



2019 Board of Directors Candidates

Michigan Farmers Who Sell Their Own Products at Farmers Markets



Stephanie Willette

Two Tracks Acres - Grasslake

Ann Arbor Farmers Market - Ann Arbor

Stephanie is both a manager and a farmer and is closely connected with the farmers, business owners, and markets in Washtenaw County. She currently serves as a Steering Committee Member of the Ann Arbor Farm to School Collaborative and board member of the Kerrytown District Association and has been working cooperatively with other manager groups to strengthen the region. She has previously served as a Staff Member for Chelsea Community Kitchen. Stephanie is also the former Chair of the Farmers Policy Action Team, a working group of the Washtenaw Food Policy. She would like to take part in the larger state wide conversation of the role of farmers markets and the direction they are heading as our local food system evolves. Stephanie recognizes that MIFMA helps strengthen, professionalize, and give a voice to markets, and she would like to help further these activities.

Farmers Market Representatives



Julia Kramer - Incumbent

Allen Neighborhood Center and Farmers Market - Lansing

Julia currently serves as the Farmers Market and Breadbasket Food Pantry Manager for the Allen Neighborhood Center in Lansing. She has previously served as a board member for the East Lansing Food Cooperative (ELFCO) from April 2016 - December 2017 and helped oversee the process of shutting down its' retail store, visioning a new incarnation for the co-op, developing a business plan, and seeking funding. Julia is eager to deepen her already close relationship with MIFMA and its programs, and to support its work with her time and energy. In addition to enthusiastically serving as a committed board member, Julia currently serves as the Chair of MIFMA's Advocacy Committee and enjoys a stellar record of attendance and participation at meetings, conference calls, and other related events. Julia is excited to represent Lansing and mid-Michigan in a statewide capacity and sees this role as a natural next step in her professional development.



517-432-3381



480 Wilson Rd., Room 172
East Lansing, MI 48824



mifma.org



Connie Watson
Bay Mills/Brimley Farmers Market - Brimley

Connie has a long history of working in community food systems in tribal populations to increase access to local and traditional foods, accept food assistance payments, and implement SNAP Education. Beginning in 2009, she started working with tribal growers of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians to become farmers market vendors in Chippewa, Mackinac, Alger, and Schoolcraft Counties. Connie was instrumental in starting the Bay Mills/Brimley Farmers Market in 2015 and completed the Market Manager Certificate Program in 2016. She has been with the market ever since and has been an integral part of growing the market from 5 vendors to 25 vendors and making an impact on local and traditional food access in the Eastern Upper Peninsula. She is also excited that the Bay Mills Indian Community was granted funding from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation to construct a market pavilion that is slated for completion in June 2019. Connie is seeking a position on the MIFMA Board of Directors to not only enhance new and growing markets and increase access to affordable local and traditional produce and goods, but to also bring a tribal market perspective to the table; as growers, buyers, and vendors.

Business Professionals



Chris Broadbent - Incumbent

Chris has spent the past 8 years on markets across Michigan in a multitude of roles. He has been a vendor of co-operative foods, organic vegetables, and organic plants, as well as serving as a manager, coach and volunteer. Chris has served as a board member for West Michigan Glass Arts Center, the IDEA Association, and the Open Roads Bike Program. He currently serves as the MIFMA Interim Board Chair and is seeking his third and final two year term on the board. He is eager to support the MIFMA staff and members in the work of advancing farmers market with equity, sound governance, and critical thinking, as well as continuing to offer his creative problem solving and listening skills to the board.



Ruthy Shemanski

As the past executive director of City Market, a supportive friend of MIFMA, and a member of its Advocacy Committee as well as a beginning farmer in the year 2019, Ruthy offers unique insight as both a certified market manager and farmer. She has served as a board member of the Downtown Management Board of Bay City and as director of its Marketing Committee. Ruthy is grateful to MIFMA for helping her in her role at an indoor farmers market and the many hours of counsel provided to her as a new market manager. She has made lifelong friends through the Market Manager Certificate Program and still wears her pin proudly! Ruthy is eager to further the work of MIFMA as it paves the path for other associations across the nation. She feels her passion, loyalty, can-do spirit, and the knowledge of the challenges farmers markets face would help give MIFMA intuitive insight into the needs of both market managers and farmers and how we can best serve our community. She is also interested in helping to expand the WIC program to allow for Women, Infants and Children to purchase fruits and vegetables from their local farmers markets, farmers and growers year-round.