



A TASTE OF THE TOP FARMERS' MARKETS

By Lynn & Cele Seldon

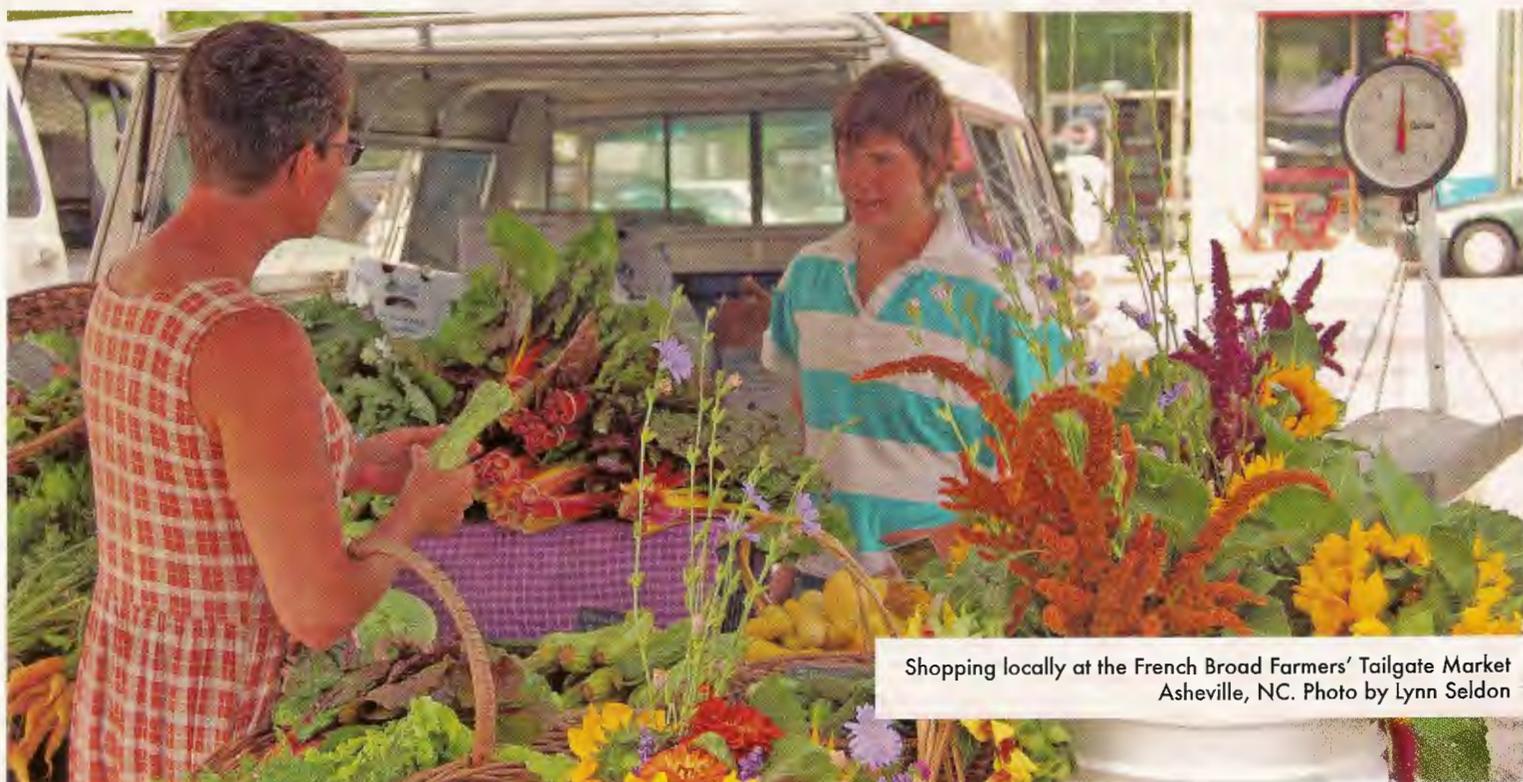
The movement for buying, cooking, and eating fresh food grown locally means farmers' markets are better than ever across the country. Thus, it's easy to find a farmers' market, buy what's fresh, and prepare tasty meals back at your campsite.

"The farmers' market movement is booming across the country, which means you can pretty much find one anywhere you travel," says Amelia Saltsman, author of *The Santa Monica Farmers' Market Cookbook*. "I love cooking on the road. My favorite way to get a feel for the area I'm in is to visit a local farmers' market. I immediately get a sense of the flavors and colors of a place. When it comes to picking up supplies for picnics or meals on the road, I can't do better than the fresh ingredients offered by local farmers."

