



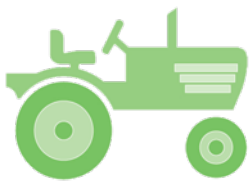
2015 National Farmers Market Week

There's More to Market!

From August 2nd through 8th, communities across the country will celebrate their local farmers markets during National Farmers Market Week. The impact of these farmer-to-consumer transactions is greater than it appears on the surface. Now more than ever, farmers markets serve as anchors across American communities, positively influencing community health and wealth. Markets result in more viable regional economies and local farm businesses, increased access to fresh, nutritious food, and stronger social networks that help keep communities healthy.

By the end of 2014, there were more than 8,200 farmers markets in the U.S.—that is 50% more than just five years ago. As these markets become more established, they offer more services and benefits to their communities.¹ The following pages highlight some recent studies, data, and observations on the impact of America's markets. The Farmers Market Coalition hopes you will help us celebrate National Farmers Market Week by visiting your local market and spreading the word that markets are growing in impact!

Farmers Markets:



**Preserve
America's Rural
Livelihoods
and Farmland**



**Stimulate Local
Economies**



**Increase Access
to Fresh,
Nutritious Food**



**Support Healthy
Communities**

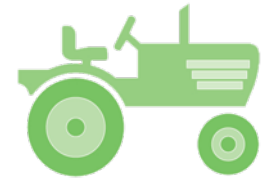


**Promote
Sustainability**

"What we're seeing is the evolution of the local and regional food movement beyond weekend shopping into something more substantial and sustainable."

Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Krysta Harden

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Farmers Markets

Preserve America's Rural Livelihoods and Farmland

From 1992 to 2007, 21% of mid-sized farms in the U.S. stopped operations.¹ In this challenging agri-business environment, farmers markets provide small, beginning, and seasoned farmers alike the opportunity to launch new enterprises.

- Small and mid-size farmers who sell at farmers markets have nearly a 10 percent greater chance of staying in business than those selling goods through traditional channels.²
- Even small community markets are champions of farmland preservation and farm viability; Georgia's Lilburn Farmers Market gives 10 farmers an opportunity to grow produce on 500 acres of farmland.
- Eighty percent of farmers market vendors in Iowa, New York, and California said that farmers markets offer them a greater opportunity for business development than traditional food retail outlets.³
- The seven Seattle farmers markets hosted by the Neighborhood Farmers Market Alliance support 9,491 acres of farmland in diversified production.
- There are 3.5 times as many U.S. farmers over the age of 65 as there are under 35. Farmers markets provide one of the only low-barrier entry points for new farmers, allowing them to start small as they learn and test the market.⁴
- 16% of farmers selling at farmers markets are under 35 and 43% have farmed for less than 10 years. These rates are twice the national rates for all farmers according to the 2012 Ag Census.⁵
- 50% of farmers selling at farmers markets derive at least half their revenue from farmers market sales.⁵
- The number of farmers markets operating in winter months has nearly tripled since 2010. The 2,469 markets open in the winter provide an extended opportunity for farmers to do business.^{6,7}

"If it weren't for the rise of farmers markets, a lot of these small farms would simply not exist."

Rebecca Landis, Market Director, Corvallis-Albany Farmers Markets.

"We were working hard to protect the region's farmland but realized that without a new generation of farmers and stronger local food systems, there would be no one to work the land, protected or not."

Noelle Ferdon, Director of Local Food Systems, Northern California Regional Land Trust



Farmers Markets

Stimulate Local Economies

Farmers markets and other locally owned retailers return more than three times as much of their revenue to the local economy than do chain competitors. This “economic multiplier effect” helps create jobs and boosts economic activity.⁸

- Growers selling locally create thirteen full time farm operator jobs per \$1 million in revenue earned. Those that do not sell locally create three.³
- Florida households spent an estimated \$1.8 billion at farmers’ markets, roadside stands, and U-pick farms in 2011.⁹
- In Iowa and Oklahoma, every dollar spent at farmers markets led to an additional \$0.58 - \$1.36 in sales at other nearby businesses.^{10,11}
- Farmers markets create between 257 and 361 full-time jobs and generate up to \$13 million in South Carolina alone, according to one recent estimate.¹²
- The 52 producers of the Williamsburg Farmers Market in Virginia generated an estimated \$48,969 in state sales tax in 2011, supporting the state economy.
- A 2010 study by USDA’s Economic Research Service compared producers selling salad mix, blueberries, milk, beef, and apples locally with producers of the same products selling to mainstream supply chains. “In all five cases, nearly all of the wage and proprietor income earned in the local market chains is retained in the local economy.”¹³
- Wyoming’s economy was bolstered by more than \$2.8 million in 2013 from sales at the state’s farmers markets.¹⁴
- Virginia Cooperative Extension reported that Southern Virginia households spending 15% of their weekly food budget on locally grown food products would generate \$90 million in new farm income for the region.¹⁵
- According to the US Census of Agriculture, 144,530 farms sold \$1.3 billion in fresh edible agricultural products directly to consumers in 2012.

“Farmers Markets are the most genuine type of commerce. Selling at the market allowed us to start our business slowly and focus on building our brand and customer base. It gave us confidence. We wouldn’t be here without the market.”

Freddy Kaufmann, Owner, Proper Sausages, Miami Shores, Florida

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Farmers Markets

Increase Access to Fresh, Nutritious Food

The number of farmers markets and farmers accepting Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits has increased 40% on average every year since 2009.¹⁶ With affordable prices and special programs for low-income people, markets are expanding access to fresh, nutritious food.

