



# MICHIGAN FARMERS MARKET ASSOCIATION

## MIFMA and Learn Great Foods to Host Summer 2009 Farmers Market Tours

Farmers market shoppers all aboard! This summer the Michigan Farmers Market Association (MIFMA) will host a market road show - visiting six farmers markets for a guided shopping tour, cooking demo and gourmet lunch made with fresh products purchased at the market that morning. One stop is scheduled for each month, June through November. Participating farmers markets are members of MIFMA and include the Meridian Township Farmers Market, a Leelanau area farmers market, the Downtown Saginaw Farmers Market, the Texas Township Farmers Market, the Farmington Farmers and Artisans Market and the Frankenmuth Farmers Market.

These tours are organized by the Michigan Farmers Market Association and Learn Great Foods. Stay tuned to [www.learngreatfoods.com](http://www.learngreatfoods.com) to read about the tours and sign up, or call Pam at (231) 758-3407.

MIFMA is a member-based, statewide

association promoting local food consumption in Michigan by connecting more farmers to consumers through farmers markets. The association promote farmers markets across the state to increase visibility to both farmers and consumers and aids farmers market sponsors, managers and farmers in assuring long-term viability of Michigan farmers markets. Its overall mission is to advance farmers markets to create a thriving marketplace for local food and farm products. Learn more about MIFMA and becoming a member at [www.farmersmarkets.msu.edu](http://www.farmersmarkets.msu.edu).

Learn Great Foods is a national touring company that teaches about the natural link that exists between sustainable farming, great cooking and the environment. LGF hosts agri-culinary tours and dinners, retreat weekends, travel vacations and more and is the recipient of the Michigan State University Product Center for Agriculture and Natural Resource's Best Innovative Business Idea of 2008.

### What's Happening?

- **March 3, 2009**  
Ag for Tomorrow Conference in Escanaba
  - **March 4, 2009**  
Accepting SNAP Benefits at Farmers Markets Training Session, Gaylord, MI
  - **March 5, 2009**  
Michigan Farmers Markets Food Assistance Partnership Conference Call
  - **March 9, 2009**  
Using the Internet to Increase Awareness and Interest in Your Farm or FarmersMarket, Workshop, East Lansing, MI
  - **March 9, 2009**  
MIFMA Annual Meeting and Celebration Dinner, East Lansing, MI
  - **March 10, 2009**  
Farmers Market Manager "Boot Camp" II, East Lansing, MI
  - **March 19, 2009**  
MIFMA Professional Development Committee Conference Call
  - **March 19, 2009**  
Accepting SNAP Benefits at Farmers Markets Training Session, Grand Rapids, MI
  - **March 23, 2009**  
MIFMA Marketing Committee Conference Call
  - **April 2, 2009**  
Michigan Farmers Markets Food Assistance Partnership Retreat
- For more information regarding these listings, call 517-432-3381.

### 2009 Summer Farmers Market Tours

**June:** Meridian Township Farmers Market

**July:** Leelanau Area Farmers Market

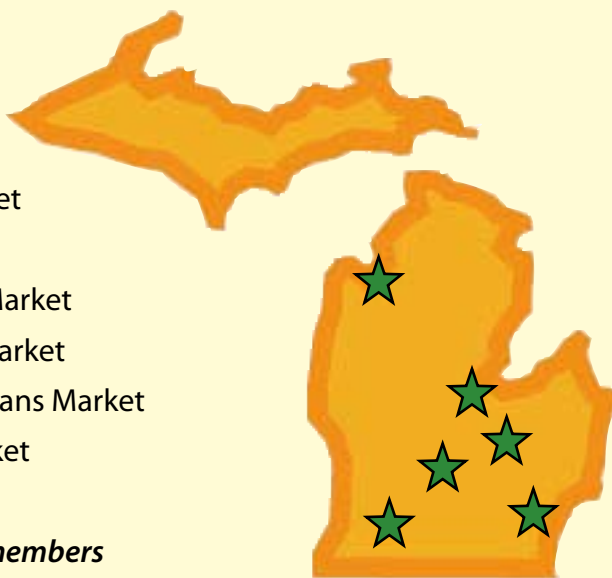
**August:** Downtown Saginaw Farmers Market

**September:** Texas Township Farmers Market

**October:** Farmington Farmers and Artisans Market

**November:** Frankenmuth Farmers Market

*Tickets are \$50 each or \$40 for MIFMA members*



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: Douglas DeLeo, Big Blue Plantation

An Interview with Farmer, Douglas DeLeo



Douglas selling his produce at Kalamazoo's Bank Street Farmers Market



Susan standing in their fields last summer.

## Please tell us about Big Blue Plantation

We are located in Van Buren County, Bangor area. We raise blueberries, apples, cherries, peaches, plums, gooseberries, currants, potatoes, herbs, flowers, beans, eggplants and tomatoes. We specialize in produce that appeal to the local restaurants in the surrounding areas of Kalamazoo, Berrien and Van Buren counties.

## How did you get involved in selling at farmers markets?

My wife, Susan, and her family were farmers who sold produce at the Kalamazoo Farmers' Market for more than 50 years. Susan and I married 38 years ago and bought a small farm and started selling produce at the market before taking over the family business.



The DeLeos plant and harvest about an acre of basil to sell fresh cut at the market.

## Which farmers markets do you sell at and why?

We have always sold at the Kalamazoo Farmers' Market downtown on Bank Street, and we do wholesale produce at the Benton Harbor Farmers' Market. They're both great markets, not far from where we live.

## You are a farmer member of MIFMA. Why is it important to you to be involved in MIFMA?

Being a member of MIFMA allows us to network with other markets sellers from around the state. This gives us educational information on farming and selling techniques from other in the same kind of business.



They also sell fresh cut flowers, like these sunflowers, throughout the summer.

## Welcome New Members!

MIFMA would like to welcome its new members for February 2009.

### Farmers Market members

- Texas Township Farmers Market, Kalamazoo

### Farmer/Vendor members

- Turk Farms in Fenton, MI

### Friend of MIFMA members

- Battle Creek Downtown Partnership

To join MIFMA, visit [www.farmersmarkets.msu.edu](http://www.farmersmarkets.msu.edu)!

## Thank You Sponsors!

Thank you to our sponsors!

### MIFMA Sponsors

- Lynn Ochberg, Ochberg Sugar Bush in Okemos, MI

To become a MIFMA Sponsor, contact Dru Montri at (517) 432-3381 or [dnmontri@msu.edu](mailto:dnmontri@msu.edu).