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# The State University of New York

## News Release



### **SUNY Plaza To Host Albany's Only Year-Round Farmers' Market**

*Chancellor Zimpher Highlights Increased Vibrancy Downtown, Support for New York Agriculture*

*Plaza Lawn Open for Summer, Community Invited to Utilize Green Space in Front of Historic SUNY Building*

**For Immediate Release: Thursday, June 12, 2014**

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Albany – State University of New York Chancellor Nancy L. Zimpher, in partnership with Governor Andrew M. Cuomo's FreshConnect initiative, the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, and the City of Albany, today announced that SUNY Plaza will host the Farmers' Market every Thursday, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., opening historic SUNY Plaza to the community year-round.

The Farmers' Market at SUNY Plaza will feature a growing number of farmers and vendors outside every Thursday afternoon, in front of SUNY and the federal building, near the intersection of State Street and Broadway. During inclement weather and the winter months, the market will be held inside System Administration's first floor gallery.

Bringing the market to SUNY Plaza aligns with the University's strategic planning commitment to improving the vibrancy of New York's communities across the state and supports the state's agriculture industry through increased procurement of local goods and services in addition to academic programs aligned with industry demand.

"SUNY campuses are anchor institutions in communities across New York, and the same holds true for our historic headquarters in Downtown Albany," said Chancellor Zimpher. "As part of the fabric of New York State's Capital City, SUNY is proud to open its doors to the public and to leverage its assets with events like the farmers' market that attract more people to downtown and bring renewed vitality to this important part of Albany. We look forward to the many visitors this will attract to SUNY Plaza throughout the year."

State Agriculture Commissioner Richard A. Ball said, "We are delighted that SUNY Plaza is opening a new FreshConnect Farmers' Market in downtown Albany, which will provide New York agricultural products every Thursday for city residents and visitors. Providing local foods to communities in the market for them is what the Governor's FreshConnect program is all about. At their core, farmers' markets do a great job of bringing communities together and I am certain that's what SUNY's new market will do."

City of Albany Mayor Kathy Sheehan said, "We are thrilled to have a farmers' market in the heart of downtown Albany, and can think of no better place for it than the beautiful SUNY Plaza, one of Albany's best-loved and iconic sites. On behalf of the city, I want to thank SUNY for hosting the market and helping to expand it to become a year-round event. It's community partnerships like those exhibited today – between stakeholders and neighbors – that create strong, livable cities and will enhance quality of life in downtown Albany. Thanks to the many vendors who will be bringing their goods to market here. We look forward to supporting you."

**XXXX Frank Stanton** said, "Farmers markets are becoming the trendy way to shop. The farmers markets' growth depends on the growing interest among people who want control over what they're eating. People want to reduce the environmental impact by traveling fewer miles to shop and buy foods that have traveled fewer miles to get to market. People feel good to contribute to the local ecosystem and local economy."

Chancellor Zimpher also formally opened the plaza lawn to the community for the summer and invited the public and the Downtown Albany community to utilize SUNY's green space and visit the historic SUNY building to view the student artwork now on display on the first floor.

As part of the day's family-friendly events, Tessa Edick and FarmOn! Foundation helped connect children to seed and soil with biodynamic organic seed packet crafts and planting activities to inspire healthy eating and happier meals. Live music was provided by the Zucchini Brothers.

Chancellor Zimpher also highlighted the university system's coordinated farm-to-market procurement program, "SUNY Commits, in which campuses agree ahead of growing season to collectively purchase locally-grown or processed foods to be procured in dining halls. The program [launched](#) in October with the purchase of 1,000 gallons of tomato sauce by 12 SUNY campuses. SUNY is seeking to expand the program to include more SUNY colleges in the coming years, as well as more New York products, such as meats, fruits, and vegetables.

Regular vendors at SUNY Plaza are:

- Meredith's Country Bakery, Ulster County – pies, bread, muffins, gluten free, quiche, pot pies
- Bulich Creekside Farms, Greene County – vegetables, fruit, flowers, mushrooms, sweet corn
- Good Day Honey, Southern Albany County – raw local honey, creamed honey, farm fresh eggs, beeswax candles, soap, body butter, and lip balm
- Hope Valley Farm, Hamilton County – certified naturally-grown vegetables, annual and perennial plants, garlic
- Rheingold Farm, Rensselaer County – hanging baskets, herbs, vegetable seedlings, salad greens, tomatoes, eggplant, beans, melons, squashes, potatoes, and berries
- Scotch Ridge Berry Farm, Schenectady County – raspberries, blueberries, strawberries, vegetable seedlings for your garden
- Meadow Lark Farm, Orange County – bouquets of country cut flowers
- Worldling's Pleasure, Albany County – cheese spreads, and baked goods including cheesecakes, tarts, and cookies
- Euro Delicacies, Albany County – ready-to-eat authentic Mediterranean foods
- Cravings Too, Inc, Albany County – caramel popcorn, roasted nuts
- Little River Farm, Columbia County – apples, pears, peaches, plums, grapes, cherries, and chestnuts

### **About FreshConnect**

The FreshConnect program was the first step in Governor Cuomo's "Farm New York" initiative to invest in the state's agriculture industry, a vital component of the state's economy. Currently in its fourth year, the FreshConnect Farmers' Market program has increased capacity for farmers to directly market their products to consumers while providing New Yorkers in underserved communities with new opportunities to purchase farm fresh products. Since its inception the Fresh Connect Program has funded more than 90 projects throughout the state and allocated more than \$1 million. For more information about the FreshConnect Farmers' Market program, please visit: [freshconnect.ny.gov](http://freshconnect.ny.gov).

### **About FarmOn! Foundation**

Created in 2011 as the philanthropic arm of Culinary Partnership, FarmOn! Foundation is the financial beneficiary of the Friends of the Farmer Festival. Tessa Edick, founder of both, has cultivated and nurtured a broad network of supporters and beneficiaries within New York. Located in the heart of the agricultural community of the Hudson Valley in Columbia County, N.Y., the organization strives to bring community awareness to food sources, reinvigorate a respect for farming to inspire youth and encourage careers in agriculture and help connect rural to urban marketplaces. By supporting succession on the farm and funding educational youth programs and experiences for the next generation of farmers, FarmOn! Foundation is working to preserve family farming in America.

### **About the State University of New York**

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