

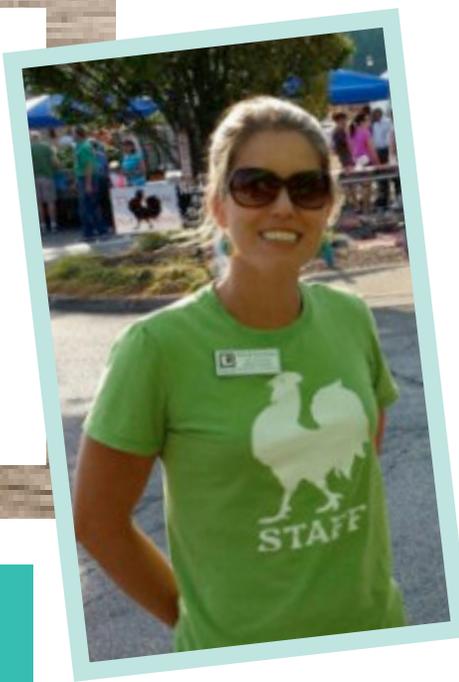


**2014**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

# MARKET MISSION

Urbana's farmers market is a vibrant market that connects the community with local food growers and producers, strengthens our local food economy, provides access to local artisans, and serves as a community gathering place.



## A LETTER FROM THE MARKET DIRECTOR

Farmers markets are an integral part of the urban-farm linkage and have continued to rise in popularity, mostly due to the growing consumer interest in obtaining fresh products directly from the farm. Farmers markets, including Urbana's Market at the Square, are an integral part of a viable and sustainable community, and the presence and visibility of the Market contributes enormously to our identity and sense of place here in Urbana.

Market at the Square is one of Urbana's strongest attractions for residents and visitors to the community alike. It is one of the largest and most diverse farmers markets in Illinois and consistently draws well over 4,000 people weekly from both Urbana-Champaign and the surrounding area.

We're proud to be home to nationally-recognized and award-winning food producers, processors, and local merchants. We are committed to our vendors because it is their creativity and talent that make our farmers market such a great place to shop and do business. We've also taken on the unique role of a business incubator for food entrepreneurs and new small businesses. We take the time to walk potential vendors through our application process and provide the appropriate contacts and business resources in an effort to help launch their businesses. Whether it's meeting with various City departments, working with the State of Illinois to register for a sales tax number, or initiating inspections with local and state health departments, we've tried to not only streamline the process but make it less burdensome for all involved parties.

This past year we continued to strengthen our relationships with state-wide organizations such as the Illinois Stewardship Alliance, which helped us to bring local chefs and farmers together in the attempt to foster a relationship resulting in more local products appearing on the menus of area restaurants. We're also committed to helping promote farmers markets across the state by taking on leadership roles within the Illinois Farmers Market Association. This has included providing input on and suggestions for rules and regulations affecting Illinois farmers markets.

Most importantly, we're committed to collaborating with other groups and organizations in an effort to connect our community with local food and products and the people that produce those items.

The local food movement is vibrant and growing in our community and Urbana's Market at the Square is excited to be at the forefront. We are grateful for our many community partners and organizations that promote our Market, the many City of Urbana departments and divisions that assist us on a day-to-day basis, and to the Mayor and City Council for their support of the Market's mission and efforts.

Natalie Kenny Marquez  
Director, Urbana's Market at the Square

## MARKET GOALS

- 1 Preserve and enhance the character of Urbana's farmers market.
- 2 Ensure that the provision of a variety of fresh, healthy, local foods remains the cornerstone of the Market.
- 3 Encourage a dynamic, diverse, and quality Market.
- 4 Promote the inclusion of stakeholders in the decision making process for the Market.
- 5 Consider future growth of the Market that is consistent with its mission.
- 6 Enhance the quality of life in Urbana by providing a community activity which fosters social gathering and interaction.
- 7 Promote the Market as an educational forum for consumers to learn the uses and benefits of quality, locally grown or prepared foods.
- 8 Ensure that the Market continues to have a stable funding source to ensure its long-term continuity and fiscal health.
- 9 Strengthen the Market's role in the City's economic development efforts in the downtown and elsewhere.
- 10 Enhance the Market's role in the local food system.

# MARKET PARTICIPANTS

registered and approved in 2014

42

## PREPARED FOOD VENDORS

Includes: bakers, candy makers, ice cream vendors, and other prepared foods. All items must be prepared by the seller within the State of Illinois.

