

## Increasing Farmer Profitability through Forging Community Partnerships in Education

Create new marketing opportunities for the current vendors at the Davis Farmers Market by developing an innovative partnership with the Davis Joint Unified School District.

[Final Report](#)

**DAVIS FARMERS MARKET FOUNDATION (DFMF)  
"IMPROVING FARMER PROFITABILITY BY FORGING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS IN EDUCATION"  
USDA/AMS FARMERS MARKET PROMOTION PROGRAM  
FINAL REPORT  
OCTOBER 2006 - MARCH 2008**

The overall goal of this project has been to create new market opportunities for Davis Farmers Market vendors by partnering with Davis's two major public education institutions—the University of California (UCD) and the Davis Joint Unified School District (DJUSD). The following is a final report of accomplishments.

## **1. Summary of issues being examined**

The project addresses the need for small and mid-scale farmers to expand their venues, recruit new clientele, and educate the public about the availability and benefits of fresh, farmers market products. The project addresses this need by establishing a presence for farmers on a campus of 45,000 students and staff and by increasing the use of farmers' market products in the local schools. The increased awareness generated by the on-campus farmers market and the programs in the local schools further enhances the city's Farmers Market, drawing new customers to the city venue.

The project also sought innovative responses to the current health situation in the U.S. It is now well known that the percentage of adults and children who are overweight or obese is unacceptable. Similarly, the rate of increase in Type II diabetes continues to concern public health officials. These problems are inseparable from a second issue: consumers' lack of knowledge about healthy, whole food and where it comes from. California's population continues to urbanize, and for many living in cities or suburbs, the connection between the food they eat and local agriculture is diminishing—or absent altogether. Many children have no exposure to fresh fruits and vegetables and even as adults have only the dimmest idea of how their food is grown. In this regard, farmers markets hold tremendous opportunities for increasing consumers' access to fresh produce, encouraging healthier lifestyles, and (re)educating them about their local food systems and the importance of local agriculture.

UC Davis and DJUSD are responding to the health crisis by instituting health and wellness policies and working to implement them. This project builds on the growing awareness by educational institutions that the current model of serving institutional food has to change. They need alternative programs that provide youth and others access to the kind of healthy, fresh food that farmers market vendors can supply. They also need assistance with educational campaigns so that consumers young and old transform their understanding of the food system and develop lifelong healthy habits. This project has supported these efforts.

To address all of these issues, the Davis Farmers Market Foundation proposed to 1) create a satellite farmers market on the UC Davis campus in order to make fresh, local food available to the university community and to educate students and staff about its value; and 2) assist DJUSD in the implementation of their Wellness Policy by bringing farmers market fresh produce into the schools. Education is the key to increasing understanding of the value of fresh, healthy foods. By targeting youth, this project seeks to establish awareness and healthy habits early, benefiting both consumers and farmers.

## 2. Ways the issues were addressed

### 2a. UC Davis East Quad Farmers Market

With the support of USDA-AMS funding, the Davis Farmers Market Foundation (DFMF) established the first farmers market on the University of California Davis campus. This was an innovative project and collaborative effort that was greeted enthusiastically by the campus community. The first market was launched in October 2006 in conjunction with Local Food Week and the Campus Community Book Project, which include a presentation by Michael Pollan on his book, *The Omnivore's Dilemma*.

In the spring of 2007, the campus Farmers Market Steering Committee named the market "East Quad Farmers Market" (EQFM) and ran it each Wednesday for five weeks. By this launch, the market had established visibility and identity on campus, and the response was even more positive. The spring market, with its cherries, peaches, strawberries, organic vegetables, olive oil, nuts and flowers brought farmers a significant additional income, and increased farmers' profile among UCD staff and students.

#### Farmer Sales

Overall, East Quad Farmers Market vendors viewed the Spring East Quad Farmers Market as a valuable extension to their normal market sales. During the project period, sales fluctuated according to season and weather. The first Market of fall 2006 was the smallest at an average of about \$130 per farmer/ per day, as it was new and the weather was particularly poor for an outside market. Overall average sales were about \$1,140/day.

