



Special Activities in Store to Celebrate National Farmers Market Week at the Alton Farmers' and Artisans' Market

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Alton, IL (2 August 2011) – National Farmers Market Week is August 7th-13th, and Alton Marketplace is extending the celebration with special activities throughout the month to mark the occasion.

The festivities will kick off on Friday, August 5th, with a special evening version of the Market at the amphitheater in conjunction with a free outdoor movie. All of your favorite vendors will be set up in the parking lot in Riverfront Park starting at 6pm, and at 9:30 the movie "Fresh" will be shown on the main stage. Fresh is a new feature documentary film by Ana Sofia Joanes, which celebrates the farmers, thinkers and business people across America who are boldly re-inventing our food system with sustainable agriculture initiatives. The movie is hailed as "An exhilarating look at the whole range of efforts underway to renovate the way we grow food and feed ourselves," by Michael Pollan, Author of *In Defense of Food*.

On August 6th, enjoy live music from the Dixie Dudes, and make wooden wind chimes with the Jacoby Arts Center at their "Arts in the Park" booth. On August 13th their craft is tissue paper paintings, and on August 20th, have fun making 3D puppets. To finish the month, we welcome The Nature Institute on August 27th who will offer composting workshops to shoppers.

Also, sign up at the Market for the Senior Nutrition Program which provides \$21 worth of vouchers for fresh produce from the Farmer's Market. To qualify you must be 60 years and older and meet a household income guideline. You may sign up at the Alton

Farmers' Market on Saturdays from 9 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. Look for a Senior Services Plus representative at the Alton Marketplace booth. You do not need to bring proof of income but you will need identification, such as state ID card or driver's license to verify age. Please direct questions about this program to Senior Services Plus's Information and Assistance hotline at 465-3298.

Young Entrepreneurs Program - Alton Marketplace is looking for young entrepreneurs to try their hand as a vendor at the Farmers' and Artisans' Market. One entrepreneur aged 8 -16 will be chosen each week to receive complimentary booth space where they can sell anything that they have grown or made themselves. Both for-profit ventures and non-profit projects to raise money for charity will be considered. Please plan to have adult supervision for any child that will be participating. Applications will be reviewed by a committee, and vendors that are accepted will be contacted to schedule a date. Applications are available at: www.AltonMarketplace.com.

The Farmers & Artisans' Market is currently underway and runs from 8am to Noon every Saturday through mid-October, the event has doubled in size over the past few years and currently features 35-40 weekly vendors. The market is located in the parking lot at the corner of Henry Street and Landmarks Boulevard, under the steamboat mural. A wide selection of locally-grown seasonal fruit and vegetables is available, including heirloom varieties and organically grown crops. Along with produce, shoppers will also find plant materials, grass-fed meat, local honey, fresh bread and other baked goods, and a large assortment of hand-crafted artwork. The location provides plenty of on-site parking.

The market is a fun, easy, and responsible way for citizens to shop for healthy food. Fruits and vegetables are at their freshest and most nutritious when purchased locally, and the most environmentally, economically and socially responsible way to purchase your food is through local growers at the Farmers' Market.

For more information, please contact Sara McGibany, Executive Director of Alton Marketplace, at 618-463-1016 or Bob Sancamper, Head Farmer, at 618-372-3018.