49

## GROWER VENDORS

Includes: fresh fruit and vegetable growers, meat and dairy producers, fresh flower and live plant growers. All products must be grown by the seller within the State of Illinois.

55

## PERFORMERS & BUSKERS

Includes: acoustic musicians and performance artists busking in fixed locations throughout the Market space.

69

## COMMUNITY GROUPS

Includes: non-profit, charitable, educational and government organizations engaging with and providing information and resources to the community.

70

## ARTS & CRAFTS VENDORS

Includes: artisans producing pottery, soaps, jewelry, furniture, and more. All items must be created by the seller within the State of Illinois.



## MARKET MENU

Every week during the Market season, the Market Director works with Urbana Public Television (UPTV) staff to write, record and produce a video showcasing what to expect that week at the farmers market.

The segment is aired on UPTV, and archived on the UPTV YouTube video channel. The Market also links to this video from Facebook and Twitter. New in 2014, the video update included a fun new jingle, which was used during the video intro. The jingle was recorded by local musicians Bones, Jugs & Harmony.

To view past Market Menu videos, please visit:

[www.youtube.com/user/UPTV/videos](http://www.youtube.com/user/UPTV/videos)



# VISITORS 2014



An estimated

# 123,733

visitors attended the Market during the 2014 season. That means, over the course of the 27 week Market season, an average of

# 4,582

visitors came to the Market EVERY SINGLE WEEK!

## BUSIEST MONTHS

# JUNE & JULY



Looking back, the estimated number of visitors in 2014 was nearly identical with the estimated number of visitors recorded during the 2013 season. This goes to show that Urbana's Market at the Square remains as one of Urbana's signature institutions and continues to hale as one of the largest and most diverse producer-only farmers markets in the State of Illinois...even after 35 years!

## THE BIRD IS THE WORD.

Both traditional and new media marketing tools are used to spread the word about Urbana's Market at the Square. Traditional marketing tools include: print advertising, radio advertisements and occasional on-site broadcasts, maintaining pages on the City of Urbana website, printing and distributing posters and handbills, street pole banners, merchandise sales (Market t-shirts), press releases, and earned media coverage. New media marketing efforts have grown to become one of the most cost-effective ways to share Market happenings and include:



162

Followers  
New in 2014!



8,146

Likes  
26% increase



1,166

Subscribers  
52% increase



3,501

Followers  
23% increase

# CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING

Now in its 7th season, Sprouts at the Market provides opportunities for children to taste fresh and in-season produce, and receive nutrition information about these foods while simultaneously meeting the farmer/producer responsible for the food. In 2014, a total of six events were held, averaging 70 children per event. By providing programming like Sprouts at the Market, children are able to learn about the uses and benefits of quality, locally grown or prepared food. This helps to meet one of the Market's goals (see page two) and help to reinforce the need for healthy eating habits beginning at a young age.



**Sprouts at the Market**  
 Sprouts at the Market is a **FREE** nutrition & farm linkage program geared towards **kids** ages 5-8 years old. Join us from **9:30-11:30AM** on these **Saturdays**:

- Farm to Table May 17**  
 Presented by Strawberry Fields  
 Learn how the food we eat is grown, harvested and transported to us.
- Taste of the Market July 19**  
 Presented by Champaignana.com  
 Take your taste buds on a tour of the fresh produce available at Market at the Square.
- What's in Season? Cucurbits! September 20**  
 Presented by The Great Pumpkin Patch  
 Find out what this crazy, fun word means as you follow it through the seasons & explore the life cycle of pumpkins, squash, and gourds.
- Build-A-Snack June 21**  
 Presented by Eastern Illinois Foodbank  
 Let's make snack time fun and healthy using locally grown fruits and veggies.
- Let's Make MyPlate Local August 16**  
 Presented by C-UPHD WIC  
 Learn about the USDA MyPlate and how you can fill your plate with local foods at breakfast, lunch and dinner!
- What We Grow in Illinois October 18**  
 Presented by Common Ground Food Coop  
 Did you know we grow more than just corn and soybeans in Illinois? We love our farmers and all the fresh, local produce they grow. Come learn about Illinois-grown fruits and veggies.