However, the Spring 2007 EQFM saw the highest daily average sales, at \$2,993 per day (\$272 per farmer per day average). The following Fall of 2007 was also high, averaging almost \$2,000 per day (\$235 per farmer per day). Farmers felt that the spring sales were higher because of the abundance of fresh fruit and the more predictable pleasant spring weather.

Participating farmers considered the EQFM a success and a valuable addition to their business profile. The following are sample quotations from vendors:

- The market should be a mainstay here on campus.
- Overall really good and continually improving.
- The number of people shopping has doubled since the fall—convenient for students.
- Fresh produce is always nice.
- Warm reception from students and faculty, excitement for fresh fruits and vegetables on campus, good location.
- This market has been fantastic about relationships with people.
- Selling people plants and vegetables brings people back to their connection with the foods they eat.

#### EQFM Customers

Customers, too, were very positive about the presence of a farmers market on campus, particularly by spring after it was established as a regular feature of the Quad activities and offerings. Customers were almost exactly evenly split between staff and students. On average there were about 200 customers per day, and most visited the market to buy fresh produce. However, many stopped by because it "looked like a fun atmosphere."

Satisfaction was high as the following quotes indicate:

- It's great!
- It should happen more often for staff. All summer long would be great.
- We never had this in 2002 when I was a student—it's good!
- I love it; I am so happy it is here.

### **Sustainability**

The success of the campus farmers market and the increased awareness it generated about health and agriculture issues are evidenced by the fact that the university is assuming administrative responsibility for its continuation. By Fall 2007, UC Davis administrative supporters recognized the value of having the East Quad Farmers Market on campus, and implemented a number of procedural measures to institutionalize the market. The Cowell Student Health Center's Wellness Committee, which had been instrumental in establishing the market on campus, officially took on responsibility for continuing it. As a result, the Fall 2007 EQFM ran an additional three weeks, with the promise of support for a continuing presence on campus each spring and fall. This step towards sustainability of the East Quad Farmers Market is one of the major achievements of this project.

### **2b. Assistance to DJUSD in the implementation of their Wellness Policy**

A number of activities were undertaken to address the goal of assisting Davis Joint Unified School District's Food Service Division in the implement of the district's Wellness Policy.

#### **Facilitate purchases of farmers' market product for school lunch**

The Project Coordinator met with the Food Service Director and a local distributor to arrange an agreement facilitating the purchase of local product. During the period of the project, local produce purchases averaged 22% of total produce purchases (range = 10% to 25%). In addition, relationships were established with the local distributor and local farmers that ensure these purchases continue.

### **Sustainability**

In November 2007, Davis voters passed a Parcel Tax which allocates approximately \$70,000 annually specifically for the purchase of fresh, local fruits and vegetables for the school lunch program. This was an historic accomplishment for Davis Joint Unified School district, and a first in the nation, and was brought about primarily through the efforts of members of the Davis Farm to School Connection (F2SC) Steering Committee, a program under the Davis Farmers Market Foundation. Their close association and collaboration with the Student Nutrition Services Director since 2000 has paved the way for this landmark policy in support of local food and farmers. This is an excellent example of this project's impacts in leveraging local funds for sustainability. Furthermore, the concept is replicable, as every school district in California can deploy this tax, while other school districts throughout the nation now have a model of voter self-taxation in support of bringing local foods into the school lunch programs.

This innovative strategy for support was brought about by turning attention to education within the community about the importance of farm fresh food, and by advocating to the Board of Trustees, who proposed that the issue be put into a poll. In a preliminary poll, the concept was overwhelmingly endorsed, and it was then added to the Parcel Tax.

Once the Parcel Tax passed, the F2SC committee worked with the school district to create a plan to implement the allocated funds, including the use of a matrix of seasonally available produce that incorporates local, farm fresh food in a series of daily meals. In this way, the produce is integrated into the school lunch program more deeply than simply into a salad bar. The plan emanates from cooking

lessons, initially funded by the USDA-FMPP, and, initiated by the Davis Farm to School Connection. This new matrix and set of monthly cooking classes is truly a national model. It links the school district food service with the Davis Farmers Market and engages school district food service personnel as part of the wider professional chefs' world of flavors and local, seasonal produce.