Not only are locals and travelers shopping at farmers' markets and then preparing their purchases, many chefs are also frequenting the markets in search of fresh fare for their menus. That means the bounty of farmers' markets can be enjoyed at many restaurants as well.

"There's an excitement about a farmers' market, because all these people are there for the same reason—they want high-quality food," says Kevin Nashan of Sidney Street Café in St. Louis. "I love seeing other chefs there and it's also fun to see my customers there too."

Though there are hundreds of farmers' markets across the country on any given day, here is a selection of top farmers' markets from Portland, Maine, to Portland, Oregon.



Shopping locally at the French Broad Farmers' Tailgate Market Asheville, NC. Photo by Lynn Seldon

Portland, Maine

www.portlandmainefarmersmarket.org

Founded back in 1768, everything at the Portland Farmers' Market is grown and produced in the state of Maine. It's generally held on Wednesdays and Saturdays year-round. Like many farmers' markets, and depending on the location and time of year, visitors might find local vegetables and fruits, herbs, meat, eggs, cheese, milk, cider, honey, grains, bread, jams, fermented foods (like sauerkraut, kimchi, and tempeh), flowers, plants, and more.



Montpelier, Vermont

www.montpelierfarmersmarket.com

The Capital City Farmers Market is held in downtown Montpelier on Saturdays year-round (indoors from December to April). In-season possibilities include produce, meats, cheese, goat and cow milk, honey, maple syrup, mushrooms, wild edibles, baked and prepared goods, plants, crafts, and more. There's a special Thanksgiving Farmers Market at Montpelier High School on the Saturday before Thanksgiving.



Boston, Massachusetts

www.bostonpublicmarket.org

Boston Mayor Thomas Menino envisioned many neighborhood markets selling local food and Bean Town has seen the number of farmers' markets double to more than two dozen in less than a decade. Among many great possibilities throughout the week and weekend, the Boston Public Market currently features a duo of seasonal markets: City Hall Plaza (Mondays and Wednesdays) and Dewey Square (Tuesdays and Thursdays). This market will have permanent new digs on the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway in 2015.

New York, New York

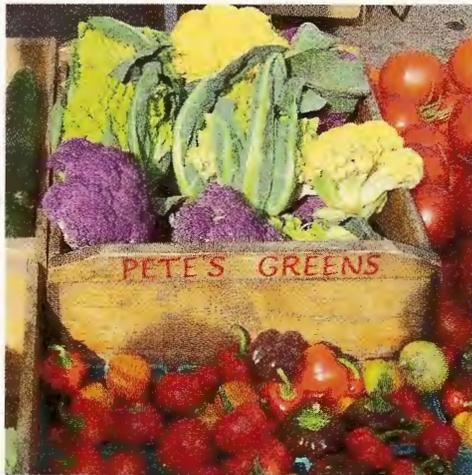
www.grownyc.org/greenmarket

Manhattan has many great farmers' markets, but Union Square Greenmarket remains a favorite with locals and visitors alike. It was founded with just a handful of farmers in 1976 and has grown to include 140 regional farmers, fisherman, and bakers during peak season. It's year-round and is now held on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays. It's part of the Greenmarket Farmers Market network, which now includes more than 50 outdoor farmers' markets to make it the largest network of urban farmers' markets in the world, with 200-plus farming families and fisherman and more than 30,000 acres of farmland protected from development.

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

www.readingterminalmarket.org

Since 1893, Reading Terminal Market has been the place to find it fresh and local every day. Philadelphia's historic farmers' market is a classic, with a huge selection of meats and seafood, produce fresh from the field, Amish specialties (Amish vendors aren't open on Sundays), ethnic foods, eclectic restaurants, and more. The Pennsylvania General Store and Dutch Eating Place are among many long-time favorites.



Photos:

Above: www.montpelierfarmersmarket.com
Right: www.portlandmainefarmersmarket.org
library.byways.org

Washington, District of Columbia

www.freshfarmmarkets.org

Famed Dupont Circle Freshfare is part of the FRESHFARM Markets group of farmers' markets in the Washington, DC metropolitan region. Held year-round every Sunday, it features more than 40 folks offering fruits and vegetables, meat, poultry, fish, cheeses, breads, fruit pies, fresh pasta, flowers, plants, and much more. The "Chef at Market" program lures renowned chefs for tastings, demonstrations, market tours, and book signings. FRESHFARM has several other farmers' markets in the city and there's also Eastern Market (www.easternmarket-dc.org), and revitalized Union Market (www.unionmarketdc.com), with fresh oysters from Rappahannock Oyster Co. (www.rroysters.com) and fresh lamb from Border Springs Farm (www.borderspringsfarm.com), which is also sold Thursdays at FRESHFARM Market at Penn Quarter.