Learn more at [urbanaillinois.us](http://urbanaillinois.us)

# ARTS PROGRAMMING

For the last six market seasons, the Public Arts Commission has supported free arts workshops at Urbana's Market at the Square through a program called Art at the Market. In 2014, there were five of these workshops, as well the continuation of a program called Performance at the Market that featured free performances by local music groups in a tent adjacent to the art activities. Both Art at the Market and Performance at the Market events were well attended in 2014, with over 1,000 participants attending the events, up from 812 participants attending the 2013 events. The Nature Mobiles workshop presented by Traci Pines brought in the most participants for an arts workshop this season at the farmers market and Djibril Camera & the Mara Giri Ensemble brought in the most participants for a performance. By providing free arts programming at Urbana's Market at the Square, local artists have an opportunity to showcase their talents while residents are able to explore a variety of art media and experience a wide range of musical styles.



**Art at the Market**  
**FREE Workshops from 8AM-noon & Performances from 9:30-11:30AM**  
[urbanaillinois.us/artworkshops](http://urbanaillinois.us/artworkshops)

- May 10**  
 • Suminagashi Printing w/ Judy Lee  
 • Djibril Camara & the Mara Giri Ensemble
- June 14**  
 • ArtLab w/ Meredith Foster  
 • Don't Ask- Klezmer Music
- July 12**  
 • T-shirt to Tote Bag w/ Makerspace Urbana  
 • Aduki Jazz Quartet
- August 9**  
 • Veggie Stamping w/ The Land Connection  
 • Rebecca Rego & The Trainmen
- September 13**  
 • Nature Mobiles w/ Traci Pines  
 • The Curses

urbana public arts program

This program is partially supported by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency.

# MARKET SCRATCH

*SNAP is the supplemental nutrition assistance program, formerly known as food stamps, administered through the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Office of Food and Nutrition Services.*

SNAP is a federal program that helps low-income individuals and their families buy the food they need for good health. In Illinois, benefits are loaded onto a card called LINK through an EBT or electronic benefits transfer system which allows recipients to access their SNAP benefits from their LINK card, similar to a debit card.

Urbana's Market at the Square developed the Market Scratch program in 2010 in order to enable Market patrons receiving SNAP benefits to purchase fresh and local fruits and vegetables as well as food-bearing plants, fresh baked goods and other food items at the Market.

The USDA notes that nearly 1 out of 6 Illinoisans receive SNAP benefits but only 32% of Illinois farmers market Accept LINK cards.

To help more farmers markets learn about the process of accepting LINK cards, the Market Director worked with Urbana Public Television (UPTV) and the Illinois Farmers Market Association (IFMA) to write, record and produce two videos for the Lieutenant Governor's Office to distribute state-wide. The videos accompanied a brochure which listed all Illinois farmers markets capable of accepting SNAP benefits.

To view the videos, visit the Illinois Farmers Association website at [www.ilfarmersmarkets.org](http://www.ilfarmersmarkets.org)

## CSA FAIR

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) has become a popular way for customers to buy local food, bridging the gap between customers and farmers. CSAs allow customers committed to the local food economy an opportunity to connect, on a deeper level than purchasing from a retail store, and simply shopping at a farmer's market.

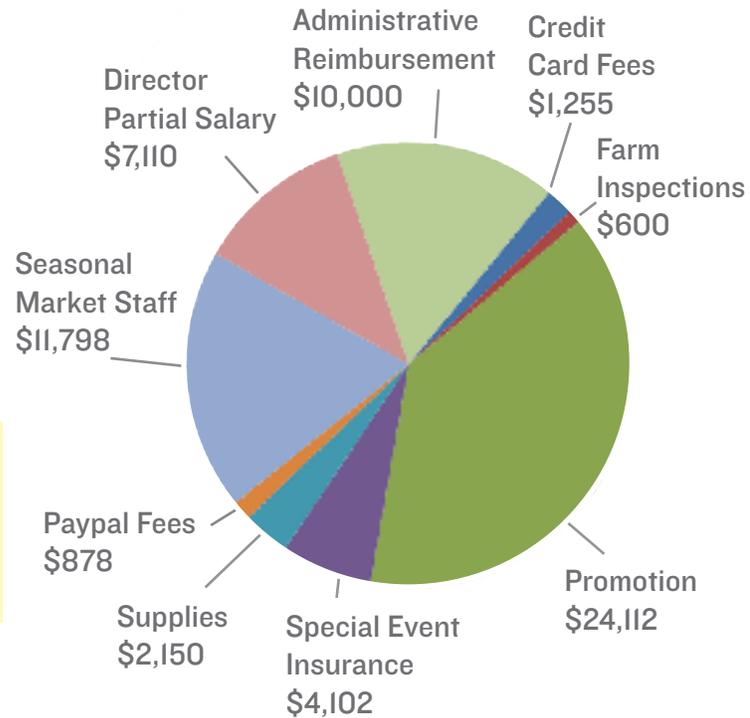
Urbana's Market at the Square hosted a CSA Fair on January 21, 2015. The event showcased 13 vendors from the 2014 Market season that offer CSA or buying club opportunities. The event also included educational information about local food, samples, recipes, a Sprouts at the Market activity table, music, and more.

