North Dakota Farmers Market and Growers Association Inc. 105 Simrall Blvd., Molberg Center #22 Bottineau, ND 58318





North Dakota Farmers Market and Growers Assn.

Growing North Dakota From Within

www.ndfarmersmarkets.com

Spring Issue 2015

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Local Food Conference in Mandan!

Producers and consumers gathered February 6th and 7th at the Seven Seas in Mandan to meet, greet, share, and get inspired for our upcoming growing season. Keith Knudson's veggie compass workshop and helpdesk was well attended as participants gathered important information on how to keep track of their produce production and anticipated revenue. Lunch, a welcome, and an NDDA update were followed by keynote speaker, Lynda Annorena. Break-out sessions brought speakers to share their production knowledge and point of sale tips. Producers learned about weed control options, how to investigate

new pests and diseases in crops, and ways to utilize farm animals with garden production. Plus they found out the importance in product labeling, and how to combine their efforts to reach a common goal. The evening was topped off with a delicious local food banquet, and the NDFMGA annual meeting.



Marvin Baker addressing the media

Marvin Baker, past association President for 10 years, stepped down and out to let someone else run the helm of the association. Hero Barth, our VP, was elected as President, Cheryl Duvall is now our new VP, and we have two more ladies rounding out the NDFMGA board. Stephanie Blumhagen, Bottineau, owner of Meadowlark Granary, and Janel Anderson, Rolette's market manager and owner of her business, Rustic Acres. Roberta Thorson, Thorson Produce, was up for re-election, and we gladly welcomed her back to the board for another two year term. Congrats to all of our new appointments and board members! And a special "Thank YOU" to Marv, for all your time and dedication to the NDFMGA! Good luck to you in your future endeavors.

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"There is a growing market today for local, organic foods produced by small farmers. And farmers' markets have played a large role in making that happen" <u>Eric Schlosser</u>

Be ready to
label your
produce.
Call the
NDFMGA to get
your stickers, shelf
talkers and other
related marketing
materials today!

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Saturday was filled with marketing topics that included cooperative farming entrepreneurship opportunities for our upcoming future farmers, hop growing and beyond, and energy source alternatives for farming while production sessions covered the Farm Breeder Club 2014 and the vegetable variety trial update, how to keep bees in your backyard, and what every beekeeper should know to be productive.

A young gardener panel was presented, and this year we offered a friendly competition contest with vendor and market displays to be voted on by all attendees. The winning vendor was Stephanie Blumhagen, Meadowlark Granary. She won a new Coolpix camera which will come in handy this upcoming season, and our market winner was the McClusky Farmers Market. Their market display won a new tablet computer. Congrats to both our winners! This contest was a great success and will most likely be offered next year with more vendors and market participation. Be ready to market yourself!















Other
Market
and
Vendors
Display
Entries





THORSON PRODUCE



Questions???? Contact the NDFMGA at 701-228-5649

Specialty Crop Radio Promotion Questionnaire -North Dakota Department of Agriculture Funded through the USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant

What's for Dinner?

Local food

producers

our

meals.

This was

provided the

conference

goods to make

Saturday night's

meal... stuffed

pork, cheesy

turnips with

potatoes,

carrots.

It was

The North Dakota Department of Agriculture is promoting specialty crops this growing season at farmers markets, roadside stands, CSAs and other events across the state. The department is looking for farmers who are willing to share information about the crops they grow and

process. If you are interested in allowing the department to come and promote specialty crops at your event, please answer the questions below.

The promotion will occur by live radio broadcast and typically includes three 2 minute interviews per hour. Most live broadcast sessions are for 3 hours. If you or your market is interested in helping with these promotions please fill out the attached questionnaire and get it back to me by April 17th.

Please share with others that you think may be interested. Thanks and if you have any questions, call Jamie Good @ Office: 701-328-2659 or the Main switchboard: 800-242-7535.

* Name of market, CSA, or roadside stand:

- Location:
- Available dates:
- Contact person:
- Phone:

- * Email:
- Name of radio station(s) in your area that offer live broadcasts:
- In your opinion, which stations have the best listenership?
- If you are a farmers market, how many vendors at your market sell specialty crops (fruits, vegetables, herbs, cut flowers, etc.)?
- If you are a CSA or roadside stand, how many specialty crops do you raise and sell?
- During market hours, would you or vendors at your market have time to share how they grow or process the specialty crops they raise?
- What are some topics that you feel would be of interest to listeners in your area about the specialty crops?