Richmond, Virginia

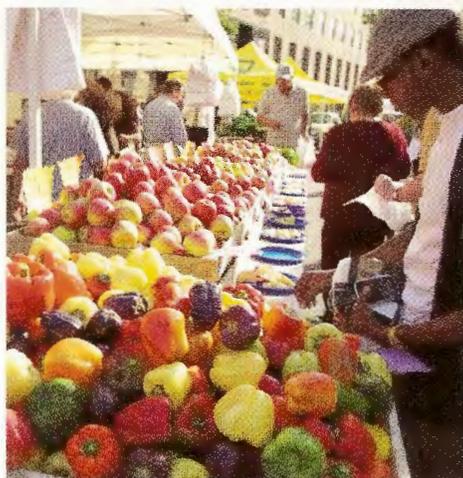
www.sojmarket.com

As one of America's oldest public markets, the capital city of the Old Dominion still features the historic 17th Street Farmers Market in Shockoe Bottom on Saturdays and Sundays (www.richmondgov.com/farmersmarket). However, it's Richmond's South of the James Market that's now making history as an open-air producer-only farmers' market featuring locally-grown and hand-made items. Situated just south of the James River in Forest Hill Park, it's the place to see, be seen, and purchasing almost every Saturday of the year.

Wilmington, North Carolina

www.wilmingtondowntown.com/farmers-market

Situated right on the Cape Fear River in historic downtown Wilmington, the Riverfront Farmers' Market is held on almost every Saturday from spring to fall (except for Azalea Festival and Riverfest weekends). Featuring views across the river to the Battleship USS North Carolina, the popular market also features fresh seafood straight from the Atlantic.



Raleigh, North Carolina

www.ncagr.gov

Just off I-40, the sprawling Raleigh Farmers Market is one of five regional farmers' markets owned by the state of North Carolina and operated by the North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Service. Open seven days a week, highlights include the Farmers Building; Market Shoppes; the drive-through Truckers Building; Market Imports; the Wholesale Terminal; and three restaurants (the State Farmers Market Restaurant features country cooking for breakfast and lunch). Other state farmers' markets can be found in Lumberton (near I-95), the Piedmont-Triad (near Greenville), Charlotte, and Asheville (see below).

Winston-Salem, North Carolina

www.oldsalem.org

The Old Salem Cobblestone Farmers Market brings sustainable agriculture back into the heart of the city and restores a tradition established in historic Salem more than 200 years ago. The producers-only market is held on Saturdays and features lots of fruits, vegetables, herbs, meats, eggs, cheeses, breads, and more from the surrounding countryside. Border Springs Farm (see Washington, DC) also sells their fresh lamb at this market.

Asheville, North Carolina

www.appalachiangrown.org

The western North Carolina mountain town of Asheville is home to more than a dozen

Photos:
FRESHFARM, Washington D.C.
www.summertomato.com
www.goinggreendc.net

active “tailgate markets,” where many farmers sell their wares right off their trucks’ tailgates. Of course, there are more traditional stalls and stands as well, but the varied opening days and locations make tailgate shopping for fresh food in and around Asheville easy to accomplish—and eat. Known for farm-to-table fare (make that tailgate-to-table), many Asheville-area chefs, like John Stehling at beloved Early Girl Eatery (www.earlygirleatery.com) and Katie Button at super-hot Curate (www.curatetapasbar.com), can often be spotted shopping at tailgate markets.

Charleston, South Carolina

www.charlestonfarmersmarket.com

Open from mid-April well into December, the Charleston Farmers Market in Marion Square is historic Charleston’s gathering spot for foodies and chefs come most Saturdays (and select Sundays). Established by beloved long-time Mayor Joe Riley in 1989, it features produce and much more from throughout the Lowcountry. Fittingly located on Market Street just down Meeting Street from Marion Square, the renovated and revitalized historic Charleston City Market (www.thecharlestoncitymarket.com) features famed sweetgrass baskets and several food vendors, like Food for the Southern Soul (www.foodforthesouthern soul.com). To see how the pros use what they find at the markets, head to McCrady’s (www.mccradysrestaurant.com) and Husk (www.huskrestaurant.com).



