



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 23, 2009

CONTACT:
Dru Montri, Association Manager
Michigan Farmers Market Association
Michigan Food & Farming Systems
Phone: 517-432-3381
Fax: 517-353-7961
Email: dnmontri@msu.edu

MIFFS and MIFMA Receive USDA Farmers Market Promotion Program Grant to Train Farmers Market Managers

EAST LANSING, MICH – As part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s “Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food” initiative, the Farmers Market Promotion Program (USDA FMPP) recently awarded Michigan Food & Farming Systems (MIFFS) and the Michigan Farmers Market Association (MIFMA) \$92,400 to support our state’s farmers markets and market managers.

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced the 2009 FMPP awardees on September 17 at the opening of the FRESHFARM Market by the White House on Vermont Avenue. FMPP awarded 86 grants, totaling more than \$4.5 million, to encourage and support the viability of farmers markets and direct marketing projects nationwide.

MIFMA received this 24-month grant, running from October 2009 through September 2011, through MIFFS, the umbrella under which it operates, to develop professional expertise among Michigan farmers market managers and the MIFMA Board of Directors.

A certificate program for market managers will provide training and education as well as networking and information sharing opportunities for market management, focusing on market governance, rules and enforcement, business planning, market growth management and recordkeeping, human relations and conflict management, marketing and outreach, food safety, and fundraising.

“It is critical that market managers have skills, both interpersonal and technical, to perform their jobs effectively,” said Dru Montri, MIFMA Association Manager. “Improving market management will provide a direct benefit to the more than 3,000 farmers/vendors that sell at Michigan farmers markets.”

Since MIFMA’s inception in 2006, the number of farmers markets in Michigan has grown from 150 to nearly 200 – more than double the number of markets in just 2001. As markets have grown, though, so has the need for training new market managers and continuing education for current and experienced market managers.

The project will also target professional development opportunities for the MIFMA Board of Directors and association members to assure the viability of the statewide association and



NEWS RELEASE

CONTACT:

Dru Montri, Association Manager
Michigan Farmers Market Association
Michigan Food & Farming Systems
Phone: 517-432-3381
Fax: 517-353-7961
Email: dnmontri@msu.edu

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 23, 2009

developing a long-term strategic plan for MIFMA to build capacity for Michigan's direct producer-to-consumer marketing endeavors.

MIFMA's mission and vision are to advance farmers markets to create a thriving marketplace for local food and farm products and to place 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.

To learn more about MIFMA or farmers markets in Michigan, visit www.farmersmarkets.msu.edu or contact Dru Montri at (517) 432-3381 or dnmontri@msu.edu.

View the full USDA press release and see all 86 grantees at <http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal?contentidonly=true&contentid=2009/09/0451.xml>.

###

MIFMA was developed in 2006 to promote and grow farmers markets across the state and increase their visibility to both producers and consumers. This membership-based organization offers information, sharing and resources to farmers markets, farmers and vendors and friends of Michigan food and agriculture.

The MIFMA mission is to advance farmers markets to create a thriving marketplace for local food and farm products and to place 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. To learn more, please visit www.farmersmarkets.msu.edu or call (517) 432-3381.