

# Farmers' Market at the X



Belle Rita Novak, Market Manager

[www.thefarmersmarketatthex.com](http://www.thefarmersmarketatthex.com)

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## Summer Theatre in Western Mass

The Chester Theatre Company begins its 20th anniversary season on July 1st and goes through August 23rd. Go to [chestertheatre.org](http://chestertheatre.org) for details. Chester is about one hour from Springfield off Rte. 20. The theatre is air-conditioned. New Century Theatre has its performances in the Mendenhall Center for Performing Arts at Smith College on Green Street in Northampton. Their season starts June 18th and goes through August 8th. They also have children's theatre. Their website is [newcenturytheatre.org](http://newcenturytheatre.org). That theatre is also air-conditioned. Enjoy!

## From the Market Manager

Isn't it such a pleasure to have salads with fresh vegetables! I looked over at The Kitchen Garden's display and saw a mound of radishes, and a little while later they were gone. If you haven't tried the white turnips from Red Fire Farm do so. They are mild and sweet. They are excellent in a salad as well as cooked. They don't have to be peeled either.

Last year one of our regular customers told me that she had purchased some Swiss chard and put it in her spare refrigerator and forgot about it for two weeks. When she found it she said it was still perfect. That is one of the main differences between farmers' market food and food from stores. Here you know that it was picked either the day of or the day before the market, and the grocery store's was picked ?.

Most often no-one complains about the cost of anything at the market. If someone does complain I always tell them that they are confusing price and value. Sometimes farmers' market prices are higher than grocery stores, but small-scale farming has higher production costs than factory farming does.,

Also, you will find varieties of produce at a farmers' market that you will never find in a store. I read in *Edible Pioneer Valley* that The Kitchen Garden is growing 200 varieties of produce this year. I would expect that Red Fire Farm grows a similar number also. Riverbend Farm is growing several varieties of potatoes; yellow, white, red, blue. The blue potatoes actually have blue inside as well as on the skin. Make a potato salad with the different colored potatoes;



it's pretty. The yellow potatoes make gorgeous mashed potatoes. It looks as though you've used a pound of butter when they're mashed.

## What will you do to use less Water?

From the Springfield Water and Sewer Commission-

- The average American uses 140-170 gallons of water per day.
- One flush of the toilet uses 6.5 gallons of water

- Take short showers instead of baths; a full bathtub uses about 37 gallons of water.
- You use about 5 gallons of water if you leave it running while you brush your teeth.
- An automatic dishwasher uses 9-12 gallons of water while hand washing dishes can use up to 20 gallons.
- You can refill an 8 oz. glass of water approximately 15,000 times for the same cost as a 6-pack of soda.
- A leaky faucet can waste up to 100 gallons of water a day.
- It is unnecessary to have an automatic sprinkler system running during a rainy period.

## **This ‘n’ That**

If you donate used items, and you put them into one of those containers that are in parking lots, make sure that the organization that you are donating to is legitimate. You can't go wrong with Goodwill or the Salvation Army. Some of the others, who knows?

Take your children with you when you go to pick any produce. It will give them some idea of what is involved in getting their food to them. Don't bring really little kids to the strawberry patch as they will likely walk all over the berries. Blueberries are on bushes, so they can't damage them in the same way.

Please bring your favorite recipes to the market manager and they will be copied and handed out.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, direct to consumer sales increased 104.7% between 1997 and 2007. There are over 4,000 farmers' markets in the country now.

Do yourself a favor and visit some of the ethnic grocery stores that we have in Springfield. You will find that the prices are less than the big grocery stores and the selection is terrific. All of them have prepared food also.

Italian--Milanos and Mom and Rico's, South Main St.; Frigo's, William St. and Shaker Rd., E. Longmeadow.

Middle Eastern--3 NG Bakery, Howard St.

Asian--Saigon Market, Belmont Ave., Zone Supermarket, Belmont Ave., Asian Market, Pomona St.

## **New Bakery in Neighborhood**

By now many of you have discovered Essen and Fressen Bakery aka Elke's Bakery on Dickinson St. just before (or after if you're coming from Longmeadow) Fountain St. Open Tuesday through Saturday 7-4. Everything is baked from "scratch. Elke is from Germany. Lunch is served.

## **Organic Dairies in Trouble**

The trend toward organic food has slowed somewhat from its explosive growth, and dairy farms are feeling the brunt of the slowdown. Many conventional dairy farmers converted their farms to organic production at a very high cost, and now are finding that it costs them more to produce the milk than they can get for it. The NY Times had an article in its May 29th edition about this.



## **Some Ideas for Strawberries**

Spinach and strawberry salad--add some fresh cut up strawberries to fresh spinach, roast some pecans if you'd like, make a light dressing with lemon juice, raspberry, white, balsamic, or rice wine vinegar, olive oil or vegetable oil, a little sugar, salt, pepper, and if you want a little zing, add some dry mustard. Shake the dressing and let it sit a little while for the flavors to blend and put on the salad and toss.

Strawberry Soup--Puree fresh strawberries in a blender or food processor. Add either half and half or plain yogurt and some sugar to taste. You can add a little nutmeg also. Serve very cold. This is a dessert soup.