



# MICHIGAN FARMERS MARKET ASSOCIATION

## Discounted SBAM Membership Available to MIFMA Members for Next 60 Days

**By: Sarah Miller**

*SBAM Director of Products and Services*

Members of the Michigan Farmers Market Association can now become a member of the Small Business Association of Michigan at a special discounted rate!

SBAM focuses on the resources that organizations need, from health care and human resources services to discounted office supplies and credit card processing. For a low annual investment, your farm, business or farmers market can gain access to the wide variety of services that SBAM provides, saving you significant time and money.

One of the highlights of SBAM's member benefit programs is health insurance through Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan. Members insured

through SBAM also enjoy the benefit of our in-house customer service staff (taking care of *all* your insurance related questions) and *free* Summary Plan Descriptions (a \$300 - \$500 value).

Plus, SBAM offers additional – and affordable – benefits that can help you lower the cost of providing health care, such as Health Savings Accounts, Health Reimbursement Arrangements, Section 125 Plans, and Flexible Spending Accounts. SBAM will work with your business to determine the most economically sound plan for you and your employees.

**As a member of MIFMA you can join SBAM now for just \$90 (a \$45 savings off the MIFMA member rate of \$135, and over half off the normal member rate of \$185)! This special rate is valid for the next 60 days, so act now!**

Visit [www.sbam.org](http://www.sbam.org) to learn more or contact SBAM's Greg Rambat at [greg.rambat@sbam.org](mailto:greg.rambat@sbam.org) or (800) 362-5461 ext. 210 for information on services that will benefit you and your bottom line.



**Focusing the POWER of Small Business**

### What's Happening?

- **July 10, 2008**  
MIFMA Board Meeting, 12-4pm.
  - **July 10, 2008**  
Senior Project FRESH Webinar 3-4pm.
  - **July 15-17, 2008**  
Ag Expo at MSU, [www.agexpo.msu.edu](http://www.agexpo.msu.edu)
  - **July 16, 2008**  
MSU Student Organic Farm Tour, 6-8pm, [www.msuorganicfarm.com](http://www.msuorganicfarm.com).
  - **July 17, 2008**  
Commission of Agriculture Meeting in St. Johns at 9am, [www.michigan.gov/mda](http://www.michigan.gov/mda)
  - **July 24, 2008**  
Buy Local Farmers Market, sponsored by MDA, East Capitol Lawn, Lansing, MI.
  - **August 1, 2008**  
Learn Great Foods Culinary Farmers Market Tour in Petoskey, MI. Discount for MIFMA Members. See [www.learngreatfoods.com](http://www.learngreatfoods.com).
  - **August 12-13, 2008**  
Choices: The Conference That Celebrates Food and Health! 517-663-5147
  - **August 22, 2008**  
Select Michigan Marketplace at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit
  - **September 18, 2008**  
4th Annual "Buy Fresh Buy Local – Select Michigan Day"
- For more information regarding these listings, call 517-432-3381.

### Culinary Farmers Market Tour in Petoskey on Aug 1

This tour starts with a tour of the Petoskey Farmers Market, a gem of the north. With fish, meats, poultry, vegetables and herbs, fruits and cakes, syrups and honeys - this is a feast for the eyes and taste buds! Go on safari through the market, picking up delicacies, and then head back to Crooked Tree Arts Center for a hands-on cooking class with a delicious organic gourmet lunch. The tour begins at 12 p.m. and ends at 5. It is sponsored by the Michigan Farmers Market Association (with a discount 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!

## Donna McClurkan

An Interview with MIFMA Friend, Donna McClurkan



**Q: Can you tell us a little bit about yourself and your passion for farmers markets?**

A: Food and food-related issues are among my passions. I serve on the board of Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes, a county-wide network of 23 food pantries, and Fair Food Matters, an organization with a mission for building community connections around local food. I volunteer in a variety of gardens in southwest Michigan and am in the final stages of completing MSU's Master Gardener certification program. These experiences, along with my background as a former healthcare provider, give me context to the impact that food and the environment can have on health outcomes. I believe farmers markets will play an increasingly important role in access to fresh, local produce and other foods that are grown and raised in ways that sustain our planet.

**Q: You are a participant in The Splendid Table's Locavore Nation Project. What is this project and what's your role?**

A: NPR's The Splendid Table launched Locavore Nation in January this year. A group of 15 people in a variety of locations across the country have committed

to obtain 80% of our food from local, seasonal and organic sources. We blog about our experiences at <http://splendidtable.publicradio.org>. In addition, The Splendid Table conducts quarterly surveys to track our progress and quantify challenges and the ways in which we've been changed by our experiences eating locally.

Participants in this year-long project were given a lot of latitude in terms of defining what "local" meant for them. We chose to source our food from Michigan, within 100 miles of our Kalamazoo home. My husband and I made this decision after considerable research to determine what we could do to contribute to our state's economy. As consumers, we make a difference by investing our food dollars on items grown, raised and produced here – in part because these dollars tend to circulate and multiply in the local economy. Moreover, our state is rich in farm-based resources. So rich, in fact, Michigan is second only to California in agriculture diversity!

**Q: You are an individual Friend of MIFMA member. Why is it important to you to be a member of MIFMA?**

A: As the benefits of eating locally become more widely understood and embraced, I believe the rapid rise in the number of new markets will continue, and there will be increased pressure on existing markets to expand.

As consumers of food, we all have a vested interest in the success of the markets that serve our communities. Buying food from local growers and shopping at farmers' markets are obvious ways to contribute to that

success. I decided to take it one step further, though, and become a Friend of MIFMA because I believe the mission "to create a thriving marketplace for local food and farm products" is key to addressing many of the challenges of our current (broken) food system.

**Q: You participate on MIFMA's Professional Development and Marketing Committees? Why?**

A: As a member of MIFMA, I have learned a lot about how markets function through a variety of resources and educational offerings. Participation in MIFMA committee work helps me understand and help address the challenges faced by growers, market managers and consumers. I need to know these things in order to advocate for local food.

**Q: What's your favorite thing about shopping at farmers markets, like the MIFMA member Kalamazoo Farmers' Market, in your own community?**

A: In the six years we've lived in Kalamazoo, I've rarely missed a Saturday at the market. My 11 year old daughter and I love the smells, the tastes, the sounds, and the sights of our farmers market. It's a social event for us and many of our friends – one of the ways in which we feel a part of the community at large. Over the years, we've frequented the tables of many growers and have found favorites for our basil, tomatoes and other foods. We have visited their farms. We know where our food comes from. We know how their animals are raised. Every meal from our market has a story, a history.

## Welcome New Members!

MIFMA would like to welcome its new members for the month of June 2008.

### Farmers Market members

- City of Fenton Farmers Market
- East Warren Avenue Farmers Market, Detroit
- Nature's Best Farmers Market in Fairview

### Farmer/Vendor members

- Dennis Gale, The Wheatgrass Factory in Clinton Township
- Janice Wlodyga, Wilde Flower Soap Company in Pinckney

### Friends of MIFMA

- Bill Zehnder, Vassar

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

