



**Michigan Food &
Farming Systems-MIFFS**

Bringing Farmers & Communities Together

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NEWS RELEASE

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Michigan Farmers Market Association Board of Directors elects officers

EAST LANSING, MICH. – The Michigan Farmers Market Association (MIFMA) Board of Directors is proud to announce its officers: Dietrich Bronner as Chairperson, Dan Keane as Vice-Chair, Lynn Ochberg as Secretary, and Yolanda Blissett as Treasurer.

These officers, along with the Board of Directors and all MIFMA members, represent a diverse sampling of the many facets of farmers markets, from farmers and market managers to farmers market friends and local food enthusiasts. Each contributes a unique and vital perspective as they all move toward the same mission of growing and improving markets around the state of Michigan.

Dietrich Bronner of Frankenmuth has been an involved MIFMA member since the organization's inception in April 2007 and has a deep passion for farmers markets and all of their important benefits to Michigan's community, economy and society. Dietrich represented MIFMA at a Project for Public Spaces convening in Washington, D.C. and is a co-chair of MIFMA's Marketing and Outreach Committee. Bringing a business and marketing background to the Board, he hopes to maximize the benefits of markets for both farmers and consumers as Chairperson.

“Our task this year is to grow MIFMA membership, member benefit offerings and the impact on farmers markets across the state so that MIFMA becomes a self-sustaining, influential, indispensable powerhouse to promote markets and their benefits,” said Dietrich.

Dan Keane and has also been involved as a MIFMA farmer/vendor member since April 2007 and is a local beekeeper in Hemlock, Mich. Dan has been very involved in the Saginaw Area with the Downtown Farmers' Market and, more recently, the Hemlock Farmers' Market, where he sells his honey. This commitment has been an important part of his life for more than 15 years, and now, he is taking the next step to improve farmers markets by using his knowledge of Michigan agriculture and market management on the Board of Directors as Vice-chair.

Lynn Ochberg of Okemos recently joined MIFMA in November 2007 as a farmer/vendor and brings her passionate support of local farming, land use and farmers markets to the Board as Secretary. Lynn has a law degree and a thorough knowledge of parliamentary rules of procedure, as well as 28 years of producing and selling maple syrup.



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Yolanda Blissett of Ionia joined MIFMA in April 2007 as a farmer/vendor and brings to the Board both farm and non-farm business knowledge, previous board work and a strong interest and enthusiasm in the mission and vision of MIFMA. Before she began running her family's centennial farm, Yolanda worked in accounting and business management for 25 years, developing an understanding of financial statements and budget development and implementation, making her a great Treasurer for the Board.

"MIFMA's leadership team and founders have given the organization an outstanding, solid start, as evidenced by the more than 100 members we already have," said Dietrich. "Our feet are on the ground, and now we just have to start running."

The Board plans to begin its year dedicated to growing and retaining membership of farmers markets, farmers, vendors and friends throughout the state. They also plan to further strengthen MIFMA's foundation by developing community and institutional support through fundraising and sponsorship, marketing and improved member benefits.

For more information about MIFMA, visit www.farmersmarkets.msu.edu or contact Dru Montri at (517) 432-3381 or dnmontri@msu.edu.

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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.