

Contact: Office of Communications  
[press@oc.usda.gov](mailto:press@oc.usda.gov)  
(202) 720-4623

## **Agriculture Secretary Vilsack Proclaims August 7-13 “National Farmers Market Week”**

WASHINGTON, July 11, 2016 - Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today signed a [proclamation](#) declaring Aug. 7-13, 2016, as "National Farmers Market Week." This year marks the 17th annual National Farmers Market Week to honor and celebrate the important role that farmers markets play in local economies.

"Farmers markets are an important part of strong local and regional food systems that connect farmers with new customers and grow rural economies. In many areas, they are also expanding access to fresh, healthy food for people of all income levels," said Secretary Vilsack. "National Farmers Market Week recognizes the growth of these markets and their role in supporting both urban and rural communities."

Throughout the week, USDA officials will celebrate at farmers market locations across the country. On Saturday, Aug. 6, Elanor Starmer, the Administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) – which conducts research, provides technical assistance, and awards grants to support local and regional food systems – will kick off the week visiting a farmers market and wrap up the week at USDA's own farmers market in Washington, D.C., on Friday, Aug. 12.

"Farmers markets are a gathering place where you can buy locally produced food, and at the same time, get to know the farmer and story behind the food you purchase," said Administrator Starmer. "These types of markets improve earning potential for farmers and ranchers, building stronger community ties and access to local foods."

To help farmers market managers across the country promote and celebrate National Farmers Market Week, USDA is sharing online free farmers market related graphics that market managers and others can use to customize posters, emails, websites and other promotional materials. The graphics, along with a short demonstration video, can be found at: [www.ams.usda.gov/resources/NFMW](http://www.ams.usda.gov/resources/NFMW)

Over the course of the Obama Administration, USDA has invested close to \$1 billion in 40,000 local food businesses and infrastructure projects. Farmers markets provide consumers with fresh, affordable, convenient, and healthy products from local producers. With support from USDA, more farmers markets offer customers the opportunity to make purchases with the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program; the Women, Infants, and Children Nutrition Program; and the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Programs.

Supporting farmers markets is a part of the USDA's [Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food](#) (KYF2) Initiative, which coordinates the Department's work to develop strong local

and regional food systems. USDA is committed to helping farmers, ranchers, and businesses access the growing market for local and regional foods, which was valued at \$12 billion in 2014 according to industry estimates. You can also find local and regional supply chain resources on the newly-revamped [KYF2 website](#) and use the [KYF2 Compass](#) to locate USDA investments in your community.

More information on how USDA investments are connecting producers with consumers and expanding rural economic opportunities is available [in Chapter IV of USDA Results on Medium](#).

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