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Farmers Market Coalition Helps Markets Prepare for National Farmers Market Week

Offers free tools for planning and promoting events

July 12, 2016 - The [Farmers Market Coalition](#) (FMC), a national nonprofit committed to strengthening farmers markets, announces today the launch of its annual [campaign](#) to help farmers markets nationwide prepare for 17th annual National Farmers Market Week (NFMW, August 7-13), a yearly celebration sponsored by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) that highlights the important role farmers markets play in the nation's food system. The campaign provides more than 8,500 farmers markets across the country with promotional tools, guides and materials they can use to promote events happening at their markets during the weeklong celebration.

“National Farmers Market Week allows farmers markets to take center stage on a national level and is an opportunity for all markets to showcase the impacts they make in their communities. We want to make it easy for all market managers, regardless of funds or capacity, to spread the word by providing them with these easy-to-use, customizable tools,” said FMC’s executive director, Jen Cheek.

FMC’s resources are free and available [online](#). The toolkit includes templates for creating newsletters and press releases, sample social media posts and graphics, farmers market facts and talking points, as well as information on how to invite local officials to market events. Farmers market-themed merchandise is also available for purchase to hand out at events, give away as prizes and more.

This year, USDA Agricultural Market Service (AMS) also released new NFMW [branding materials](#) markets can download free of charge to create marketing materials such as posters, emails and buttons.

“We’re thrilled USDA AMS is providing this easy, cost-effective way for managers to develop beautiful marketing materials for their market,” said Cheek. “We hope the combination of USDA and FMC resources streamlines promotional efforts for markets nationwide.”

In addition, FMC is also hosting a [poster contest](#) designed to highlight the creativity and hard work farmers markets already put into promoting their venue. Markets of the winning posters are eligible for \$1500 in cash prizes and will be featured at events in Washington D.C. during NFMW. Contest deadline is July 24.

As demand for local food continues to swell, farmers markets in the United States have nearly doubled in number over the past ten years, increasing from 4,384 to 8,562, according to the USDA. This year, FMC celebrates its tenth anniversary and is heartened by the progress farmers markets have made in the past decade, as well as the impacts they continue to make in both rural and urban communities. [Research](#)

indicates farmers markets are not only economic drivers and food access hubs for communities across the country, but play a vital role to support rural livelihoods, preserve farmland, and protect the environment.

“As farmers markets continue to grow across America, they’re also becoming critical community assets and public spaces that bring families from all backgrounds together to socialize, purchase healthy, affordable food and support their local farmer,” said Cheek. “FMC is proud to be a voice for our nation’s farmers markets and support their efforts toward continued growth. We’re excited for what the next decade will bring.”

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The Farmers Market Coalition (FMC) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to strengthening farmers markets for the benefit of farmers, consumers, and communities. For more information about the Farmers Market Coalition, visit www.farmersmarketcoalition.org