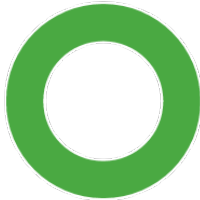




## 2016 Advocacy Priorities

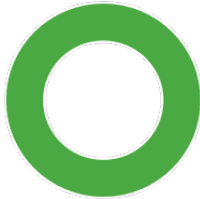
### MIFMA's Advocacy Accomplishments



2009- MIFMA works with MDARD to secure a licensing exemption for egg producers selling direct to consumers



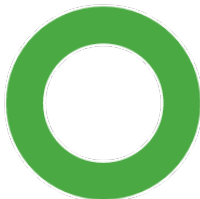
2009- MIFMA works with MDARD to publish Safe Food Sampling Guidelines



2010- MIFMA advocates for the passage of the Cottage Food Law



2013- MIFMA supports the passage of Public Act 100 to create a license for wine sales at farmers markets



2015- MIFMA works with MDARD to license farmers markets to do cooking demonstrations throughout the market season

The Michigan Farmers Market Association (MIFMA) is a statewide, member-based association with a mission to advance farmers markets to create a thriving marketplace for local food and farm products. To accomplish this mission, our work includes advocacy. MIFMA supports and advocates for policies at the federal, state and local levels that expand opportunities for direct market farmers and businesses, support the farmers market industry, contribute to vibrant communities, and sustain the environment.

MIFMA represents more than 400 members, including more than 200 farmers and food and ag-based businesses that sell at farmers markets, as well as more than 130 farmers markets that contribute to the economic viability of more than 3,000 farmers and food and ag-based businesses.

This document outlines MIFMA's priorities for 2016. These advocacy goals support our mission, and the objectives are integral to our strategic plan.

### Goal:

Support policy initiatives within the state of Michigan that advance and improve farmers markets.

### Objectives:

- \* To increase the awareness and consumption of value-added products that highlight Michigan's diverse agricultural industry.
- \* To support policies that enable food entrepreneurs to use Michigan grown and produced products.
- \* To create new opportunities for promoting farmers markets, food and ag-based businesses, and Michigan grown fruits and vegetables.

### Action:

- \* Support legislators in the re-introduction and passage of a bill to expand licensing that allows beer sales at Michigan farmers markets.
- \* Share information about the success of wine sales at farmers markets in an effort to educate potential sponsors of a bill to increase the size of wineries that are eligible for the farmers markets license.
- \* Research the potential impacts of a bill defining the term "hoophouse" (HB5130) on zoning, urban agriculture and farmers markets, and educate our members on what is learned.

### Goal:

Support food assistance programs that ensure access to fresh, healthy, local foods available at Michigan farmers markets.

### Objectives:

- \* To advocate for maintaining and/or expanding federal funding for nutrition assistance programs that can be redeemed at farmers markets. For example, supporting the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) referred to as WIC Project FRESH in Michigan; and the Senior FMNP referred to as Market FRESH in Michigan; and WIC Cash Value Benefits.
- \* To support programs and collaborate with organizations that work to increase consumers' access to healthy, locally produced foods through farmers markets. For example, supporting Fair Food Network's Double Up Food Bucks program and Michigan Nutrition Network's SNAP-Ed nutrition education program.
- \* To support federal and state initiatives that increase the capacity of or reduce the barriers for farmers and farmers markets implementing food assistance programs.

### Action:

- \* Advocate for the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services to incorporate into the State Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) SNAP processing contract that farmers markets and direct-marketing farmers have access to free, wireless equipment that does not incur transaction fees, with the goal that when the contract comes up for renewal in 2018, an amendment is included to serve this purpose.

### Goal:

Establish relationships with legislators and other food and farming organizations in alignment with our mission to advance farmers markets to create a thriving marketplace for local food and farm products.

### Objective:

- \* To identify and align with initiatives and organizations with clearly stated advocacy priorities, including but not limited to the Michigan Good Food Charter, Healthy Kids, Healthy Michigan, Michigan Alliance to Stop Hunger, Farmers Market Coalition (FMC), and the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition (NSAC).

### Action:

- \* A MIFMA representative will serve on the Michigan Good Food Charter steering committee. MIFMA staff will participate in the Healthy Kids, Healthy Michigan Community Policy Action Team for Healthy Food Access and the Michigan Alliance to Stop Hunger. MIFMA's Executive Director will serve on the Farmers Market Coalition's Board of Directors, and MIFMA staff will participate in multiple committees within NSAC.
- \* Educate our members on which legislators are in key positions to support our advocacy priorities and guide our members in how they can strengthen their relationships with those decision-makers. Support our members in their advocacy efforts by providing tools and resources.

### Goal:

Support federal initiatives that align with our mission to advance farmers markets to create a thriving marketplace for local food and farm products.

### Objective:

- \* To advocate for maintaining and/or expanding the funding essential to the farmers market community including, but not limited to the Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Programs, Specialty Crop Block Grant program, the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program and the Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive program.

### Action:

- \* As new members of the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition (NSAC), engage in committees and/or workgroups that support the coalition's work and align with our priorities. One of NSAC's 2016 Policy Priorities is Local and Regional Food System Program Implementation.

Approved by MIFMA Membership at the Annual Meeting 3/9/16