- In 2014, over 5,000 markets and farmers accepted SNAP benefits.¹⁷ Some states that help farmers markets accept SNAP saw a ten-fold increase in the number of markets accepting SNAP between 2009 and 2014.¹⁸
- The amount of SNAP benefits redeemed at farmers markets increased nearly 450% from 2009 (\$4.2 million) to 2014 (\$18.8 million).¹⁷
- In 2014, 42 farmers markets in Washington, D.C. accepted EBT and credit/debit cards, up from 7 in 2010.¹⁸
- Of 216 shoppers surveyed at the Janesville, Wisconsin Farmers Market in 2012, 98% said that they would eat more fruits and vegetables as a result of their SNAP benefits and 30% said that they had not shopped at the market before SNAP benefits were accepted.¹⁹
- In 2012, New York City's farmers markets distributed over \$280,000 in Health Bucks, a health incentive coupon, to SNAP participants. Nearly three-quarters of Health Bucks users reported that the coupons made them more likely to buy fresh produce.²⁰
- From 2008-2013, the number of vulnerable seniors visiting Crescent City Farmers Market increased by 501%.²¹
- More than 1.5 million WIC participants and 835,795 low-income seniors bought fresh produce directly from farmers in 2013 through the WIC and Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Programs.²²
- A 2011 study of southeast and Appalachia markets found that in 74% of communities, conventional farmers market produce was less expensive than supermarket produce, on average by 22%.²³
- In one study, average produce prices were 17.9% lower at farmers' markets than at supermarkets in 12 North Carolina counties.²⁴
- A Vermont study found that prices for many conventional products and all organic products, with the exception of potatoes, were lower at farmers markets than at nearby supermarkets.²⁵

“[Increasing SNAP purchases] is a win-win-win situation. It helps farmers by increasing their sales, it helps the customer by gaining access to more fruits and vegetables, and it helps the market itself grow its customer base.”

Amanda Shreve, Manager of Programs and Partnerships, Michigan Farmers Market Association



Farmers Markets

Support Healthy Communities

Farmers markets provide communities with a healthy food environment. They are places where farmers and neighbors come together to educate each other about nutrition, cooking, and farming. With abundant produce, farmers markets help increase fruit and vegetable consumption.

- A 12-week study found that the placement of farm stands outside of community sites in low-income areas of Austin, Texas one day per week increased consumption of fruit and vegetables among people within walking distance.²⁶
- Farmers markets foster interactions among people of different race, class, age, and lifestyle. 28% of respondents surveyed about public markets said the greatest benefit of the market to the community is that it “Brings people together.”²⁷
- A comparison of shoppers at farmers markets and supermarkets shows that people shop in the company of others more frequently at farmers markets and have more social encounters.²⁸ The correlation between health and social interaction implies that the social opportunities markets create provide important public health benefits.
- The American Fitness Index includes the number of farmers markets per capita as a factor contributing to community health, using it as an indicator for community members’ access to fresh fruits and vegetables.²⁹
- Proximity to farmers markets was associated with lower body mass index (BMI) among North Carolina youth, while density of fast-food and pizza venues was associated with higher BMI.³⁰
- 45% of farmers market vendors nationwide sell fresh produce, fruits, or vegetables according to the most recent USDA Farmers Market Manager Survey.³¹
- NYC’s Health Bucks program was deemed a practice-tested health intervention by the CDC-funded Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention and an evidence-based strategy for environmental change by USDA SNAP-Ed.³²
- Low-income diabetic shoppers increased their fruit and vegetable intake by 1.6 servings per day using an incentive program based at a farmers market located at a health center.³³
- Over 90% of participants in Wholesome Wave’s Double Value Coupon Program agreed or strongly agreed that the amount of fresh fruits and vegetables that they purchased at farmers markets made a big difference in their family’s diet.³⁴

“We provide sustenance for our customers, our community, and they in turn provide the same for us.”

Alice White, Bluebird Meadows Farm, Durham, North Carolina



Farmers Markets

Promote Sustainability

Farmers markets create new business opportunities for farmers interested in selling sustainably produced food. This helps protect the natural environment, public health, human communities, and animal welfare.

- Nearly half of markets sell organically labeled products, and many more sell chemical or pesticide-free labeled products.³⁵
- A Vermont Price Study found that of the items compared, prices for many conventional products and all organic products, with the exception of potatoes, were lower at the farmers market than at nearby supermarkets.³⁶
- On average, food travels over 1,000 miles from the point of production to the retail store.³⁷ In contrast, many farmers markets only allow vendors to sell food produced within 200 miles. Some markets only have food grown within 50 miles.
- Locally or regionally sourced produce travels about 27 times less distance than conventionally sourced produce.³⁸
- In a 2015 survey of farmers selling at farmers markets:³⁹
 - One in four farmers selling at farmers markets cultivate land that is protected from commercial development.
 - Three out of every four say they use practices consistent with organic standards.
 - 48% use integrated pest management, information on the life cycle of pests and their interaction with the environment to manage and prevent crop damage.
 - 81% incorporate cover crops, reduced tillage, on-site composting, and other soil health practices into their operations.
 - Four out of five discuss farming practices with their customers, educating them about farming and its interactions with the natural environment.
 - 69% sell vegetables, 53% livestock, poultry or eggs, 47% fruits and tree nuts, and 31% value-added products. There is tremendous diversity in the foods and farm products being sold at farmers markets.

“Farmers' markets...hold potential to build and rebuild local and regional food systems...”

Gilbert Gillespie, Duncan Hilchey, Clare Hinrichs and Gail Feenstra in Remaking the North American Food System

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