



# MICHIGAN FARMERS MARKET ASSOCIATION

## The Future of Markets

This month, Project for Public Spaces (PPS) shared the results from a discussion they hosted with a group of experts about what the future holds for public markets. PPS currently supports MIFMA with funding from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, as well as providing networking opportunities with other associations like ours and individuals involved in the farmers market sector across the country.

The panel examined the new challenges public markets face and explored the future potential for markets. They addressed many topics, such as markets reaching a saturation point, the future of markets in low-income communities, how to strengthen urban-rural connections and

making markets a year-round attraction. In these discussions, the experts agree: it's a myth that farmers markets have hit a saturation point. The article also shares their ideas about the other topics and highlights the Flint Farmers' Market, one of MIFMA's charter members.

The article, in the PPS September 2007 *Making Places* newsletter, can be found at [www.pps.org/info/newsletter](http://www.pps.org/info/newsletter).

What are your thoughts about the future of farmers markets in Michigan? Please send responses to Dru Montri at [dnmontri@msu.edu](mailto:dnmontri@msu.edu), and we will share them in the October issue of our MIFMA e-newsletter.

### What's Happening?

- **October 1, 2007:**  
MIFMA Marketing Committee Conference Call 2-3 pm
  - **October 3, 2007:**  
MIFMA Professional Development Committee Conference Call 8:30-9:30 am
  - **October 6, 2007:**  
Rapid Market Assessment at the Farmington Farmers Market
  - **October 31, 2007:**  
MIFMA Professional Development Committee Conference Call 8:30-9:30 am
  - **November 2, 2007:**  
Growing Your Business Conference at the Kellogg Center in East Lansing. See [www.productcenter.msu.edu/conference](http://www.productcenter.msu.edu/conference)
  - **December 4-6, 2007:**  
Great Lakes Fruit, Vegetable and Farm Market Expo in Grand Rapids. See [www.glexpo.com](http://www.glexpo.com)
  - **December 6, 2007:**  
MIFMA Founding Meeting from 11 am - 12 pm at the Great Lakes Expo, Grand Rapids.
- For more information regarding these listings, call 517-432-3381.

## Join MIFMA Today and Elect MIFMA's First Board of Directors

As farmers markets wind down for the end of the harvest season, the Michigan Farmers Market Association (MIFMA) is just gearing up for its founding meeting on Thursday, December 6, 2007 from 11 a.m. – 12 p.m. in Grand Rapids. All MIFMA charter members are invited to attend and work together to grow the organization.

This meeting coincides with the farmers market portion of the Great Lakes Fruit, Vegetable and Farm Market Expo, which is held yearly at the DeVos Place Convention Center. Members can attend the educational sessions, network with one another and get engaged in moving Michigan farmers markets forward.

It's a chance for MIFMA's charter members to be involved in adopting by-laws and electing the first board of directors. Everyone's input and suggestions will form the structure, basis and building blocks for MIFMA's future decisions and direction.

Voting at this founding meeting is just one of many membership benefits that MIFMA offers to farmers markets, farmers, vendors and friends. **Charter memberships are being accepted now through November 15.**

Join the association at an exciting time! Read more about MIFMA member benefits and download the membership application today. Click on the "Join MIFMA" tab at [www.farmersmarkets.msu.edu](http://www.farmersmarkets.msu.edu).

Become a Proud  
Charter Member of  
the



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!

## Richard (Cousin Don) Hobson

*Hickory Hill Farm and Aunt Annie's Waffles of Clifford, MI*

An Interview with Cousin Don, MIFMA charter member since April 2007



### Q. What do you love about the farmers market?

A. I love the people, talking to them. I make it my task to meet at least 77 new people every week.

### Q. Which farmers markets do you sell at?

A: This is our 8th year at the Downtown Rochester Farmers Market, our 5th year at the Birmingham Farmers Market (Cousin Don is also the market manager of the Birmingham market), and our 1st year selling at the Birch Run Farmers Market. We have a joint venture, so we sell the products that we grow as well as those from 8 other farms in Michigan.

### Q. Why did you decide to become a MIFMA member? Was it worth the \$50 investment?

A. I became a MIFMA member because I have a love for farmers markets and think we have an opportunity to push agricultural entrepreneurship to a new level. It was a natural fit for me to join an association that is advancing farmers markets and to work with a larger group of people.

It was worth the \$50 and I am excited about being a charter member. I think it will be even more worth it as we get more involved and work together to figure out how MIFMA will work for us (farmers and vendors).

### Q. What's your favorite thing to buy at the farmers market?

A. (No hesitation). Raspberries. And can I add a second one? Peach rhubarb pie from Blue Ridge Blueberry Farm. They do it right!

### Q: How long have you been farming?

A. Hickory Hill Farm has been our family farm since 1888. My great-grandfather, grandfather, and father all farmed before me. Myself, I farmed in Georgia while also doing glasswork before moving back to Michigan 8 years ago. This is my 9th season farming here on the family farm. I farm with my sister, Colleen, and brother, Steven, and my brother, Jeff, helps with the maple syrup and honey.

### Q. Why or how were you drawn to selling at the farmers market?

A. Farmers markets are in my blood. My great-grandfather sold at the Detroit Eastern Market, my grandfather sold at the Pontiac Farmers Market, and my father sold at the Flint Farmers Market.

## Welcome New Members!

MIFMA would like to welcome its new charter members for the month of August 2007. A complete list is available at [www.farmersmarkets.msu.edu](http://www.farmersmarkets.msu.edu)

### Farmers Market members

- Midland Farmers' Market
- Northville Farmers Market
- Petoskey Farmers Market
- Springport Youth Farm Stand

To join MIFMA, visit [www.farmersmarkets.msu.edu](http://www.farmersmarkets.msu.edu) to download a form.

Check out the article on page 1 to learn more about joining MIFMA and the benefits it can offer you, your market or your farm.

