First-of-its-Kind National Summit Convenes Farmers Market Operators and Farmers with Researchers and Technical Assistance Providers

Registration is open for the National Direct Agricultural Marketing Summit on September 15-18th, 2018, in Arlington, VA. Calls for Research and Outreach Poster proposals are due June 18th.

The Farmers Market Coalition (FMC) is proud to partner with the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), Farm Credit, the Food Distribution Research Society (FDRS) and National Value Added Conference (NVAC) to offer the 2018 Direct Agricultural Marketing Summit. The Summit is a first-of-its-kind opportunity for farmers market operators and direct marketing farmers from across the country to come together with researchers, extension specialists, entrepreneurs, service providers, farmers, mission-focused investors, business operators, community practitioners, students, consultants, and government employees from state and Federal agencies.

The goal of the Summit is to improve understanding, capacity, and performance of farms and businesses that participate in direct to consumer markets. The Summit will feature new resources—intended to assist farmers, market managers, and direct marketing farmers—as well as research and data on direct to consumer markets.

Panels and presentations will highlight successful programs and initiatives from direct marketers across the country, with a focus on best practices for quantifying, evaluating, and maximizing the impact of these initiatives. In addition to panels and presentation sessions on innovative programming, new tech tools, practical research approaches, and important USDA assistance programs, participants will have the opportunity to sign up for one-on-one office hours with experts, visit with service providers and vendors, and network with peers. The USDA will also be hosting specialized training and networking sessions for Farmers Market Promotion Program grantees.

"The Summit is a rare opportunity for managers of farmers markets and those who provide technical assistance to local food systems to learn about innovative training tools and resources, including research and partnerships," said Professor Ron Rainey of the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture. "The gathering is also a great time for attendees to visit and compare notes. This type of networking opportunity does not come along often."

A Call for Outreach Posters and Call for Research Posters are open now, with a rapidly approaching **deadline to submit abstracts on June 18th.** Outreach Posters will highlight successful farmers market programs and technical assistance resources available to producers, market managers, and other

practitioners involved in direct-to-consumer agriculture. Research Poster submissions should highlight scholarly papers or updates on research in progress.

FMC is pleased to offer a series of pre-conference workshops in partnership with the Center for Agriculture and Food Systems at the Vermont Law School. After a tour of DC farmers markets, pre-conference participants will participate in workshops on managing risk at markets, maintaining market integrity, and effective data-based outreach strategies. Learn more about FMC's contributions to the Summit, including scholarship opportunities for pre-conference attendees at this link: bit.ly/DirectAgSummitFMC.

Links:
Register for the National Direct Agricultural Marketing Summit: localfoodeconomics.com/agsummit.
View information on FMC's Scholarship Opportunities: bit.ly/DirectAgSummitFMC.
View the Call for Outreach Posters: bit.ly/OutreachPosterCall.
View the Call for Research Posters & Presentations: bit.ly/ResearchPosterCall.

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.