



## THE MARKET AT A GLANCE

The Ann Arbor Farmers Market staff is proud to present the 2019 Annual Report.

*1919 - 2019: 100 years of local food and local farms*

The Ann Arbor Farmers Market is proud to bring farm-fresh produce to the community every week of the year. The gathering place for more than 100 local businesses, the producer-only market offers native plants, unique artisan crafts, cheese and baked goods, fresh-picked vegetables, slow-roasted coffee beans, fermented sauerkraut and Sriracha, cut flowers, premier Michigan fruits and nuts, holiday wreaths, honey, maple syrup and so much more.

### Operating schedule:

Wednesdays and Saturdays, May-Dec., 7 a.m.-3 p.m.  
Saturdays, Jan.-April, 8 a.m.-3 p.m.

**Market and Vendor Details:** 86 market days | 125 vendors  
*# of vendors selling each type of product (some sell more than one type):* Vegetables, 34; fruit, 8; baked goods, 9; artisan, 25 (20 classified as artisan); jam, 4; honey, 4; holiday, 8; eggs, 5; meat, 8; dairy, 2; hot ready to eat food, 4; plants seedlings, 9; flowers, 13; and prepared food, 12.

**Average number of vendors:** Saturdays, 54 | Wednesdays, 27

**Average customer count:** Saturdays in the summer average 13,000 customers. In the winter Saturdays average 3,000. Wednesdays are about one third the customer traffic as Saturdays.

**Food assistance sales, Dec. 2018-Dec. 2019:** Women, Infants and Children - \$5,330 (redeemed); Senior Project Fresh - \$4,540 (redeemed); Double-up Food Bucks - \$36,782 (redeemed); SNAP/EBT - \$35,167 (redeemed); Credit card - \$296,965 (redeemed).



Ann Arbor  
**farmers market**  
great produce and more since 1919



## 2019: Food Truck Rallies



The 2019 food truck rally season was a big success, with a huge variety of food options including Mexican, Spanish, Jamaican, Turkish, sandwiches, vegetarian and vegan dishes, donuts, rolled ice cream and more. This was our fifth year hosting the rally, which replaced the Wednesday Evening Market in 2015 after five seasons. The number of trucks in 2015 was six, which has grown to 14-16 vendors in 2019. The rallies have become a way to highlight a different element of our vibrant food system: the trucks that serve prepared meals, providing unique recipes and creative ways of cooking. Each rally included live music and face painting.

Zero Waste Washtenaw (ZWW) participated during each rally to cut down on waste by helping customers sort between trash, compost and recycling. Volunteers monitored stations to facilitate



the sorting process and educate customers. We were able to achieve a diversion rate of 79%, up from 51% in 2018. One reason for the big increase is that we made it a requirement, rather than a suggestion. The market will continue to work with ZWW next year toward becoming a 100% zero waste event.

After the rallies, the "Flix on Bricks" series continued the event into the night with movies projected on a big blow-up screen in the parking lot, and performances from the Detroit Circus. Hosted by Exchange Capital Management, in partnership with the Michigan Theater.

### Trucks and carts:

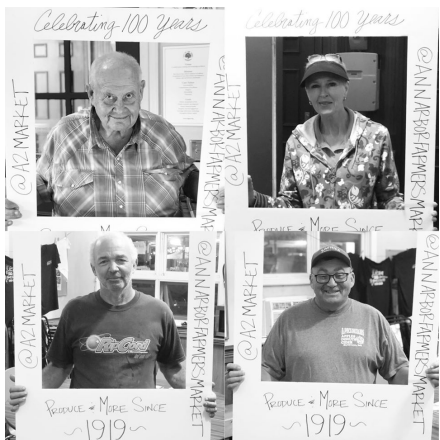
Impasto; Salt & Sugar Co.; Naughty Boy's Rolled Ice Cream; Jamerican Grill; Truckshuka; Hero or Villain; Delectabowl; Wood Fired Up; Shimmy Shack; Nosh Pit; Simply Spanish; Petey's Donuts; Michigan Drink Co; Cosa Sabrosa; Brother Truckers; Bearclaw Coffee; Bavarian Inn Cluck Truck; and Blom Meadworks.





## Centennial celebration: The market turns 100

**Ann Arbor Farmers Market turned 100 years old this year.** In May 1919, the first “curb market” was held at the old courthouse square (northeast corner of Main and Huron streets). The market was established by the Community Federation, composed of representatives from several women’s organizations.



The federation argued that a market where farmers could sell directly to customers would cut food costs by eliminating the middleman. In the 1920’s, the market became very popular, often creating traffic problems on market days.

In the early 1930’s, Gottlob Luick donated the land between Fourth Avenue and Detroit Street from his lumber company to create a permanent home for the market. In 1938, the City of Ann Arbor received a grant from the federal Works Progress Administration (WPA), a Depression-era jobs program to build a structure for the market. Between 1939 and 1940, the current roofed area with 124 stalls was built, along with a market office and meat inspection area.

