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Wilson County Agricultural Article from Ruth Correll, Agricultural Extension Agent

August 2-8 is National Farmers Market Week

This week, has been proclaimed National Farmers Market Week by U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, Tom Vilsack. Secretary Vilsack announced that 8,144 farmers markets are now listed in USDA's National Farmers Market Directory, up from about 5,000 in 2008. The directory is published online at farmersmarkets.usda.gov. This year, the directory has been upgraded to include a new Application Programming Interface (API) that improves customer access to farmers market data.

Farmers markets are the “in” place to shop it seems. More consumers are interested in connecting with the folks that produce their food. Personally knowing the farmer that grew the beans, potatoes, tomatoes, squash or other fruits and vegetables has increased in consumer popularity and interest.

Farmers markets are an integral part of the urban/farm linkage and have continued to rise in popularity, mostly due to growing consumer interest in obtaining fresh products directly from the farm. Farmers markets allow consumers to have access to locally grown, farm fresh produce which enables farmers the opportunity to develop a personal relationship with their customers.

Direct marketing of farm products through farmers markets continues to be an important sales outlet for agricultural producers nationwide. According to a Marketumbrella research paper published in 2012, having a farmers market nearby means an average increase in sales to nearby businesses in major cities across the U.S.

Farmers markets are a win-win for farmers and consumers. Farmers markets are often the first point of entry into the marketplace for small and medium-sized producers. They help small and medium-sized producers begin their businesses, develop and test new product lines, obtain better prices for high-value products while providing a reliable source of farm income.

Farmers markets benefit consumers by providing access to locally-produced, farm-fresh food, to develop face-to-face relationships with the farmers who grow the food, and the opportunity to contribute directly to local farm viability.

According to Secretary Vilsack, farmers markets often serve as an integral part of creating a robust local economies and thriving neighborhoods. They also provide easier access to fresh, healthful food in communities.

If you want to support local farmers...shop your local “Farmers Market. Local food and direct marketing opportunities, including farmers markets, are one of the fastest growing segments of agriculture.
Agricultural Market Summary

Cattle Market Trends
The summer months have resulted in much softer prices. 500 to 550 pound steers have lost more than $42 per hundredweight since its spring peak in mid-April. This decline in prices represents a 15.4 percent decline in prices while most years the decline is somewhere 7-10%. Feeder steers, under 500 lbs. $5 to $8 lower, over 500 lbs. $2 to $5 lower, $170.00-$320.00; Feeder heifers, under 500 lbs. $4 to $7 lower, over 500 lbs. unevenly steady, $155.00-$315.00; Slaughter cows, steady to $1 lower, $93.50-$114.00; Slaughter bulls, steady, $123.00-$145.00.

Grain Market Trends

For additional information on these and other topics, contact the UT Extension Office, 925 East Baddour Parkway, Lebanon, TN 37087, 615-444-9584 or acorrell@utk.edu. UT Extension provides equal opportunities in all programs. Visit the UT/TSU Extension webpage at http://utextension.tennessee.edu/wilson or look for UT & TSU Extension, Wilson County on Facebook.

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