



## Community groups working to combat food deserts around Jackson

Sunday, July 30th 2017

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Source: WLBT

JACKSON, MS (Mississippi News Now) -

There's a buying blitz happening at a South Jackson grocery store. It's all in an effort to support a store that moved in after the building was vacated--leaving the community without a grocery store.

But the overall goal is still expanding.

"Let's go shopping," said Geanette Gross.

South Jackson residents couldn't say that for the Terry Road location for more than two years, but the Jackson Cash and Carry opened in the old Kroger location this May.

"To make sure that everybody has access to good quality fresh food and produce is important to us," added Working Together Jackson member Geanatte Gross.

Working Together Jackson doesn't want to see any other communities void of a grocery store.

"We want to make sure not only this store, but we want to support this store but all over Jackson," explained Ronnie Crudup, Jr., Working Together Jackson member. "Like we said, a month ago there's a Save-A-Lot that closed in North Jackson. And now that's a food desert out

there. So, we've got to make sure we bring quality fruits, vegetables, and produce all around the city of Jackson."

Many of those at the state and local level who helped get the funding in place for the new store were part of today's push for continued support.

"I just want to pause and say thank to all the heroes around this room who made this grocery store a possibility," noted City Councilwoman Virgi Lindsay, Ward 7. "I thank you, thank you, thank you. There's nothing worse than an empty grocery store in a community."

The mission is still growing. The group now plans to partner with groups like Up in Farms to again, provide better access to fresh produce.

"Our goal is to grow farmers that can grow food and make a middle class living growing food at prices that their neighbors can afford to buy the products," explained Jeff Good with Up in Farms. "This is a long term project. We look forward to it."

Working Together Jackson now has a grant from the American Heart Association that will also help as they target other areas of the city and county that are considered food deserts.

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