

# Governor Baker Proclaims August 2-8, 2015 Massachusetts Farmers' Market Week

BOSTON— July 31, 2015- In recognition of the positive contributions Massachusetts' farmers' markets have on agriculture and public health in the Commonwealth, Governor Baker has proclaimed August 2-8, 2015 "Massachusetts Farmers' Market Week." The weeklong event coincides with the [16th National Farmers' Market Week](#) as the United States Department of Agriculture celebrates the nation's thousands of farmers' markets.

"Farmers' markets are crucial direct market venues for growers across the Commonwealth and help ensure the continued viability of family farms and local food production," said Governor Charlie Baker. "I encourage everyone to support Massachusetts' hard-working farmers by visiting their local farmers' market this week."

"Not only do farmers' markets strengthen the Commonwealth's vital agricultural industry, they also provide healthy food to our communities," said Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Matthew Beaton. "The Baker-Polito Administration is committed to ensuring access to locally-produced, fresh food for all Massachusetts residents."

Massachusetts' 7,755 farms help to protect over 523,000 acres of open space and produce more than \$492 million in agricultural products annually. At nearly \$48 million, direct market sales account for 10 percent of the state's total sales of agricultural products. Massachusetts ranks 5th in the nation for direct market sales and 3rd for direct market sales per operation.

The number of farmers' markets in Massachusetts continues to grow. In 1987, there were 69 farmers' markets; today there are approximately 250 summer markets and 40 winter markets. Yesterday, Governor Baker, Secretary Beaton, and Department of Agricultural Resources (DAR) Commissioner John Lebeaux attended the grand opening of the Boston Public Market, a new year-round, locally-sourced market in downtown Boston.

"We are proud to recognize the growing popularity and opportunity farmers' markets have seen in recent years," said Commissioner Lebeaux. "The farmers and food producers who make these markets possible and the communities that host them reflect the growing demand of the Buy-Local movement. The variety of farm products and specialty foods found at farmers' markets is stunning and the quality and craftsmanship from our local farmers and food producers cannot be beat."

In recent years there has been an increase in the number of farmers' markets accepting Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. Of the 250 summer farmers markets, 142 currently accept SNAP.

DAR compiles an annual list of Massachusetts farmers' markets, listing days, locations, times, and opening and closing dates for each market. An interactive map of farmers' markets statewide is available [here](#).

###

Follow EEA Secretary Beaton on Twitter:..... [www.twitter.com/masseea](http://www.twitter.com/masseea)

View downloadable photographs on Flickr:..... [www.flickr.com/photos/masseea/sets/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/masseea/sets/)

Visit the Energy Smarts blog:..... [www.mass.gov/blog/energy](http://www.mass.gov/blog/energy)

Visit The Great Outdoors blog:..... [www.mass.gov/blog/environment](http://www.mass.gov/blog/environment)

Visit our website:..... [www.mass.gov/eea](http://www.mass.gov/eea)