### **Nutrition education and taste testing**

Nutrition education took place in the form of in-class and lunchroom taste testings with students. The Project Coordinator visited schools on a weekly basis throughout the spring and fall and winter of 2007, offering students samples of seasonal fruit and vegetables purchased from local farmers. Parent volunteers and university interns were trained to expand the tasting program. These tastings were linked to events at the Davis Farmers Market and with the food service staff (see below). The tastings were used both to market new offerings to students and to inform purchases. Responses from both students and parents were very positive.

### **Alternative fundraisers**

One goal of the project was to implement alternative fundraisers in the school using Farmers Market products. During the first year, DFMF arranged for Farmers Market baskets to be sold during the winter holiday season as an alternative to cakes, candy, wrapping paper, etc. Although it was positively received, the alternative fundraiser project did not raise enough money to justify the time devoted to its implementation; therefore, DFMF decided to re-direct the Project Coordinator's efforts towards creating a system for sustainability of the overall program after the grant ran out. This approach would consist of a Farm to School Committee at each elementary school site responsible for overseeing the school gardening efforts, the recycling program, and the farm-to-school food service purchases for that school. It would also take ownership of alternative fundraisers for the school. This strategy was still in progress at the end of the project period.

### **Farm Tours and Farmers Market Cooking Connections**

An important component of student education is the opportunity for students to take a Farm Tour at a local farm. This is an opportunity that DFMF has offered to 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students for the past six years in the spring. This extraordinary opportunity gives children a chance to visit a working farm and to experience first-hand how fruits and vegetables are grown and harvested. The Farm Tours have been a collaborative effort between DFMF and Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF).

With this project, the grant allowed us to leverage the Project Coordinator's time to arrange and conduct the farm tours. Approximately 400 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade students attended local farms this spring (2008). This program included Farm to School curriculum, classroom presentations that further linked the school site tastings to the farms where the produce was grown. It also reinforced the connection between food service's purchasing of produce from local farmers with agricultural literacy and nutrition education of the students.

With this grant funding we were able to add a new element to the program, the *Farmers Market Cooking Connections*, providing elementary teachers with classroom lessons and activities using Farmers Market products. The quarterly seasonal "lessons" were demonstrated at the market using a recipe that could be employed in the classroom or home kitchen with product purchased at the Davis Farmers Market. These seasonal recipes were developed and sent to second grade teachers throughout the district with information about sourcing from the market and the Farmers Market demonstration day event. The activities featured Sugar Pie Pumpkin Pie in the fall, Lemon Curd and citrus tasting in the winter and Strawberry Jam and lemonade in the spring. These demonstrations attracted an appreciative audience at

the Farmers Market, and in the school context, teachers were pleased to receive additional information on how to use local products. This project will be continued.

We also took advantage of an opportunity to increase awareness of our programs to promote farmers market products at The Big Tomato, held adjacent to the Davis Farmers Market on March 15. The Big Tomato, an event celebrating processing tomatoes (Yolo County's Number One Crop), was presented by the Yolo County Agricultural Marketing Initiative and the Yolo County Farm Bureau. Prior to the event all 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teachers in Yolo County received an invitation along with a packet of tomato seeds and "Tomato Time", a curriculum for 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students developed by the UC Children's Garden program. This created another connection to the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade farm visits. At the event, DJUSD student nutrition services staff demonstrated their newly developed recipes using processing tomatoes, alongside renowned chefs from the region. (See below for more on the cooking lessons for DJUSD staff.)

### **Student Nutrition Services Workshops: Farmers Market Chefs Walk, Farm Tour & Cooking Lessons**

A creative outcome of the project has been an innovative effort to bring together food service personnel from Davis Joint Unified School District and UC Davis Sodexo Dining Services with local caterers and chefs from local restaurants for professional training and sharing.

The first step in the process was the Farmers Market Chefs Walk on Saturday, November 10, 2007, and was a collaborative effort between DFMF Davis Farm to School Connection, Slow Food Yolo, Yolo County Agriculture Marketing Initiative, Produce Express and CAFF's Growers Collaborative. The event was planned as a "Chef's Walk" around the Market, during which food service staff and other local chefs would meet with local farmers, learn about the products they offer and exchange information about ways to prepare the fresh produce. Integral to this event is the assumption that food service staff are culinary professionals, on a par with caterers and restaurant chefs, and that bringing them together in a professional peer-to-peer setting will enhance their expertise and enthusiasm for trying new fresh, local products and recipes.