NDFMGA grants are now available for the 2015 season

New Vendors and Farmers Markets can apply to put some extra money into your growing needs. Both grants are available to download and print from our site www.ndfarmersmarkets.com, or can be emailed or mailed. The *new vendor grant* is for 1st time vendors only, can be applied for in your first or second year as a new vendor, and will pay **\$200.00** for your needs to start selling on your own or at a farmer's market. Eligible items include: canopies, canopy weights, tables, bags, boxes, scales, banners, signs, business cards, brochures, etc. Deadline: November 30, 2015.

As a new vendor, and a recipient of this grant, you may get a kickback of \$50.00 by enrolling in the Dakota College at Bottineau's Entrepreneurial Center for Horticulture's Farm Business course. In this course, the instructor visits the location of the vendor/producer and assists with business strategies and record keeping to facilitate the success of the venture. For more information on this course, what is involved, and the services you could receive, please contact Keith Knudson, Farm Business Management Instructor, Entrepreneurial Center for Horticulture, 105 Simrall Boulevard, Bottineau, ND 58318-1198, (701) 228-2160, Keith.Knudson@dakotacollege.edu. Be sure to tell him you are an applicant through this grant program so the additional \$50 can be sent to you if you enroll.

The market mini-grant, for \$300.00, gives market managers some monies to purchase advertising and marketing materials to start off the season. Eligible activities for this grant include, but are not limited to, all event activities that promote and aid a farmers market such as: advertising, all media, circulars, flyers, posters, banners, billboards, in-market activities or entertainment, and point-of-sale promotional materials used to promote the farmers market.

As added incentive, if the market manager, a vendor, a new vendor, or a board member attends next year's local food conference, additional monies, (amt. to be determined later), will be given to the market to spend as you see fit. Deadline: November 30, 2015

FYI ... Potato onions are onions, not potatoes, that are grown like garlic. When you plant a bulb division in the fall or early spring it grows a small nest of onion bulbs by mid summer, hence the potato reference. Potato onions are very much like shallots except that the bulbs are bigger and they have a lower tendency to flower. There were many colors and they usually were able to store very well. They were very popular until mass production of onion plants and sets made it easier for everyone to grow flowering onions for bulbs.

Frank Kutka with the NPSAS Farm Breeding Club is looking for starts of potato onions that any gardeners in the region may be maintaining, with the hope of increasing some for evaluation and promotion. If you have potato onions and would be willing to sell some, please contact Frank at fkutka@npsas.org or 701-225-7853. If you have a strong interest in potato onions and would like to help with the evaluation or breeding of potato onions, that would be much appreciated too. Thanks!



http://npsas.org/aboutus/farm-breeding-

Do you have a **Farm Food** Safety Plan?

The Entrepreneurial Center for Horticulture will be holding workshops to educate producers on ways to keep their produce safe for their customers. This one day workshop gives participants all information needed to write a food safety plan and implement food safety practices in their operation. Workshops are followed up with a visit to a farm to see just how a food safety inspection might go.

Watch the ECH Facebook page www.facebook.com /ndveggies for more information on dates and locations for workshops.



Check out our website: www.ndfarmersmarkets.com

Hunger Free Garden Project collects over 1M pounds of produce



North Dakota gardeners and growers gave over 125,000 pounds of produce in 2014. This creates over 500,000 donated servings of fruits and vegetables to help enhance the well-being of North Dakota residents.

Patti Larson

Source: www.ndda.org

North Dakota Agriculture Commissioner Doug Goehring kicked off the 2015 Local Foods and North Dakota Farmers Market and Growers Association by presenting a NDDA Community Orchard Grant award to Joanna and Patti Larson for their project, a City of Sheyenne tree board.

