



Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

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Patrick-Murray Administration Proclaims August 21-27 Massachusetts Farmers' Market Week

BOSTON – Friday, August 19, 2011 – The Patrick-Murray Administration today proclaimed August 21-27 Massachusetts Farmers' Market Week, calling farmers' markets across the state "essential to the vitality of Massachusetts farms."

"This week we celebrate our farmers' markets across the Commonwealth because they are not only places for communities to gather and enjoy fresh, healthy and locally-grown foods, but also help sustain our agricultural history and traditions," said Secretary Sullivan.

The week will officially kick off on Monday, August 22, when Department of Agricultural Resources (DAR) Commissioner Scott J. Soares will read the proclamation at the 27th Annual Massachusetts Tomato Contest at Boston's City Hall Plaza Farmers' Market.

Farmers' markets "create a festive open air setting which enhances community spirit and civic pride by offering a natural place for community gathering," according to the proclamation, which also says markets, "help heighten public awareness of the agricultural diversity of Massachusetts and the benefits of buying local and preserving open space."

With farmers' markets, shoppers in communities across the state – urban, suburban, and rural alike - have easy access to an array of freshly-harvested fruits, vegetables, herbs, and flowers, as well as local farm items such as maple syrup, honey, eggs, meat, poultry, baked goods, wine, and jams and jellies.

"Farmers' markets continue to expand each year," said Commissioner Soares. "The number of markets has more than doubled since 2005, with 245 farmers' markets up and running this summer from Cape Cod to the Berkshires. Additionally, more markets are extending their season into the winter, in some cases, moving the market into an indoor location for a few months."

The Massachusetts Farmers' Market Week celebration on August 22 is being coordinated by DAR, along with the Mass Farmers Markets and the New England Vegetable and Berry Growers Association.

DAR compiles an annual list of Massachusetts farmers' markets, listing days, locations, times, and opening and closing dates for each market. An interactive map of farmers' markets statewide is available at http://www.mass.gov/agr/massgrown/farmers_markets.htm.



DAR's mission is to ensure the long-term viability of agriculture in Massachusetts. Through its four divisions – Agricultural Conservation & Technical Assistance, Agricultural Markets, Animal Health, and Crop and Pest Services – DAR strives to support, regulate and enhance the rich diversity of the Commonwealth's agricultural community to promote economically

and environmentally sound food safety and animal health measures, and fulfill agriculture’s role in energy conservation and production. For more information, visit DAR’s website at www.mass.gov/agr, and/or follow at twitter.com/agcommishsoares

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