The event was a huge success, with well over 100 people in attendance. The event is currently being replicated in Bloomington, IL and plans are already underway to host another CSA Fair in Urbana in 2016.

# FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

The Market is focused on making incremental adjustments each season as a way to work towards becoming a more financially sustainable and profitable program for the City of Urbana. By continuing to attract a steady number of vendor and community group participants each season, and controlling staffing and administrative costs, the Market should begin to report steady or decreased expenditures and boast increased profits. The information contained on this page reviews the 2014 Market expenditures and highlights overall Market revenue, as noted by season.

In 2014, Market operating expenditures totaled just over \$62,000 while revenues reached just over \$78,000. Revenues and expenses are expected to remain steady in the 2015 Market season.



# REVENUE BY SEASON



**2010**  
**\$65,693**



**2011**  
**\$62,878**



**2012**  
**\$71,517**



**2013**  
**\$76,854**



**2014**  
**\$78,303**



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# WE LOVE TO WINE

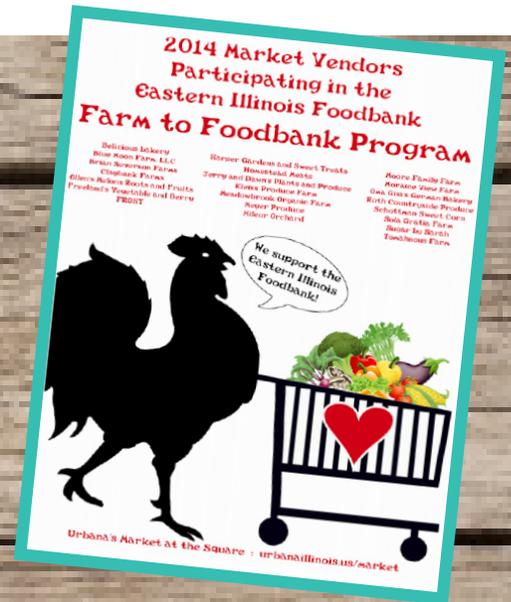
For the first year ever, Urbana's Market at the Square saw vendors selling locally produced wine.

This addition to the vendor line-up came after the Urbana City Council approved the creation of a new temporary liquor license allowing for the packaged sales and tasting of locally produced beer, wine and spirits at farmers market events. In 2014, the Market saw two Illinois wineries attend: Sleepy Creek Vineyard (Fairmount, IL) and Kite Hill Vineyard (Carbondale, IL). The Market Director is hopeful that more local beer, wine and spirit producers will apply to participate in 2015 after learning of the success realized by these two wineries.



## AWARDS & ACCOLADES

Since 2009, Market at the Square has worked closely with the Eastern Illinois Foodbank (EIF) on a program called 'Farm to Foodbank'. This program was created to encourage the voluntary donation of local produce by Market vendors. The Farm to Foodbank program collected 12,911 pounds of produce donated by participating vendors during the 2014 season. Collected produce was then distributed to EIF agencies and programs for distribution to their clients. During their 2014 annual partner luncheon and awards ceremony, EIF honored the Market with their Mission Impact Award. The Market was specifically selected for making a significant, effective, and efficient impact on the community through continued efforts of the Farm to Foodbank program.



## NATIONAL FARMERS MARKET WEEK: AUGUST 3-9, 2014

With the help of the Illinois Farmers Market Association, Urbana's Market at the Square coordinated the state-wide efforts to recognize and celebrate Illinois farmers markets. This included encouraging other farmers markets to promote their farmers, market activities, and work with their local elected officials to proclaim the first week of August as National Farmers Market Week. Nationally, the United States Postal Service joined forces with the United States Department of Agriculture and created a limited edition stamp series showcasing the locally grown products available at farmers markets across the country. Locally, Market at the Square hosted a small celebration including the reading of a special proclamation by Mayor Laurel Prussing, music, all-ages activities, and special give-aways for Market customers.

### SPECIAL THANKS TO:

