2014
Michigan Farmers Market Association
Annual Report

Advancing farmers markets to create a thriving marketplace for local food and farm products.
Succinctly summarizing the scope of our work each year can be a daunting task. We accomplished so much in 2014! This report showcases the impact of our programs, events and collective efforts over the last year. It explains the ways that we work to support and enhance Michigan’s farmers market community. Most importantly, the compilation of these results provides us with an opportunity to thank you - our members, partners, volunteers, donors, and funders - for investing in our work.

In 2014, the Michigan Farmers Market Association (MIFMA) continued to grow our membership, professional development programming, and outreach efforts.

We invested in new membership management software to facilitate stronger communication with our members and partners. At the same time, we committed to a strategic partnership with the Small Business Association of Michigan to expand member benefits. The results of these initial efforts were approved at the end of 2014 and we look forward to providing even greater customer service in the years to come.

In terms of our professional development programming, in the forthcoming pages you will read about the fourth cohort of individuals who successfully completed the Market Manager Certificate Program, our 8th annual Michigan Farmers Market Conference, and the launch of our Farm-based Education Program. We are also striving to make the farm-based programming accessible off-the-farm by significantly increasing the number of educational videos available on our MIFMA YouTube channel.

To promote and advocate for Michigan farmers markets, each year we host the beloved Farmers Markets at the Capitol. This year we were honored with the opportunity to host Senator Debbie Stabenow and Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Director Jamie Clover Adams who spoke on the importance of Michigan’s agricultural diversity and the role farmers markets play in our regional food system. We used these events to showcase our 2014 Policy Priorities, to promote farmers markets all across the state, and to demonstrate the importance of accepting food assistance benefits including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and SNAP incentive programs like Fair Food Network’s Double Up Food Bucks.

Every year, I’m impressed by how much we accomplish with such a modest budget. It’s the passion, hard work, and collective energy of our leadership team that drives our continued growth. Together, we strive to maintain a unified voice for farmers markets while respecting the tremendous diversity across our community. Thank you for being a part of our progress and for supporting MIFMA.

Dru Montri
Director
Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR</td>
<td>Dru Montri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>MARKET MANAGER CERTIFICATE PROGRAM</td>
<td>Grand Rapids, Michigan Marquette, Michigan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>MICHIGAN FARMERS MARKET CONFERENCE</td>
<td>Bootcamp Advanced Market Managers Farmer/Vendor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>FARMERS MARKETS AT THE CAPITOL</td>
<td>July 31 August 28 September 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>FARM-BASED EDUCATION PROGRAM</td>
<td>Drip Irrigation, July 28 Engaging Customers, Sep 8 Using Equipment, Sep 15 Maintaining Produce Quality, Sep 29 Season Extension, Oct 12 Hoophouses and Cold Storage Crops, Nov 10 Technology for Production and Profitability Webinar, Dec 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>EFFORTS TO INCREASE FOOD ACCESS</td>
<td>Supplemental Nutrion Assistance Program Hoophouses for Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>FINANCIALS</td>
<td>2014 Total Revenue 2014 Total Expenses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>MIFMA LEADERSHIP</td>
<td>2014 Board of Directors Staff Committee Members</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In 2014, MIFMA’s Market Manager Certificate Program saw significant changes including shifting a portion of the program to a digital format and adding a satellite location to expand the reach of the program. What has remained consistent since the program started in 2011, is that the program remains a voluntary program designed to encourage farmers market managers to pursue leadership skills and professional development in topics essential to market management. MIFMA’s Market Manager Certificate Program is the only program in the nation that recognizes market managers as professionally trained.

Program Highlights:

New to the program this year, registrants could choose to participate in the in-person sessions in one of two locations: c. Through a partnership with the Marquette Food Co-op, five participants gathered in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula to watch the presentations through a live stream from the Grand Rapids location. MSU Extension was also an important partner for the program this year hosting the Grand Rapids location, helping to organize the satellite location in Marquette, and hosting all seven of the program’s webinars.

With the help of MSU Extension, this year’s program shifted from 6 in-person sessions to 3 in-person sessions and 7 webinars. The shift to a digital format allowed for wider participation from individuals around the state, country and welcomed participants from Canada as well. The digital format was well received by both participants and speakers and will continue to be an important component of the program in the future.

“The information and insight that I gained from this training program is invaluable to me in supporting the mission of my community farmers market as a market manager and in turn, is invaluable to my overall community and to all of the people in it.”

Lower Peninsula graduating class

Upper Peninsula graduating class
Program Highlights (continued):
The 2014 program cohort added 22 individuals to the list of certified market managers. The certification offers acknowledgement to market organizers and vendors that the market manager is a trained professional. Certificates were awarded to 21 farmers market managers from Michigan and one who travelled from Pennsylvania to complete the full program. These market managers join the 81 market managers that were certified between 2011 and 2013 for a total of 103 certified farmers market managers.

Each certified farmers market manager had the opportunity to network with other managers over the course of the program and focus on a range of topics relevant to market management. A final manager-to-manager education and networking opportunity completed the program focusing on sharing experiences and lessons learned.

Program Topics:
- Farmers Market Planning and Management
- Preparing for Farmers Market Growth
- State of Michigan Licensing & Regulations
- Overview of Food Assistance Programs
- Collecting & Sharing Farmers Market Data
- Grant Writing to Grow Your Market
- Marketing Your Market
- Planning for Events & Entertainment
- Manager to Manager Education and Presentations

Program Snapshot
- 22 earned certifications
- 26 additional webinar participants
- 25 speakers

Full Program Participants:
- 15 first year managers
- 2 with fewer than 2 years of experience
- 5 with 2-5 years of experience
- 1 with more than 5 years of experience
- 15 Paid market managers
- 9 volunteers

Feedback from Participants:
“The curriculum provides a broad overview of the key issues and challenges faced by farmers markets, and gives real world approaches to overcome these. The instruction was excellent, and the opportunity to build a network of other managers in the state is invaluable.”

“The Market Manager Certification Program is aligned with other talent development programs across the state that educate, skill-build, and connect managers with the resources we need to move our markets and our communities forward. Our state needs our talent to support the growth of small businesses like farmers and food entrepreneurs, and to benefit consumers, local communities and Michigan as a whole.”

“The MIFMA Market Manager Certificate Program provided exposure to a wide variety of topics that a farmers market manager must juggle each season from vendor policies to state regulations. The classroom sessions were a great opportunity to network with other market managers in the state (and from other states!) while the webinars provided a convenient way to teach the material and the “chat” capability in these online classes helped it be more interactive. As someone very new to managing a farmers market, this program provided a great way to feel a part of the larger Michigan Farmers Market community. I will be more likely to reach out to other markets and discuss the issues we are struggling with.”
The 2014 Michigan Farmers Market Conference was held on Tuesday and Wednesday, March 4 and 5, 2014 at the Plant and Soil Science building on the campus of Michigan State University. The conference marked the seventh year that the Michigan Farmers Market Association (MIFMA) has hosted an event during MSU’s Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) Week and the third year that MIFMA has hosted a two-day conference. More than 130 participants attended the conference for the latest information about operating and selling at farmers markets in Michigan.

**Conference Highlights:**

The conference included ample networking time, a keynote speaker, MIFMA’s annual meeting, 15 breakout sessions on a wide variety of topics, round table discussions and a silent auction.

Lisa Rose Starner, herbalist, forager, author and local food advocate, kicked off the conference as the keynote speaker. Lisa encouraged farmers market managers and farmers to think of themselves as storytellers who share the story of food with members of their community.

New to the conference this year, farmers and vendors were eligible to receive Phase One credit towards becoming MAEAP verified if they attended the Farmer/Vendor Educational Tracks breakout sessions on water quality and scaling up production. MAEAP stands for Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program and is an innovative, proactive, and voluntary program that helps farms of all sizes and all commodities voluntarily prevent or minimize agricultural pollution risks.

During the roundtable discussions, participants reflected on identifying skills and traits beneficial to market managers, the challenges and obstacles associated with extended season markets, and how they can assist MIFMA in gathering information about farmers markets across the state.

This year’s silent auction raised more than $1,100 to support future educational events including the 2015 Michigan Farmers Market conference.

“Because this was my first time attending the conference, I had no idea what to expect. I can affirm that I enjoyed the conference so much that I plan to attend the next one and want to become more active in the organization.”
Breakout session topics:

**Bootcamp:** Starting a Farmers Market in Michigan; The Moving Parts of Market Management: Keeping it all Together; New in 2014: Wine Sales at Michigan Farmers Markets; MDARD Food Safety Regulations and Licensing; What Factors Do You Consider When Choosing Farmers Markets to Sell At? Vendor Panel;

**Advanced:** Placemaking: How Farmers Markets can Help Create Community Spaces; Regional Collaborations and Promotion; Photography: Basic Techniques for Capturing Compelling Farmers Market Photos; Mobile Payment Processing Technology: Results from the Kent County Pilot Project; Alternative Models for Increasing Food Access: Mobile Food Trucks and Food Share Programs

**Farmers/Vendors:** Employee Hiring, Administration and Management; Becoming a Policy Advocate for Yourself and Others; Water Management on the Farm to Ensure a Healthy Environment and Safe Food; It’s Who You Know: Using Farmers Market Connections to Scale Up to New Markets; Communicating with Shoppers about Certifications and Other Hot Topics

Feedback from Participants:

“The conference offers a great opportunity to network with other market managers. The sessions present valuable information that I can take back and implement at my market.”

“For me, the networking and sharing of ideas with other vendors and with other farmers markets managers was excellent. But I also learned quite a lot from the sessions I attended.”

“Honestly, the conference sold me on my MIFMA membership. When I joined MIFMA I wasn’t sure why, but after meeting everyone and seeing the strong network of support this association offers, I think I’ll be a member for a long time.”
In 2014, MIFMA worked with partners Michigan Food and Farming Systems (MIFFS) and the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) to host three farmers markets on the lawn of the Capitol in Lansing. This year marked the ninth that a farmers market has been held on the lawn of the Capitol and the first that three markets where held in one year. The markets were held on Thursdays, July 31, August 28 and September 25 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. each day.

Program Highlights:

With funding from a MDARD Food Safety Training and Education Grant, the market was able to offer cooking demonstrations for the first time. The recipes demonstrated highlighted products available from the vendors at the market and the demonstrations offered simple food safety tips to consumers on how they could “Keep Food Safe from the Farm to the Fridge.” Take-home materials included recipe cards and food safety information.

The markets featured physical activity demonstrations sponsored by Lansing Parks and Recreation which included Zumba, belly dancing and Latino dancing. Market attendees also enjoyed performances from CATA Acts of Culture sponsored by the Capitol Area Transportation Authority (CATA). Performers included Ballet Folklorico, Three Men and a Tenor, and Riverwalk Cabaret.

The September Farmers Market at the Capitol was honored to host a press conference with special guest, Senator Debbie Stabenow. Senator Stabenow joined MDARD Director Jamie Clover Adams, Fair Food Network Double Up Food Bucks Program Manager Rachel Bair, MIFMA Director Dru Montri and MSU Extension Educator and MIFMA Vice President Julie Darnton in addressing the media and market attendees on how the Agricultural Act of 2014 can expand and support Michigan farmers markets and the farmers and vendors that sell at farmers markets.

Senator Debbie Stabenow proudly accepted a MIFMA t-shirt at the September market.
Program Snapshot:

- **22,000+** shoppers
- **$200,000** estimated vendor sales
- **$1,170** average sales per vendor per market
- **$1,780** SNAP benefits and Double Up Food Bucks spent at 2014 Farmers Markets at the Capitol
- **$22** average purchase reported by shoppers per market
- **91%** of vendors would recommend this event to another vendor
- **72%** of vendors rate customer attendance as good or excellent
- **73%** of vendors rate their sales as good or excellent

**July Market**
- 57 vendors
- 12 nonprofits
- 4 sponsors
- 7,750 shoppers
- $70,000+ vendor sales

**August Market**
- 56 vendors
- 13 nonprofits
- 5 sponsors
- 7,300 shoppers
- $65,000+ vendor sales

**September Market**
- 59 vendors
- 11 nonprofits
- 10 sponsors
- 7,000 shoppers
- $66,000+ vendor sales

- 22,000+ shoppers
- 91% of vendors would recommend this event to another vendor
- 72% of vendors rate customer attendance as good or excellent
- 73% of vendors rate their sales as good or excellent

**Bushel Sponsors**
- Blue Care Network of Michigan
- Clean Commute
- Doty Agency
- Lansing State Journal
- Michigan Fitness Foundation
- Physicians Health Plan
- Sparrow

**Pint Sponsors**
- CUlink
- Michigan State University Federal Credit Union
- MSU Sustainability

**Peck Sponsors**
- Advanced Insurance Markets Ltd.
- MSU Center for Regional Food Systems
- MSU Sustainability
MIFMA planned and implemented six on-farm field days and one webinar from July through December, 2014 targeted toward small-scale, diversified specialty crop farmers to help them grow and expand their businesses to meet the increasing demand for local food in our state. Each day was designed for networking, sharing and free-flowing conversation and highlighted a topic of interest for specialty crop producers. MIFMA member farms across the state hosted each field day, and registration was free for MIFMA members.

To accompany the learning topics featured in the field days, MIFMA is developing instructional videos and learning guides, which will be posted to www.mifma.org.
Program Snapshot:

90% total participants gained concrete ideas to improve their farm’s efficiency

95% would recommend other farmers attend

177 total participants

55 average number of miles travelled to attend

25 average number of attendees per field day

78% gained concrete ideas to improve their farm’s profitability

Because of these sessions, participants reported plans to:

- use more season extension
- purchase a small row crop tractor and pinpoint seeder
- grow more ginger and strawberries under cover and overwinter kale in a hoophouse
- make compost tea
- collect additional farming information and expand recordkeeping
- incorporate farm software applications
- add specific hoophouse costs and designs to farm business plan
- manage hoophouses more intensively
- adjust planting dates, crops, cultivars, hoophouse space utilization and watering methods
- add hoophouses and walk-in cooler to the farm
- provide recipes at the farmers market
- install and improve drip irrigation
- begin using a harvest list

This program was funded by a USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant through the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development.
Efforts to Increase Food Access

With support from the Michigan Department of Community Health, MIFMA implemented a Market Manager Mentorship Program to support market managers who were beginning to accept Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. In 2014, 10 market managers with experience accepting SNAP mentored 12 market managers who were new to the program. Mentors helped their mentees address challenges, overcome obstacles, and implement a SNAP program based on best practices and on-the-ground experience. To support the mentoring relationships, MIFMA hosted monthly conference calls where common concerns were discussed and frequently asked questions were addressed.

Amanda Shreve talks about successes and challenges for farmers markets accepting food assistance benefits at the 2014 Year-End Meeting in Mt. Pleasant.

