



**Michigan Food &
Farming Systems-MIFFS**
Bringing Farmers & Communities Together

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 16, 2007

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Michigan Farmers' Market Association to Hold Membership Kick-Off

EAST LANSING, Mich. – Michigan farmers and farmers' market enthusiasts will now have the opportunity to join a statewide association dedicated to advancing farmers' markets to create a thriving marketplace for local food and farm products. The Michigan Farmers' Market Association (MIFMA) is holding a Membership Kick-Off and Market-Style Resource Fair at Edgewood United Church Fellowship Hall, 469 North Hagadorn, East Lansing on April 20, 2007 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. All individuals planning to attend must RSVP to (517) 432-0712.

Attendees will have the opportunity to hear two keynote speakers, Jim Farr and Diane Eggert, address the benefits of joining a statewide association. Jim Farr manages the Rochester Public Market and serves as the President of the New York Farmers' Market Federation. Diane Eggert is the Executive Director of the New York Farmers' Market Federation and also serves on the Board of Directors of the national Farmers' Market Coalition, a national coalition that reaches out to a broader audience of farmers, markets, industry supporters, academia, non-profit organizations and governmental agencies that are key to the fundamentals of farmers' market success.

“One of the most important benefits of belonging to an association like the Michigan Farmers' Market Association is the support the association offers,” said Jim Farr, President of the New York Farmers' Market Federation and keynote speaker of the MIFMA kick-off. “Most managers at the individual farmers' markets have very little



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support, so by belonging to a Farmers' Market Association, managers are able to have access to professional guidance and support.”

Much of the afternoon is dedicated to the market-style resource fair. MIFMA has a variety of resources available for everyone involved in farmers' markets, from farmers to managers to consumers. Exhibitors will include Michigan Department of Agriculture, Michigan Food Policy Council, Select Michigan, Michigan Department of Community Health, WIC and Senior Project FRESH, Michigan Department of Human Services, USDA Food and Nutrition Service, ACS Governmental Solutions, Michigan Food and Farming Systems, Michigan State University C.S. Mott Group for Sustainable Agriculture, Michigan Organic Food and Farm Alliance, Food Bank Council of Michigan, Eat Local Food and more.

Attendees will network with other growers, market managers and farmers' market enthusiasts and learn how MIFMA will help shape the role of farmers' markets in the future.

For more information about this event or to learn more about MIFMA, please contact Dru Montri at (517) 432-3381. Or, visit the MIFMA Web site to read more about the association, find resources and check out press releases, newsletters and radio clips at www.farmersmarkets.msu.edu.

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In 2006, Michigan Food and Farming Systems (MIFFS) in collaboration with Michigan State University and other partners received funding to develop the Michigan Farmers' Market Association. Founded in 1998, MIFFS is a statewide membership organization (501c3) whose purpose is to promote diverse efforts that foster and sustain food and farming systems that improve economic, ecological and social well-being. MIFFS has been effective at establishing successful partnerships among producers, markets and institutions that have created more profitable, environmentally friendly food systems in Michigan.

The organization's vision is based on the premise that agricultural productivity, environmental stewardship and profitability reinforce each other for the benefit of Michigan's rural and urban communities. To learn more, please visit www.miffs.org or call (517) 432-0712.