
THE NCGA DIRT - May 2007

Your Newsletter from the North Coast Growers' Association

Manager's Note

Hi and welcome to the first newsletter of the 2007 Farmers' Market Season. After lot of organizing, markets are underway. First market, we all enjoyed downpours of rains as we set up, fortunately giving way to clear skies as customers made it to market. Although we started a week later this year due to the way the dates fall, we are off to a good start financially, on course with last year's income. Currently, we are gearing up for the Kinetic Sculpture race on May 26, with the Oyster Festival not too far away on June 16. Check out the manager's stand to see this year's T-shirt and poster images from Willow Creek Farm. NCGA aprons are in the works! We also have a new wireless EBT machine, making food stamp transactions easier for customers and managers. I will be returning from maternity leave as full-time Market Manager, with her first market being on June 23. I'd like to thank you all for your support as I've stepped into the whirlwind of organizing our NCGA's Farmers' Markets, it's definitely been quite the ride. -Allyson

- Calendar Project and Advertising Opportunity!

In celebration of NCGA's 30th Anniversary, NCGA and the Community Alliance for Family Farmers (CAFF) are teaming up to bring you a calendar featuring paintings from Alan Sanborn. Alan has been creating artwork for NCGA's Farmers' Market posters for 12 years. We are excited to compile these images into one calendar. We are seeking sponsorship for each calendar page. Sponsorship costs \$250 and you will receive a month of advertising visibility on the calendar with placement of your logo and contact info/hours. Or split a page with a friend for \$125 each. Contact Michelle at 707-444-3255. Hurry, deadline is May 31.

Weekday Markets

The first week of June kicks off our weekday Farmers' Markets. Contact the market manager on the voicemail (707-441-9999) if interested in participating or for further info.

Old Town, Eureka
Tuesdays 10am – 1pm
June 5 – Oct 30
Manager: David MacCuish

Wildberries, Arcata
Tuesdays, 3:30pm – 6:30pm
June 5 – Oct 30
Manager: Amanda Barker

Henderson Center, Eureka
Thursdays 10am – 1pm
June 7 – Oct 25

Manager: David MacCuish

McKinleyville Shopping Center
Thursdays, 3:30-6:30pm
June 7 – Oct 25
Manager: Denise Payne
Board Meetings – April 11, May 12 and June 9th

Your Board met April 11 and one of the things discussed was ideas on how to include all the farmers in the organization's working. There was concern that there is such a long time between membership meetings that maybe farmers might want to have 3 or 4 membership meetings a year (instead of 2) so the general membership could be more included throughout the year. This might lead to shorter membership meetings since we wouldn't have to cover all the year's business in only 2 meetings per year. We'd love to hear your thoughts. Could you deal with another meeting – maybe between March and November. While you're pondering that, could you give some thought to another situation that's come up. Namely, should the actual farmer be required to show up for some minimum number of markets or may they send an employee to sell for them at all the markets. This was kicked around at length and we're leaning towards requiring a minimum. The thinking is that providing direct contact with the customer is part of what we're all about. This will be presented for a vote at the next membership meeting. We'd love to hear your thoughts. We also discussed the "HSU Welcome Back" day on the Plaza, which will occur on August 25. This is an event where students, their families and HSU faculty are invited to the Plaza to enjoy the Farmers' Market and the downtown area. There will be information tables on the Plaza and buses for free transportation. Although the Board does not feel that such an event will necessarily help sales, we also felt that we should participate in a welcome for the students. At the May 12 meeting, organizers from this event came and we worked on some logistics. The organizers wanted the entire Plaza closed to vehicle traffic, the Board agreed to closing 8th and 9th Streets. At the May 12 meeting, Deborah Giraud presented information regarding a new web-based sales grant, which is summarized elsewhere in this newsletter.

The next board meeting is Saturday, June 9, at 4pm at the North Coast Co-op in Arcata and, as always, any one is welcome to attend. If there's an item on the agenda you especially want to address or you just want to see what goes on (voodoo, sacrificing small animals, etc.) feel free to join us. We'd love to see ya. Agendas will be at the Manager's Stand a week before the meeting.

- Midge

Community Alliance with Family Farmers

The Humboldt chapter of CAFF, formerly Friends of the Farmers' Markets was established in 2006 to serve as a hub for community projects and grassroots efforts relating to the region's food system including Farm-to-School, community food system education, product distribution, and market development. Two of our goals are to strengthen existing sales relationships with local institutions, and to develop agricultural export markets for Humboldt grown produce. Through a combination of private, public and non-profit partnerships, we are working to create an efficient, rural distribution network that enhances the economic sustainability of our local agriculture and improves access to local food. We are also dedicated to increasing awareness of local agriculture through community events and projects that highlight regional farms and the importance of sustainable agriculture. Activities scheduled for this year include: local farm/farmers' market tours, a 2nd calendar in partnership with NCGA, community forums, and local food month activities including an upscale

dinner at a local farm. If you're interested in helping plan these events please call 444-3255 or email michelle@caff.org
Gleaning Program - Share the Wealth!

