



# MARKET AT THE SQUARE

*strategic plan update 2016*





# 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.**

## URBANA'S MARKET AT THE SQUARE ADVISORY BOARD

Shea Belahi - Blue Moon Farm

Paris Baldarotta - Urbana Business Association

Brion Kerlin - Antique Sterling Spoon Rings

Robert Kleiss - Kleiss Produce Farm

Diane Marlin - Urbana City Council

Kent Miles - Illinois Willows

Stan Schutte - Triple S Farm

Carey Welter, Urbana Resident

## URBANA'S MARKET AT THE SQUARE STAFF

Natalie Kenny Marquez, Director

Sterling Bollman, Assistant Director



# KEY PRIORITIES

## 1 Ensure that the provision of a variety of fresh, healthy, local, high quality foods remains the cornerstone of the Market.

- Encourage prepared food vendors to source local ingredients, especially those ingredients grown or produced by vendors that participate in Urbana's Market at the Square.
- Improve the availability of a diverse range of high-quality foods.
- Promote a healthier community by offering sustainably and organically raised produce and products.



# KEY PRIORITIES

## 2 Enhance the quality of life in Urbana and the surrounding community by providing community activities which foster social gathering and interactions.

- Expand relations with surrounding businesses, restaurants and neighborhood groups.
- Increase community engagement and attract new customers through targeted media and increased brand awareness.
- Customize vendor offerings and programs for shopper base, such as: tourists, families, seniors, children and students.
- Seek out opportunities to coordinate events and partner on programs that enhance the customer experience.





# 3 Promote the Market as an educational forum for consumers to learn the uses and benefits of quality, locally grown and/or prepared foods.

- Educate consumers about high-quality food and its source.
- Offer opportunities to sample food sourced by market vendors.
- Offer farm linkage and nutrition programming for children.
- Educate customers on how to prepare and preserve seasonal and local food.



# KEY PRIORITIES

## 4 Enhance the Market's role in the local food system, vendor profitability, and in the local economy.

- Support and encourage the preservation of sustainable farmed land.
- Connect local producers and farmers to chefs, restaurateurs, food organizations and the public.
- Offer a pathway for farmers and producers to help them grow from incubation to independent success based on their individual needs.
- Increase outreach to entrepreneurs in underrepresented culture groups to vend at Urbana's Market at the Square.
- As a resource to vendors in need, establish a scholarship fund and emergency fund program.



# 5 Consider future growth of the Market and ensure that it remains consistent with the Market's mission and remains as a financially self-sufficient program of the City of Urbana.

- Partner with local economic development departments to research and understand market trends and data.
- Determine methods for engaging and building stakeholder loyalty, such as: surveys, sponsorships, partnerships, etc.
- Seek and remain open to opportunities such as pop-up markets, new markets, and expanding Urbana's Market at the Square.





# KEY PRIORITIES

## 6 Encourage a dynamic, high-quality growers Market.

- Incentivize vendors that source local ingredients for their products as a way to nurture partnerships and collaboration.
- Curate the market with vendors that bring a balance of variety and competition while reflecting vendor and customer needs.





# 7 Promote the inclusion of stakeholders in the decision-making process for the Market.

- Exchange ideas with vendors to curate the ideal market composition.
- Engage the Market at the Square Advisory Board in the end-of-season review process and in the development of the annual report.





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