The market went through a low point in the 1970’s and 1980’s. Many small farmers sold their land or consolidated to become large corn and soy producers. Supermarkets lured shoppers away with a wide variety of products. By the early 1980’s, the





number of vendors plunged 40% and only the stalls in the center aisle were filled, even on busy Saturdays. To keep the market going, the manager implemented two important changes. Some veteran growers were allowed to rent additional stalls. And for the first time, craftspeople became market vendors. Woodworker Coleman Jewett's adirondack chairs became a fixture at the north end of the market. The market began to rebound in the 1990's as Ann Arbor began to expand its now thriving local food system. Today, the market is home to over 125 vendors and sees 13,000 customers on a given Saturday in the summer.

For 100 years, the Ann Arbor Farmers Market has been a producer-only market offering local food and artisan products to the community year-round. Still the market continues to evolve. As farms extend their growing season by using hoop and greenhouses, produce offered during the winter has expanded to include a wide variety of greens. Advancements in storage techniques allow farmers to bring root vegetables and apples to the market during the cold months. A goal for the future will be to winterize the space so that the market may thrive in all seasons.

**To celebrate its 100th anniversary, the market:**

- Partnered with the library to host an exhibit about our history, with old photos and information throughout the decades.
- Moved the exhibit to the museum on Main Street and expanded our collection of information.
- Hosted a 100th birthday bash with free ice cream from Washtenaw Dairy.
- Collected oral interviews from seven vendors, to be housed in the library archives.
- Hung banners with historical photos.

## 2019 Special Events



**CHEF COOKING DEMOS - 3RD WEDNESDAYS, MAY-OCTOBER**

Ann Arbor guest chefs performed cooking demos and served tasty treats using seasonal ingredients from our vendors. Customers could meet the chefs and learn how to create yummy recipes using local ingredients from the market. Also organized by Edible Wow. Participating chefs included Chef Ji Hye of Miss Kim; Chef Nikolas Bardt of Fustini's; Chef Bob Bennett of Zingerman's Roadhouse; Chef Michael Metevia of Slows BBQ; Chef Kieron Hales of Cornman Farms; Chef Eve Aronoff and Armando Lopez of Frito Batidos.

**KIDS ACTIVITIES - 1ST WEDNESDAYS, MAY-OCTOBER**

With an emphasis on community engagement, we partnered with several organizations to host kid's programming. Alexander the Magician, a live owl, and face painting were just some of the super fun activities offered during the first Wednesday of the summer months.



### **CSA DAY – SATURDAY, APRIL 20**

The market hosted its second annual “CSA Day” to help inform customers what a CSA is, and which is the right fit for them. The crux of the CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) is that the consumer purchases a share of a particular farm’s harvest upfront for the season, to be picked up regularly, and becomes a member of that farm. To help customers find their perfect match, vendors offering CSA’s were present to answer questions, provide information and explain what makes their CSA unique.

### **FLOWER DAY - SUNDAY MAY 26 (MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND)**

This day was all things flowers and plants. We combined with the Sunday Artisan Market to offer a special event, which also included food trucks, gardening how-to advice from master gardeners, kids activities and tons of fun! Kerrytown neighborhood businesses also hosted flower themed activities the same day.



### **100TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION - SATURDAY, AUG. 17**

The market served free Washtenaw Dairy ice cream cones to all birthday guests. The celebration also included a chef cooking demo from The Standard Bistro and Larder, a performance by the Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra and hands-on fun with instruments. Children had the chance to get up close and personal with the orchestral instruments at the symphony’s “instrument petting zoo.”

### **FARM TO TABLE DINNER – FRIDAY, SEPT. 20**

Six local chefs prepared seasonal dishes using ingredients from our farmers for this fabulous feast. 75 guests enjoyed live music, beer and wine and a six-course meal which was served family style. Proceeds from the event went toward a grant fund for farmers market vendors wishing to diversify their product mix. Featured restaurants included Zingerman’s Deli, Miss Kim, Vinology, Loomi Café, Tea Haus and Guy Hollerins. The event was sponsored by the Kerrytown District Association.





**GLASS BLOWING DEMO - SATURDAY, OCT. 19**

It was a glass pumpkin fest. The Glass Academy was at the market all weekend making glass pumpkins. Customers had the opportunity to watch glassblowing demonstrations and could commission that perfect pumpkin too.

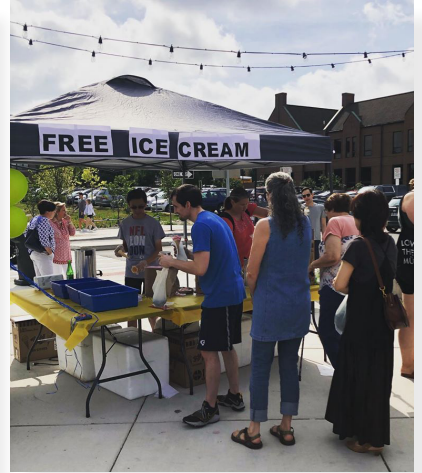


**HALLOWEEN BASH - SATURDAY, OCT. 26**

Fun for the whole family. Kids could trick or treat at our candy stations around the market or practice their art skills with pumpkin painting. All visitors, young and old were encouraged to wear costumes.