Eight projects to create orchards and plant trees in local communities totaled \$30,703.63. "The goals of the North Dakota Community Orchard Project are to increase the production of fruit and nut trees that grow in North Dakota, provide educational opportunities, and foster community spirit by bringing people together to plant and tend these orchards," said Goehring, who announced the grants at the North Dakota Farmers Market and Growers Association (NDFMGA) Lo-

cal Foods Conference on Friday. These grant monies will be used for plants, trees, planting supplies, soil modifica-

tions, irrigation and fencing supplies. Grant funding is provided by a U.S. Department of Agriculture specialty crop grant filtered through the NDDA Local Food's initiative.

Others were rewarded for their partnership efforts in supporting the Hunger Free

Garden Project. Partners in this statewide project include: the Great Plains Food Bank, Lutheran Social Services, North Dakota Master Gardeners, North Dakota **State University Extension** Service, North Dakota FFA, **Entrepreneurial Center for** Horticulture at Dakota College at Bottineau, Northern Plains Sustainable Agriculture Society, North Dakota Farmers Market and Growers Association, Healthy North Dakota and Pride of Dakota. Thank you to all who participate and support this great cause.



Dwight Duke, Dan Folske, ND Ag Commissioner Doug Goehring, Ron Walters-Great Plains Food Bank, Holly Mawby, Karen Ehrens

The Northern Plains Sustainable Agriculture Society (NPSAS) Farm Breeding Club has begun several new breeding projects with garden fruits. Members and other interested souls across the northern plains region will be planting and evaluating the offspring from two tomato crosses in 2015. With very different parents one expects fairly uniform hybrid progeny in the F1 generation, but then incredible diversity in the F2 generation. We will be hunting through this diversity to see if any of the offspring provide us an early, determinate, orange fruited tomato from one of these crosses and an early, determinate, paste fruited tomato from the second cross. Since tomatoes are self pollinating all we have to do is to save seeds from the plant or plants that actually come close to these breeding objectives and in a few years we should have new varieties. Participants are being asked to judge among the plants they are growing and see if they find one for the FBC objectives to share seed back with the club. This will be used for ongoing breeding work in future years. However, with the great diversity they are also encouraged to save seeds for themselves from any plants they like and to eat the harvest otherwise.

We are also evaluating zucchini plants from a multiple parent population. Our objective is an early flowering, vigorous, hardy, dark and tasty fruited, bush plant that is also tolerant of powdery mildew. Many of the plants will fail in this evaluation as well. Participants in this project will plant out excess zucchini seeds, thin out the weak, self pollinate the earliest 50% of the plants to flower, taste some of the other fruits to set, and then save seeds from those self pollinated fruits whose mother plant showed powdery mildew tolerance later in the season and had tasty fruits. This work will not result in a self pollinated line like it will if we are successful with the tomato evaluations, but instead we will eventually intermate the seeds of the very best lines to produce an exceptional open pollinated zucchini variety for our region's gardeners.

For more information about the NPSAS Farm Breeding Club please visit the FBC page on the NPSAS website (http://npsas.org/about-us/farm-breeding-club.html) and our Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/pages/Farm-Breeding-Club/165221056860513). If anyone else would like to participate in our tomato or zucchini breeding work this summer, please contact Frank Kutka at fkutka@npsas.org or 701-225-7853. We will accept other serious participants so long as we have enough seeds.

New Vendor Tips to help you succeed at your farmers market sales....

- Keep customers at your table with something eye catching, and asking questions of customers to keep their attention.
- Give great customer service
- Increase dollar per customer purchasing by suggesting additions
- Direct marketing = Repeat Buying
- Merchandise your Table—keep it filled with product
- Remember why people are coming to the market (fresh veggies, positive environment, farm produce) ... use these word types in your advertising and signs. (asapconnections.org/downloads/vendor-tips-for-increasing-sales.pdf)

Save the Date! Wed. - August 5th! AND Thursday -



September 17th

The 11th annual farmers market day will be held outside at the Bismarck Capital building on August 5th AND another day on a smaller scale will follow on September 17th.

These market days give great exposure for you, the vendor, to meet, greet, and sell your homegrown or homemade goodies. Over 30 vendors attended last year offering veggie products and honey, milk and meat. Pride Dairy gave away free samples of delicious ice cream, and the Bismarck/Mandan orchestra entertained.

If interested in setting up a booth, please Contact Jamie Good, NDDA, 701-328-2659.