



# Missouri Farmers Market Association

**Healthy, Fresh and Fun, To Boot!**

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## 2009 Market reports:

### Fair Grove Farmers Market -

Deb VanBenthusen, manager

Our market was the biggest it has ever been. We had a record breaking crowd as well as vendors. We had a great turn out with the EBT and debit card this year. Last year was getting it fine tuned so customers knew it was available. Our market, for the size it is, did outstandingly. We did over \$2,000 just in EBT.

Our Kids Club had a great turnout also. I now email 345 kids every week. We planted a tree on opening day. We handed out flowering trees to the kids and talked about planting for bees. The conservation department handed out coloring pages with the information on the trees. We had the Webster county sheriff's department at our market to sign up kids to the national missing kids registry. That was a Big Hit with the parents. Our school

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## Mark Your Calendar for the Annual Meeting

The Annual Workshop and Meeting of the Missouri Farmers Market Association will be Saturday, January 23, on the Cabool campus of Drury University in Jones Auditorium, 801 Walnut Avenue, Cabool. A registration & lodging scholarship application is on the enclosed insert.

9:00 - 9:30 - Registration

9:30 - 10:30 - Market insurance & liability issues - Ruth Stone

10:30 - 11:30 - Best Practices - what other markets & states are doing - Tony Anderson

11:30 - 12:30 - Lunch - presentation by the Cabool Farmers Market

menu: ham, mashed potatoes & gravy, green beans, dessert & drink

12:30 - 1:30 - Effective Social Media for Markets - Jill Fleischmann

1:30 - 3:30 - Grantwriting & funding sources - Debi Kelly & Eileen Nichols

3:30 - 4:00 - Update on state issues - Tony Anderson

4:00 - 5:00 - Annual meeting

5:00 - 6:00 - Annual board meeting - open to the membership

**Lodging scholarships** - MFMA, with a matching grant from the Farmers Market Coalition, will underwrite the hotel cost for 20 market representatives traveling more than 2.5 hours to the meeting. Market members of MFMA are encouraged to fill in the lodging scholarship information on the enclosed insert. For those receiving scholarships, MFMA will reserve & pay for the night of January 22 at the Mountain Grove Days Inn. Scholarships will be awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis to markets more than 2.5 hours from Cabool. If funding remains after January 10, rooms will be awarded to closer markets.

### Speakers -

Ruth Stone is an representative agent from Naught-Naught Insurance. She will discuss liability, insurance & terminology with a focus on markets & their boards.

Tony Anderson is a Marketing Specialist with the Missouri Department of Agriculture.

Jill Fleischmann is with the Missouri Value Added Center - University of Missouri at Columbia. The Center received a 2009 Specialty Crops grant to examine farmers market use of social media in Missouri. Jill will provide detailed information on how to use the social media that holds the most promise for markets.

The Cabool Farmers Market has just completed its first year. The space for our annual meeting is underwritten by the market's major sponsor, the Cabool State Bank.

Debi Kelly is the Project Manager of the Missouri Alternatives Center. She has served as reviewer for many regional & national grants & is the Missouri coordinator for the SARE grant program.

Eileen Nichols, Webb City Farmers Market, has reviewed, written & administered many grants.

# Could your market use an extra thousand dollars?

Next year a Missouri market will win \$1,000 as Market of the Year from MFMA & AgriMissouri. Why not make your market eligible by entering?

## MARKET OF THE YEAR 2010

In 3 pages or less, tell us about your market. You may include up to 5 supporting documents such as photos, posters, & advertising.

Subjects you may want to cover: What makes your market special? Has it grown? How has it met the needs of your community? Have your market manager/officers or vendors attended any workshops, conferences or farm tours? Have you incorporated AgriMissouri into your market's promotions? Why should your market be chosen Market of the Year? How is your market of value to your community, both patrons & vendors?

## MARKET OF THE YEAR JUDGING CRITERIA

- How is AgriMissouri incorporated into the market?
- Does the market have a wide mix of produce/product, with emphasis on locally grown?
- Do vendors or managers participate in training/learning opportunities?
- What is the general health of the market?
- How does the market interact with the community?
- What kinds of partnerships or community relationships does the market have?