**SPECIAL HOLIDAY MARKET – SATURDAY, DEC. 14**

The market ushered in the holidays with fresh roasted chestnuts, free marshmallow roasting, campfires, s'mores and hot chocolate. Musician John played Christmas songs on the vibraphone (an instrument similar to a xylophone).





## Our impact

### **CITY HALL WORKPLACE CSA**

The market piloted a workplace CSA pickup at Larcom City Hall for city employees. Employees could choose a membership to any of fthe our participating farms – Kapnicks, Tantre, Brines and Goetz – to be dropped off at their place of work. A total of 15 people participated.

### **NEIGHBORHOOD IMPACT**

We found that 83% of customers also shop at nearby businesses when they visit the farmers market, increasing the impact that the market has on our neighborhood. The market was the primary reason for visiting the area for 91% of visitors.

Many patrons come from a significant distance to shop. One study found that only 39% of Ann Arbor Farmers Market patrons reside within the City of Ann Arbor (study by Intalytics). Additionally, the market draws customers from all over the country.

### **ECONOMIC IMPACT**

Most customers (39%) spend between \$20-\$50 at the market. Vegetables were purchased most often, followed by fruit and baked goods. Over half (56%) of our customers surveyed shop weekly at the market, as opposed to monthly or yearly.

### **IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS**

- Repainted yellow stall lines.
- Worked with an architect, solar technician and city planner on plans for roll down sides on the existing structure and heating options.
- Performed a structural analysis of the beams to determine if the current structure can support sidewalls, and came up with a design to reinforce the columns.
- Added roll-out propane patio heaters for use during the winter months to provide warmth to vendors and shoppers.

### **Volunteers:**

80 hours of volunteer time.

### **Food Gatherers:**

In 2019, vendors donated 20,076 pounds of food to Food Gatherers.

The market is one of the original donors, with farmers participating pretty much for the entire 31 years Food Gatherers has been around.





## Greenbelt Program supports farmers



The Open Space and Parkland Preservation Millage (Greenbelt Program) started with a grand vision overwhelmingly supported by Ann Arbor voters, who in 2003 approved a 30-year, 0.5 mil tax levy with 67% of the vote. The millage funds both new parkland acquisitions within the city limits, as well as land preservation outside of the city but within the Greenbelt district.

Since 1935, Washtenaw County has lost 223,785 acres of farmland. Since 2007, Michigan averaged losses of two acres every hour or two farms each day. Within 10 years, approximately 35% of all Michigan farmers will retire. While the impacts to the region's farming landscape and culture have been significant, the Greenbelt Program has helped preserve and promote what farms and farming remains.

Approximately 25,000 acres of the Greenbelt district is currently in active agricultural production, and the Greenbelt Program has preserved over 5,000 acres of active farmland. This means over 20% of the currently available farmland within the Greenbelt district has been preserved, only halfway through the 30-year millage.

By preserving the most fundamental piece of the farming equation – the land itself – the Greenbelt Program has helped ensure that over 5,000 acres of farmland will be available for future generations, and be available to serve local markets as the economics and practices of farming change over the decades and centuries to come. So, while the Greenbelt Program has protected 53 working farms, and currently only five of those farms source food to local markets, the Greenbelt Program has guaranteed the land base for future local food systems to emerge upon.







"Community! Yummy food!  
Seriously the hot peppers are AWESOME!"

## WE ASKED OUR CUSTOMERS ...

### What do you like best about the farmers market?

- Relationships with vendors and local farmers.
- Homemade crafts.
- The variety of local goods.
- Quality.
- All the cheese.
- Feels like an event.
- Accessibility.
- Fresh.
- The social aspect.

### What can we do to improve your experience?

- Indoor space.
- Dogs are ok.
- Enforce no dogs.
- Live music.
- Extend the hours.
- More free parking.
- More publicity - tv/radio interviews with vendors.
- Encourage recycling.
- New affordable products.





## WE ASKED OUR CUSTOMERS TO TELL US ABOUT A FAVORITE MARKET MEMORY ...

"Growing up on the market from age eight – raising my children there too! No finer education for kids meeting people and interacting."

"My mother loved coming to the market in the 80's when she lived on Ann Street."

"Finding Stanley prune-plums to make pie from my mom's recipe. Getting great rhubarb. Concord grapes like those my grandpa grew in Galena, Illinois."



"A vendor taught me how to pick out tomatoes."

"Found Mindo Chocolate that I experienced in Ecuador."

"Bringing my three week old daughter there for the first time."

"Saturdays with the grandkids."

"Lunch with my camp."

"Going on a field trip there in 4th grade."

"Sweet potato pies in the 1960's."

"I've been going to the market since 1969. I became friends with Mrs. Parker who began with eggs. She gave me a flower bouquet on my wedding day."

