

**OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND
FORESTRY**

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PRESS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 8, 2016

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Governor Mary Fallin declares

Farmers Market Week in Oklahoma

August 7-13, 2016

Many times, Oklahoma agriculture is seen at a glance by motorists passing farms and ranches throughout the state.

One of the countless benefits of farmers markets is they slow life down and they provide consumers and producers an opportunity to meet face to face and develop a greater appreciation one for the other. These individuals may share stories during their visits, but ultimately they share a love for fresh, quality Oklahoma agricultural products.

Governor Mary Fallin is honoring this very special local treasure of so many communities in our state by declaring the week of August 7 as “Farmers Market Week in Oklahoma.”

Governor Fallin stated, “One of the most appealing aspects of farmers markets is fresh produce, often picked that morning or the evening before by the person selling it to you. You can’t get more ‘local’ than that.”

Oklahoma Secretary of Agriculture Jim Reese said, "To borrow a bumper sticker phrase from another state, 'Buy local, it's thousands of miles fresher.'"

Across Oklahoma, there are 77 registered farmers markets that are essential outlets for agricultural producers in providing opportunities for them to meet the consumer demand for locally grown, fresh produce.

Farmers markets also provide opportunities to create strong community ties and a link between rural and urban populations by allowing farmers and consumers to interact.

Plus, these markets play a vital role in supporting and sustaining family farms through the development of local and regional food systems.

The contributions of Oklahoma’s farmers markets are plentiful.

For example, farmers markets in the state offer fresh, affordable, healthful products for low-income women, infants,

children and seniors participating through the WIC and Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Programs through an opportunity to redeem their benefits.

The Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry (ODAFF) recognizes the numerous benefits of farmers markets and strongly supports and promotes the development and operation of their success and other direct-to-consumer marketing activities for agricultural producers.

To locate and enjoy an Oklahoma Farmers Market near you, go to <http://www.okgrown.com/markets/> .

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Photo caption: Photo caption: Jamey Allen, Director of Market Development, from left, Ashley Bender, Farmers Market Coordinator for the statewide program, and Secretary of Agriculture Jim Reese are shown Monday during the presentation of Governor Mary Fallin's proclamation recognizing August 7-13 as "Farmers Market Week in Oklahoma." ODAFF hosts a Farmers Market on Tuesdays in its parking lot at 2800 N Lincoln Blvd. in Oklahoma City.

Photo caption: The Cherry Street Farmers Market in Tulsa stays busy.