For 6 years local area farmers have donated thousands of pounds to Food For People, Humboldt County's food bank. Despite the bounty of Humboldt County, many of our community members lack access to fresh produce, essential to a balanced diet. We would like to ask all local farmers and gardeners to consider donating any unmarketable, or extra produce to the food bank. No amount is too small, all is welcome! Farming leaves little to spare, therefore we will provide insured volunteers to directly pick up and/or harvest any available produce on the farm or at each weekly farmer's market. If you would like to participate in the gleaning program please contact Katie at 445-3166 ext:312, or kharbaugh@foodforpeople.org.
Northwest California Web Based Marketing Project; The Virtual Farmer's Market.

The UC Cooperative Extension Advisor, Deborah Giraud, has been funded to develop a new sales tool for farmers. The virtual farmer's market website will expand direct producer to consumer marketing opportunities region-wide through the development of a web-based marketing system. The website will provide a list of exact products available, and a mechanism to contact that seller who will coordinate delivery. Customers and consumers will benefit by receiving product deliveries either from the farm, at local distribution points, or through distributors such as ProPacific and several other regional trucking companies. Some producers may have products that can be shipped, such as dried wreaths, jams etc. All local producers will be welcome to use the site. This project expands on work UCCE and C.A.F.F. has been working on in Farm-to School marketing efforts in Humboldt County, by including two other counties to form a regional approach. We have developed many excellent contacts with farmers and institutional buyers. This project will be a close collaboration between UC Cooperative Extension in Humboldt and Trinity Counties, the RC&D, CAFF and the Farm Bureau marketing committee. All collaborators have small farm sustainability as a major goal in common. Funds will be used for:

- 1) web sales site development.
- 2) Coordinator time to get farm products listed, and train farmers and buyers in the initial use.
- 3) Publicity and direct demonstration and training to restaurants, school food buyers, other buyers and the farmers (sellers).

For more information please contact Deborah Giraud at 445-7351.

Organic Planet Festival – Sunday, August 26

The Organic Planet Festival (www.organicplanetfestival.org) is northern California's only organic festival where you'll find great music, fantastic food, fun kids' activities and inspirational speakers. Featuring presentations and workshops by experts and community groups, the Organic Planet Festival also showcases wares from 60+ exhibitors. The best part is -- it's all organic or non-toxic! Produced by Californians for Alternatives to Toxics, the Organic Planet Festival is an educational event that's fun for all. Come join us on Sunday, August 26th from 11am-7pm at Halvorsen Park in Eureka, and be a part of this celebration of creative solutions for a natural, non-toxic and organic planet

This year CATs shifted the Organic Planet Festival from Saturday to Sunday, in part, because they want to be better partners with the North Coast Growers Association. With help from some volunteers, NCGA is working on having a booth at Organic Planet to sell our organic T-shirts and bags and provide information about Farmers' Markets and local agriculture. If you'd like to be involved with NCGA's information

booth or have a booth of your own contact organizer Matt Lang at 707-445-5100 ext 202 for more details.
North Coast Regional Energy Alternatives Conference

Plan It Green (www.HumboldtPlanItGreen.com) is hosting the upcoming FREE North Coast Regional Energy Alternatives Conference. This exciting event will take place at the Arcata Community Center on Saturday June 23, 2007 with a Green Homes tour on Sunday June 24th. Saturday will include an EXPO showcasing green building and energy related products and services, three concurrent lecture/workshop sessions, and followed by Local Foods Plan It Green Benefit Dinner created by local chefs with local produce. Plan It Green is looking for support in reaching their goal of a locally produced meal. They welcome donations (or reduced cost) fresh produce, salads, locally processed foods, in kind sponsorship from your store or business, and volunteers for cooking the meal. Those interested, please contact Lia Webb at 707-443-8326 x142 or LiaWebb@w-and-k.com.
Music Sponsorship

Big thanks to Northcoast Horticulture Supply for sponsoring six weeks of music this season! In addition, they are offering a 15% off coupon for NCGA farmers for use in their stores in Eureka (60 W. 4th St.) and McKinleyville (1580 Nursery Rd. – off Central Ave, N of School Rd). You can pick up your coupon at the Manager’s Stand. Thanks Northcoast Horticulture!
Opportunity:

Café Brio is looking for local produce to include in their pastries, sandwiches, etc. Even very small quantities are sought. If interested call Café Brio at 822-5922 or stop by.
Available:

Spinning wheels. #1 Clemes & Clemes oak spinning wheel with jumbo flyer...\$275 and #2 Reconditioned castle wheel....\$200. Contact Brad and Adrienne Werren at 707-442-5002 or warren@reninet.com

Wax cardboard boxes. Used to hold chicken, so suitable for reuse for non-edible items (e.g., flowers, plants, etc.) Weekly delivery possible. Contact Mike at City of Arcata Environmental Services, 707-825-2164.

Soaker/Drip Hose available for trade for veggies, flowers, etc. ¾ inch, 25ft and 50ft sections. Call Leonard 707-839-2367.
Birth Announcements:

Hazel Havens Neukom. Born April 8, 2007, to Amy and Jacques.

Baby Boy Riley. Born May 3, 2007, to Lauren and Ino.

Sophia Blessing Griffin. Born December 6, 2006 to T and Marnin