Columbia, South Carolina

www.scstatefarmersmarket.com

www.sodacitysc.com

The new state-of-the-art South Carolina State Farmers Market on Columbia’s outskirts opened in 2010 to rave reviews. It showcases the “Certified SC Grown” program seven days a week. Judy’s At The Market restaurant also highlights the state’s famed fare. Alternatively, Soda City Market downtown on Main Street bustles every Saturday morning year-round, including don’t-miss grits from Anson Mills (www.ansonmills.com) and heirloom pork from Caw Caw Creek (www.cawcawcreek.com).

Greenville, South Carolina

www.saturdaymarketlive.com

Held from May to October, the TD Saturday Market right on Greenville’s revitalized Main Street provides a perfect example of a successful downtown farmers’ market. Chefs, loyal locals, and lots of visitors come along several blocks of fresh fare that’s heading from the farm to the table at home, in an RV, or at nearby restaurants like Soby’s (www.table301.com) and Roost (www.roostrestaurant.com).

Gainesville, Florida

www.441market.com

Central Florida has lots of sprawling farms, so it makes sense that there would be several farmers’ markets in the Sunshine State. Founded in 1972, Gainesville’s Alachua County Farmers’ market on US 441 is north central Florida’s original growers market. It’s open every Saturday morning year-round with lots of Florida-produced options and special events (like July’s Chile Pepper Festival).

Ocala, Florida

www.ocalafarmmarket.com

Situated downtown on Ocala Square on Saturdays, the Ocala Farm



Photos:

Above: Saturday Market, Greenville, SC
Photo by Lynn Seldon

Top right: Local produce vendors at
North Asheville Farmers Tailgate Market,
Asheville, NC. Photo by Lynn Seldon

Bottom right: Charleston Farmers’ Market
www.sassyspoon.wordpress.com

Market is a great place to head for a small town Florida farmers' market. Many locals and visitors make a day of it by catching a movie or staying for lunch at a local foodie favorite like nearby La Cuisine. (www.lacuisineocala.com).



Chattanooga, Tennessee

www.chattanoogaogamarket.com

Founded in 2001, the Chattanooga Market is held every Sunday from spring to fall. It features more than 50 farms and 125 artisans, free music (two live shows weekly), popular food trucks and other eateries, cooking demos and tastings, and a full calendar of special events and festivals (like the Beast Feast Barbecue Festival). Sister seasonal markets include the Chattanooga River Market, Ringgold Market, and the popular Holiday Market.

Flint, Michigan

www.flintfarmersmarket.com

Open year-round on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, the Flint Farmers' Market features more than 25 vendors inside and another 50 more outside from May to October. Highlights include a meat market, baked goods, poultry, in-season produce, a wine shop, an art gallery, deli, café, ethnic specialties, lots of chefs, music, and more. In 2014, the market will be moving back downtown (into an old Flint Journal printing facility) after 70 years in the suburbs.

Chicago, Illinois

www.greencitymarket.org

Focusing on sustainable farming and food, the Windy City's famed Green City Market is outdoors in the south end of Lincoln Park every Wednesday and Saturday from spring to fall. There's also an indoor "winter" version on Saturdays in the Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum. Alice Waters, a pioneer in the local and organic food movement, called Green City Market, "The best sustainable market in the country."

Madison, Wisconsin

www.madisonfarmersmarket.com

From April to November, the Madison Farmers Market typically brings together nearly 200 friendly folks selling their freshly-grown fare. It's very likely that whatever you buy was grown or produced by the person selling it. Like many farmers' markets across the country, there's also live music and lots of special events.

San Antonio, Texas

www.pearlfarmersmarket.com

Pearl Brewery (www.atpearl.com) has become a culinary and cultural destination and Saturday's year-round Pearl Farmers Market is a part of that success. This producers-only market features vendors located within 150 miles of San Antonio. Pearl Brewery's dining, imbibing, and entertainment options are also enhanced by the presence of the Culinary Institute of America San Antonio (www.ciachef.org), including intriguing classes for consumers and Latin-leaning Nao Restaurant.

