



MICHIGAN FARMERS MARKET ASSOCIATION

MIFMA Elects its first Board of Directors!



MIFMA's first Board of Directors from L to R: Yolanda Blissett, Richard Hobson, Dan Keane, Jan Lawson, Dietrich Bronner, and Chris Bedford. Not pictured: Lisa Hale and Lynn Ochberg.

The Michigan Farmers Market Association (MIFMA) is honored to welcome its first Board of Directors: Chris Bedford, Dietrich Bronner, Jan Lawson, Lisa Hale, Yolanda Blissett, Richard Hobson, Dan Keane and Lynn Ochberg.

At MIFMA's Founding Meeting on December 6 during the Great Lakes Fruit, Vegetable and Farm Market Expo, nearly fifty charter members, including farmers, market managers and market friends from across the state, exercised their membership rights to elect the organization's first founding board and vote on bylaws. MIFMA has 97

charter members total, and the association's membership is constantly growing.

The board of directors currently consists of eight members with four of the positions held by farmers market representatives from the different MIFMA regions. Four of the positions are held by Michigan farmers (at-large) who sell their own products at farmers markets.

"This is an exciting time for MIFMA," said Dru Montri, MIFMA Project Manager. "Our board members are all people who are passionate about farmers markets and dedicated to moving Michigan's markets

forward."

MIFMA advances farmers markets to create a thriving marketplace for local food and farm products and places farmers markets at the forefront of the local food movement, working to ensure all residents have access to healthy, locally grown food and that Michigan farmers markets receive policy support.

Individuals can join MIFMA at any time by visiting www.farmersmarkets.msu.edu and downloading the membership form, or by contacting Dru Montri at dnmontri@msu.edu or (517) 432-3381.

What's Happening?

- **January 19, 2008:**
5th Annual Michigan Family Farms Conference, Lakeview High School, Battle Creek, MI. www.miffs.org/mffc.asp
- **January 26, 2008**
Northern Michigan Small Farm Conference, Grayling High School, Grayling, MI.
- **March 4, 2008**
Farmers Market Manager Training during ANR Week.
- **May 30, 2008**
Successful, Sustainable Farmers Markets: What Does it Take?

For more information regarding these listings, call 517-432-3381.



The Michigan Farmers Market Association advances farmers markets to create a thriving marketplace for local food and farm products.

Our vision is to place farmers markets at the forefront of the local food movement and to ensure all residents have access to healthy, locally grown food and that Michigan farmers markets receive policy support.

MIFMA Member of the Month!

Eat Local Food

An Interview with Joan Tobin



Q: What is Eat Local Food and how does your work relate to Michigan farmers markets?

A: We started our company, Eat Local Food, after my sister Chris participated in a successful marketing campaign for the Port Townsend WA farmers market. Using one of Chris's paintings, they created banners, tote bags and posters promoting the farmers market. Not only did market sales increase dramatically, but the market expanded to two days, and the local businesses started doing more business as well. An added benefit was about \$38,000 in tote bag and poster sales over a 3 year period, which was a nice fundraiser for the farmers market. My sister Chris and I realized that we'd like to offer the same type of promotional merchandise to other farmers markets, farmers and food retailers - really all those who were selling local food but didn't have an in-house marketing department like Whole Food or some of the other larger food retailers. If people are interested in learning more, we welcome them to visit our "about" page at www.eatlocalfood.com.

Q: What is your business philosophy and why is it important to you to focus on local?

A: Our company philosophy is that if you are asking the public to buy locally grown and produced food, you have to be authentic with your message. We don't believe that we can promote local food with products made in China, so all of the products we offer are made in the USA. We encourage MIFMA members to ask where your promotional merchandise is made. A lot of

merchandise is made in China but "printed" in the USA. Our products are both USA made and printed.

Q: What's your most frequently asked question and what's the answer?

A: The question we are most frequently asked by customers is whether they can put their own business name on our Eat Local Food designs. That concept is the cornerstone of our business. We have a large portfolio of local food art that is available to our customers. We will put your name, slogan, logo or promotional message on the design of your choice, creating a banner, poster, tote bags, etc. to promote your business. Our goal is to provide you with an eye-catching, customized promotion for your business.

Q: What is the one thing that every MIFMA member should know about Eat Local Food?

A: One thing I would like MIFMA members to know is that we offer members a 10% merchandise discount. Just let us know you are a MIFMA member when you place an order - you can even place an order on-line and enter "MIFMA" in the promotional code box at checkout. As Michigan residents, we want to see successful community farmers markets that keep the dollars flowing among our friends and neighbors, and we will continue to support them through Eat Local Food.

Welcome New Members!

MIFMA would like to welcome its new charter members for the month of December 2007.

Farmers Market members

- Canton Farmers Market
- Centre Street Market, Portage
- Lansing City Market
- Williamston Farmers Market

Farmers and Vendors

- Mary Cooper, Farmer White's
- Friske Orchards
- Howard Lubbers
- Wade Pregitzer, Pregitzer Farm Market, LLC

Friends of MIFMA

Organizations:

- Learn Great Foods

To join MIFMA, visit www.farmersmarkets.msu.edu!