## MARKET OF THE YEAR PRIZE

- \$1,000 cash
- Market banner proclaiming award
- 500 personalized refrigerator magnets
- A press release distributed to local & regional media

## FUN AWARDS 2010

In addition to the Market of the Year award, several Fun Awards are up for grabs. Please limit to one page per category & label category entered.

- Best advertising/marketing
- Best event
- Best motto/catch phrase
- Best photo

Fun category winners receive a certificate & bragging rights.

## CHAMPIONS OF THE YEAR 2010

In one page, describe someone who has gone above & beyond or someone who has made a positive impact on your market. You may include up to 3 supporting documents like photographs or newspaper articles. As many as 4 Champions may be awarded statewide.

Each champion receives:

- Basket of AgriMissouri products
- \$50 gift certificate redeemable at their local market courtesy of MFMA
- Certificate
- A press release distributed to local media

Markets must be current members of MFMA & AgriMissouri to enter.

**DEADLINES – applications must be postmarked no later than February 1, 2010, & submitted to:**

AgriMissouri, PO Box 630, Jefferson City, MO 65102

The awards will be announced in mid-April.

If you are not applying for a lodging scholarship & wish to make your own hotel reservations, the following hotels in Mountain Grove are about 10 minutes from the annual meeting site:

Schrock's Mtn. Grove Motel  
303 E. 20th  
417-926-6101

Travel Lodge  
111 E. 17th street  
417-926-3152 [www.travellodge.com](http://www.travellodge.com)

Days Inn  
300 E. 19th street  
417-926-5555 [www.daysinn.com](http://www.daysinn.com)

## Funding opportunity at the annual meeting

As part of the grantwriting workshop at the annual meeting, participants will draft an entry for the Market of the Year or other annual MFMA/AgriMissouri contests.

Participants will get hands-on experience in responding to grant criteria, while completing an application with potential to benefit their market.

Bring supporting documentation & you can complete the process & turn in the application right at the workshop.

Past winners have included markets big & small, urban & rural, established & brand new. Why not your market?

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resource officer arranged for this.

The band booster club did a first-time corn feed fundraiser and that was a huge success. They raised over \$700.

I made up Farmers Market cards with our blog and website and on the back I put the Market Cafe hours and information. I also helped vendors with Internet and computers, the making of business cards as well as labels for their product. Vendors were encouraged to put the market's website on their business cards and labels.

We had a customer appreciation sampling day and typically the customers, after they sampled, went right to the vendor and purchased some products from them.

I noticed a lot more customers using cloth shopping bags verses plastic. I also had people tell me they keep updated through our website as well as our blog. They really loved the blog and the videos of our vendors, and the community calendars on the local TV stations web sites. Just type in fair grove farmers market on your yahoo search for examples.

Next year the Greene county health department will offer a food safety handling workshop at the market for our customers. The county health department will also be at our first meeting for the 2010 season to answer questions that vendors may have about health department rules and regulations. The date and time will be posted on our website as well as on our blog and community calendars. I would encourage other markets to get in touch with their health department and do the same.

#### **City Market (Kansas City) - Deb Conner, manager**

The City Market is starting to wind down, but we are a year round market and never completely shut down.

We met many challenges this season, mainly the economy and Mother Nature. The market's Saturday customer counts dropped a little this year but we still saw an average of 12,046 customers. We think this is due in part to the number of new farmers markets opening in the area. Our Sunday market saw an increase this year with an average Sunday attendance of 4,208. This is definitely due to the increase in the number of farmers market vendors renting space on Sunday and the addition of the Sunday yard sale. The City Market started the Sunday yard sale three years ago as an event for the neighborhood, to provide them an outlet to sell unwanted items. We also hoped the event would increase the Sunday market customer count which would in turn help the farmers market vendors. At first we only had a few vendors but this season it really took off with an average of 30 yard sale stalls rented every Sunday. As with every market, the more customers you have the more vendors will come and vice versa.

