

Opening Day for the Alton Farmers' & Artisans' Market Is May 11th

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(8 May 2019 - Alton, IL) – The 2019 season of the Alton Farmers' & Artisans' Market is starting Mother's Day weekend on Sat, May 11th in the parking lot at the corner of Landmarks Blvd. & Henry Street in Alton, IL. The Market will be in session Sat mornings from 8:00 a.m. until Noon through Oct 19th. The Wednesday evening Market will run from from 4:00 until 7:00 p.m. from July 3rd through Sept 25th.

Shoppers will find a wide selection of locally-grown seasonal fruit and vegetables, including heirloom varieties and organically grown crops. Produce will be available, along with grass-fed beef, pasture-raised poultry, farm fresh eggs, local honey, hot or iced coffee, fresh bread and other baked goods. In addition, fresh cut flowers, potted plants, and a large assortment of hand-crafted artwork such as pottery, stained glass, soap, candles, and woodworking items will be sold.

This year marks the 27th season of the Market, organized by Alton Main Street as part of the organization's efforts to revitalize the Downtown Alton historic district. The events feature a variety of products that are handmade or homegrown within a 50-mile radius. New vendors are welcome; registration fees are \$12.00 for Saturdays and \$5.00 for either weeknight option. Discounted seasonal rates are also available.

Live entertainment, artist demonstrations and other special activities have been scheduled every Saturday throughout the season. The schedule is as follows:

- 5/11 - Native Landscaping with The Nature Institute
- 5/18 - Tailgate Sale & Magician Don Woodruff
- 5/25 - Photography Walk with Andrew Dobson
- 6/1 - Goat Yoga and Live music from Sue Kennedy & Keith Roberson Singer-Songwriters
- 6/8 - Live music from Nancy Lippincott & friends, and Artist Demo: Pottery Wheel with Bob Sancamper
- 6/15 - Artist Demo: Origami with Taeko Wogi
- 6/22 - Henna tattoos with Karla Anderson
- 6/29 - City Mouse, Country Mouse - Puppet Show with Blaque Berry Puppets
- 7/6 - Live music from The Goodies
- 7/13 - Christmas in July - visit with Santa & Mrs. Claus
- 7/20 - Recipe and Nutrition Booth from Illinois Nutrition Education Programs
- 7/27 - Kid-friendly activities with Riverbend Head Start & Family Services
- 8/3 - Live music from City Voices Chorus & kid-friendly activities with Madison County Child Advocacy Center
- 8/10 - Celebrating National Farmers' Market Week! Artist Demo: Mosaics with Sarah Neal
- 8/17 - Meditation Session with Stella from Riverbend Spirit Studio
- 8/24 - Recipe and Nutrition Booth from Illinois Nutrition Education Programs
- 8/31 - Live music from Nancy Lippincott & friends
- 9/7 - Live music from the Lifehouse Band
- 9/14 - Health Fair with SIHF Healthcare
- 9/21 - Recipe and Nutrition Booth from Illinois Nutrition Education Programs
- 9/28 - Canine Carnival with SNIP Alliance

10/5 - Artist Demo: Crochet & hand knitting with Sally Kirbach, plus Recipe and Nutrition Booth from Illinois Nutrition Education Programs
10/12 - Live music from Lauren Waters
10/19 - Tailgate Sale

Alton Main Street aims to improve access to healthy food thanks to the Illinois EBT Wireless Project grant funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, which were formerly known as LINK or food stamps, will be accepted by many vendors. SNAP recipients are encouraged to visit the info booth and swipe their cards to use their benefits for locally-grown produce. When doing so, Alton Main Street will double their dollars, giving shoppers twice the buying power for fresh fruits and vegetables. The goal is to boost the sale of Illinois-grown food and provide access to fresh produce to low-income residents.

At the Markets, anything homegrown or handmade by the vendor is welcome to be sold. Anyone interested in becoming a vendor is encouraged to visit the Events page of www.DowntownAlton.com to register. Pre-registration is not required, vendors simply show up one hour prior to start time to be directed to their booth space. You can receive reminders on what produce is in season, plus upcoming entertainment and activities at: facebook.com/AltonFarmersMarket.