Number of Farmers Markets Accepting Bridge Cards Compared to the Total Number of Farmers Markets in Michigan from 2006 to 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number Accepting SNAP</th>
<th>Total Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$1.5M+ in SNAP spent at Michigan farmers markets in 2014

140 farmers markets accepted SNAP during the 2014 market season

8,000 brochures distributed listing all of the farmers market accepting SNAP

18 farmers markets trained on accepting SNAP through our annual webinar

1,728 visits to the SNAP page of the MIFMA website
Hoophouses for Health is a program designed to increase access to good food for vulnerable families (primarily those involved with Head Start programs) while at the same time expanding good food infrastructure and season extension capacity of Michigan farmers. Hoophouses for Health introduces vulnerable families to good food by showcasing regional foods in partner programming and introducing families to local farmers markets. Partner organizations provide vulnerable families participating in their programs with vouchers to purchase fresh, local foods from participating Hoophouses for Health farmers at area farmers markets, where participating farmers display program signage to indicate that they accept Hoophouses for Health vouchers. Participating farmers accept vouchers for produce, or participate in Farm to School sales, as a means to “repay” capital they have received through the program to build a hoophouse.

Program Snapshot

- **9** farmers built
- **13** hoophouses
- **$39,075.57** in total payback achieved in 2014, meaning that nearly $40,000 of local foods was distributed to vulnerable families in Michigan
- **$198,676** total was disbursed to farmers in 2014 to build hoophouses
- **The total value of Farm to School sales in 2014 was $6,756.57**
- **18 farmers markets participating** Allen Street FM Lansing, Battle Creek FM, Boyne City FM, Downtown Marquette FM, Downtown Saginaw FM, Downtown Ypsilanti FM, Depot Town FM in Ypsilanti, Flint FM, Gaylord FM, Grand Blanc City FM, Kalamazoo FM, 100 Mile FM in Kalamazoo, Lapeer FM, Menominee County Food and Farm Exchange, Menominee Historical Downtown FM, Munising Farmers’ and Artisans’ Market, Sara Hardy Downtown FM in Traverse City, and Vantage Point FM in Port Huron.
Financials

2014 Total Revenue = $276,653.28

2014 Total Expenses: $167,027.09

Fiscal Year January 1 – December 31, 2014
2014 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Christine Miller, Spartan Country Meats
Vice-President: Julie Darton, Downtown Saginaw Farmers Market
Secretary: Rebecca Titus, Titus Farms
Treasurer: Melissa Harrington, Fulton Street Farmers Market
Frank Blissett, Bliss Hill Farm
Randall Fogelman, Detroit Eastern Market
Donna McClurkan, Texas Township Farmers’ Market
David McDonald, Leelanau Farmers Market Association
Sharon Ostrowski, Shkar Farm Treasa Sowa, Munising Farmers and Artisans Market and Treasa’s Treasures

STAFF

Dru Montri, Director
Amanda Shreve, Manager, Programs and Partnerships
Samantha Collins, Communications and Events Manager
Emily Beutel, Design and Branding Specialist
Yadira Perez, Administrative Assistant
Susan Smalley, Program Evaluator
Dan Hartley, Videographer
Sonia Viera, Administrative Assistant
Kat Curtis, Specialty Crop Block Grant Program Manager
Gillian Cobb, Hoophouses for Health Program Manager
Julia Hickey, Hoophouses for Health Program Manager

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chris Broadbent
Dietrich Bronner
Sarah Cross
Christine Easley
Nadia Freeman
Laura Gillis
Chuck Grinnell
Missy Healey
Richard “Cousin Don” Hobson
Wendy Jean-Buhrer
Marcy Bishop Kates
Dan Keane
Joe Lesausky
Tina Lloyd
Eileen Miskiewicz
Cindy Paparelli
Vince Paris
RoseAna Twitchell
Peggy Vaughn-Payne
Michelle Walk
Sher Watkins
Pam Weinstein
Kendra Wills
“Farmers markets in Michigan are such a celebration of the great diversity of Michigan agriculture. I appreciate MIFMA’s part in helping visitors to farmers markets make a personal connection with agriculture.”

- Sandra Dunn, Along the Fence Daylilies
  Proud MIFMA Member