For the second year the City Market conducted two customer surveys using the dot system. As in the past, the primary reason customers came to the market was to purchase fresh farm produce but we had an increase this year in the number of customers who visited the City Market for the atmosphere and to purchase handmade crafts. The average City Market customer will spend \$10 to \$20 shopping at the market and will shop 1 to 10 times per year.

The Market's food festivals have been so popular we continued them again this year, adding a flower festival in May to get things rolling. Our festivals run May through October and are held on the first Saturday of each month. Being a year round market, it is always a challenge to come up with activities during the winter months. This year the market sponsored a Valentine's event hosting free weddings in our heated pavilion. A local justice of the peace volunteered his time and we were all pleasantly surprised when 21 couples tied the knot. With grant money we received from the Farmers' Market Promotion Program, the Market hosted Wellness Wednesdays the first Wednesday of the month from May through October. Each Wednesday, 10 am to 2 pm, we had twenty plus medical groups participate, offering free health screenings and nutritional information to the public. Although the attendance count for this event averaged 904 customers per week, we had very few vendors participate. This was a big disappointment considering the amount of time and effort put into organizing this event. The Market partnered with the Kansas City Public Library and hosted a used book sale held every first Saturday, April through September. We all felt this was a good partnership and helped to bring additional customers to the market that might not have visited in the past. To add yet another customer draw to our Sunday Market, we invited local car clubs to set-up on Sundays, May through September. This was a very easy activity to organize and the only cost to the market was commemorative "Art of The Machine" dash plaques which were given to all the participants. October 17<sup>th</sup> the Market hosted an Electronic Recycling Event held in the market square from 8 am to noon. This event allowed the community to safely recycle their unwanted computers, televisions, stereos, CD player, phones and many other small electronic devices. November 1<sup>st</sup> we will held a Smiles Change Lives "Candy Exchange" where children exchange their Halloween candy for great prizes.

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Smiles Change Lives provides orthodontic treatment to kids from low-income families in our community. All collected candy goes to our troops overseas. During the Christmas holidays the Market will be visited by the Grinch every Saturday November 28<sup>th</sup> through December 19<sup>th</sup>. This is the third year we have incorporated a little bit of "Whoville" into the City Market and each year it grows a little more. This event helps to remind customers that the City Market is open year round. During the month of December we allow vendors in the farmer category to bring handmade crafts to sell for the holidays.

This past April the City Market started accepting EBT/SNAP. All in all everything went fairly well, although we were a little discouraged in the number of customers using EBT. Considering the area in which we are located we really anticipated much higher participation. We still feel it is a great opportunity for the market, its vendors, and the community and hope to see an increase next season. We feel our largest challenge is getting the word out to customers that the Market accepts EBT.

All in all we had a good season and have already started getting things lined up for 2010.

## Conferences & workshops

The Agritourism/Small Fruit & Vegetable Conference is February 15 - 17 at the Country Club Hotel & Spa in Lake Ozark, Mo. Contact Sarah Gehring at 573 522-9213 for more information.

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The Missouri Department of Agriculture is working on plans for a farmers market workshop with multiple concurrent sessions at the State Fair grounds in Sedalia on February 26. They are excited about the potential of one large workshop with the opportunity for growers & markets to learn from others across the state. Look for more details from the state later this month.

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The DeSoto Farmers Market is sponsoring the following free workshops from 6:30 to 8:30 pm at St. Andrews Church, 1004 Rock Rd. For information, contact Dean Wilson, 636 797-5391.

- January 5 - Soil testing & plant disease
  - February 2 - Tools for marketing & pricing your ag products
  - March 2 - Weights & measures - regulations for selling at farmers markets
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Master Food Volunteer Training will be 9 am to 4 pm on February 10, 11, 17, 18, 24, 25, & March 3 & 4 at the K-State Extension Office in Olathe, Kansas. Cost is \$75, plus 40 hours of community service. For information, contact Karen Elliot, 816 482-5850.



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