujah!" said McArthur resident Jane Wooddell, who is looking forward to having a full-service local supermarket again.

The Vinton County commissioners have been trying to recruit another supermarket since the SuperValu was replaced by a Dollar General store that doesn't carry fresh meat or produce. Their efforts finally bore fruit.

The nonprofit community-development financial institution Finance Fund Capital Corp. is funding a nearly \$1.6 million Healthy Food for Ohio financing package that will help Campbell's Market build a 12,000-square-foot store. An additional \$50,000 from Vinton County and the Campbell family's purchase of about 2 acres at 636-698 W. Main St., about a mile west of downtown McArthur, make up other pieces of the funding.

The Healthy Food for Ohio program began in 2016. It provides loans and grants to help stores selling fresh food open or expand in low-income, underserved rural and urban areas.

U.S. Rep. Steve Stivers, an Upper Arlington Republican, and state Rep. Ryan Smith, a Bidwell Republican, helped nail down the financing package, county commissioners said.

"Mr. Stivers and Mr. Smith saw the need," Commissioner Mike Bledsoe said. "A lot of cities are food deserts, but people in Vinton County have to go 30 minutes if they want a fresh onion, a fresh banana, a fresh tomato."

"We are blessed, we are very blessed that Campbell's is coming to Vinton County."

Residents agree.

"I think it's great, especially for our senior citizens," said Rick Gillilan, who said older people who don't drive have been most inconvenienced in the past three years without a local supermarket.

The grocery store also will bring jobs. Plans call for up to 15 full-time and 15 part-time employees from the area.

mlane@dispatch.com

[@MaryBethLane1](#)

