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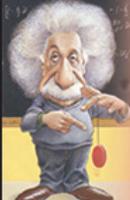
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## Location, fresh produce, contribute to Oregon Farmers Market success

Submitted by Anonymous on Wed, 08/06/2008 - 09:59  
By: Hannah Disch

Area residents looking for fresh local produce in a convenient location need look no further than the Oregon Farmers Market.

Fruits and vegetables aren't the only thing for sale at the market either. Although the available produce changes with the season, and vendors come and go, there is always a nice variety of items being sold. A recent trip to the Farmers Market found vendors selling everything from raspberries to seafood to soap, lip balms and lotion.

Lucille Miller sells handmade crafts, including many items associated with cooking such as aprons made from a vintage pattern, baby bibs and potholders. She says her products coincide well with the market. This is Miller's first year selling at the Oregon Farmers Market, and she says overall it's been a good experience.

That sentiment was echoed by the other vendors including Ruth Gullixson, an employee of The Silly Yak Bakery & Bread Barn, who says, "It's really nice to come here; lots of people come."

Gullixson adds that people are especially happy to see the bakery's gluten-free bread for sale at the market. The Silly Yak also sells regular wheat-based bread, granola and treats like cookies, scones and muffins. The products are made using all natural ingredients, including wheat that is ground at The Silly Yak's store in Madison.

This year is the market's first season in the Bill's Food Center parking lot. David Woodcock, one of the owners of Wildlife Preserves and a member of the Farmers Market board, is very pleased with the new location.

"It's good for us here," he says. "There's good visibility. It's good for the store, the customers and the vendors."

Woodcock speaks from experience - this is Wildlife Preserves' 11th year with the market, selling their jams, jellies, fruit butters, marmalades and spice blends.

The owners of Prairie Farm Produce, also members of the Oregon Farmers Market board, appreciate Bill's allowing the Farmers Market to use the space as well. Their farm, located on the corner of Sandhill Road and Rutland, is ripe with fresh produce, which they pick daily.

Last week's market found them selling onions, cucumbers, zucchini, cabbage, cauliflower, lettuce, green beans, potted perennial plants and fresh flowers. They expect sweet corn, watermelon and musk melon to be coming soon.

For customers and vendors, time at the Farmers Market is about more than just buying and selling. It's also about creating and supporting community. Sue Mueller of Sue's Handtwisted Accessories (selling hemp jewelry and dog leashes, recycled wax candles, earrings and beaded elastic bracelets) says, "I like seeing all the people coming through. Regular customers are like family."

Farmers Market customers can also benefit from the vendors' knowledge, which is often freely dispensed with each sale.

Al Shanklin, owner of Shanklin's Honey and a longtime Oregon Farmers Market vendor, is one such font of information. Not only does he know his honey, but he also has stores of knowledge on such topics as bee-keeping, the benefits of bee products and the vagaries of food labeling laws.

All of the vendors at the Oregon Farmers Market are locally based and make or grow their products themselves. The Farmers Market runs on Tuesdays, 2-6 p.m., May through October.

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