Austin, Texas

www.sfcfarmersmarket.org

www.texasfarmersmarket.org

Austin's SFC Farmers' Market actually features four locations:



Photos:

Above: Green City Market
www.youngfoodies.com

Top right: Chattanooga Market
www.nooga.com

Downtown (Saturdays); Sunset Valley (Saturdays); The Triangle (Wednesdays); and East Austin (Tuesdays). With 100-plus growers and other vendors, it's the largest certified growers-only farmers' market in the state. It's a project of the Sustainable Food Center (SFC) and sustainability is at its heart. The Texas Farmers' Market has two possibilities: Cedar Park Market (in nearby Cedar Park on Saturdays) and Mueller Market (at the historic Browning Hangar on Sundays).

Santa Fe, New Mexico

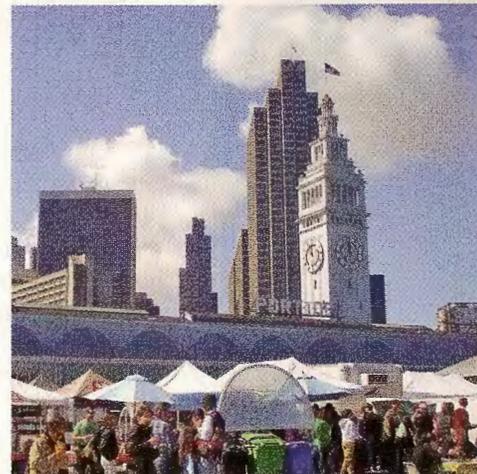
www.santafefarmersmarket.com

The Santa Fe Farmers Market is a special place every weekend, with a farmers' market proper every Saturday, an artisan market on Sundays, and varied shops open on both weekend days. Fresh local produce, eggs, cheese, baked goods, meats, and more are all found at this market.

Tucson, Arizona

www.farmersmarkettucson.com

The Tucson Farmers' Markets features three year-round urban markets with more than 100 vendors with deep Southwest Arizona and Santa Cruz Valley roots. Locations are; Jesse Owens Park (Fridays); Oro Valley (Saturdays); and St. Philip's Plaza (Sundays). Visitors shopping for supper will find farmers and producers with produce, meat, and much more.



Santa Monica, California

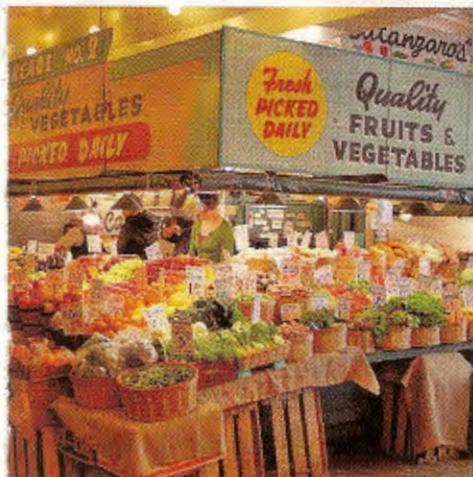
www.smgov.net/portals/farmersmarket

"The Santa Monica Farmers' Market is one of the largest in the country—four locations, 52 weeks a year, and grower-focused," says Amelia Saltsman, author of *The Santa Monica Farmers' Market Cookbook*. Saltsman says the markets offer amazing California fruits, vegetables, cheeses, meats, and dairy products. "Even if you simply visit and sample, you will have an incredible taste of southern California," she adds.

San Francisco, California

www.ferrybuildingmarketplace.com

The bustling Ferry Plaza Farmers Market is open on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. On any of these days—and especially on Saturdays—many of the Bay Area's most famous chefs and farmers can be found at the market. Saturday is the busiest day, with market stands both in front of and behind the Ferry Building, overlooking the Bay.



Seattle, Washington

www.pikeplacemarket.org

www.seattlefarmersmarkets.org

Of course, famed Pike Place Market is known for flying fish and lots of fresh seafood, but there are also lots of farmers and other producers selling produce, meats, cheese, baked goods, and much more. The city also features more than a half-dozen neighborhood markets, including Columbia City (Wednesdays spring to fall), the University District (Saturdays year-round), and West Seattle (Sundays year-round).

Portland, Oregon

www.portlandfarmersmarket.org

The Pacific Coast's Portland features the Portland Farmers Market and it's famous for good reason. Founded in 1992, and now with six sites and more than 250 vendors, the main spring to fall Saturday market is on the grounds of Portland State University. There are other seasonal city markets somewhere in Portland every day of the week. ■

Photos:

Above: Pike Place Market
www.onemansblog.com

Right: Ferry Plaza Farmers' Market
www.tomatotango.com