In attendance were student nutrition service staff from DJUSD (14), culinary staff from the University of California Davis Dining Services Sodexo along with several local chefs and caterers who purchase their fresh products primarily from the farmers market. After an initial presentation by local chefs, the group toured the market, sharing recipes, cooking techniques, tidbits of information about ways to prepare specialty vegetables and more. Afterwards, the DJUSD student nutrition services staff enjoyed a lunch prepared by Pru Mendez, chef of Tuco's Restaurant and Wine Bar. The Chefs Walk was followed by a visit to a local farm, thus further reinforcing the connections from farm to fork and building additional relationships between farmers and the student nutrition services staff. At the farm, the student nutrition services director discussed specific items the farm could provide to the schools.

Evaluations indicated a high level of interest and satisfaction with the day. Some comments by student nutrition service personnel were the following:

- I enjoyed the large collection of diverse organic produce and substantial amount of information available at each booth.
- I learned that you should always take the chance to try out new food because you never know what can be delicious.
- I will definitely use the new recipes I learned.
- I will try to use more different kinds of vegetables and fruits.

- I plan to apply the various techniques in food preparation that I witnessed at the event.
- The people were great and very enthusiastic to share and listen to ideas.

The evaluations also asked the DJUSD Student Nutrition Services staff to suggest ideas for further professional development that could be provided as part of this grant project. The top priority was cooking classes to support using Farmers Market products in the school lunch program. They were particularly interested in learning how they might incorporate the ingredients from the Farmers Market with the commodities they already receive from USDA, and how they could translate recipes to the larger scale of food production for the Davis schools. To this end, Slow Food Yolo and The Yolo County Agriculture Marketing Initiative partnered with Davis Farm to School Connection to offer cooking classes, led by internationally known cookbook author, Georgeanne Brennan. The DJUSD School Lunch Menu now features a weekly local, seasonal “from-scratch” soup at the elementary level, and various menus that incorporate local, seasonal produce from the Davis Farmers Market into the entrees. A short video on the DJUSD website describes the various ways that products from the farmers market are incorporated into the menus. Based on the success of this new program, the Davis Farmers Market Foundation is continuing to support these collaborative cooking lessons with local culinary professionals. The lessons support the development of a matrix of local, seasonal produce and flavor profiles. We believe that this program – developed through the FMPP grant - is a national model for how to transform K-12 school lunch programs.

### **3. Specific Contributions of Project Partners**

#### **UC Davis and Davis Farmers Market Foundation**

The establishment and continuation of the East Quad Farmers Market on the UC Davis campus would not have been possible without the contributions and collaborative support of many UC Davis groups (see below). Under the auspices of the Davis Farmers Market Foundation, the Farmers Market Manager, Randii MacNear, worked closely with representatives of these and other offices to ensure the smooth and successful implementation of the project. To this end, the University contributed directly or in-kind for expenses such as parking fees, insurance coverage, health inspections, stall fees, etc. The following are partnerships and in-kind contributions with UCD:

- UCD Co-sponsors
  - ASUCD Coffee House
  - Sodexo Student Dining Services
  - Cowell Student Health Center
  - Campus & Community Relations
  - Students for Sustainable Agriculture and student interns
  - USDA/ARS/Western Human Nutrition Research Center
- In-kind market fees and services sponsored by:
  - Cowell Student Health Center
  - Sodexo Student Dining Services
  - Campus and Community Relations
  - Davis Food COOP

Most importantly, Randii worked consistently with the Cowell Student Health Center Director Michelle Johnston and her staff on the Student Wellness Committee. Ms. Johnston and her staff contributed significantly to the media and outreach efforts to advertise the market and raise it in the awareness of UCD staff and students. They produced flyers, table tents, banners, signs, posters, ads in student and staff newspapers, media stories for UCD’s Web site, and more. Their volunteers helped staff the market itself, and Ms. Johnston has been instrumental in arranging for the institutionalization of the market.

She views a campus farmers market as a perfect example of action that the Health Center can take to implement their Wellness Policy.

Through the efforts of the Cowell Student Health Center Wellness Committee and later the Students for Sustainable Agriculture, the EQFM will remain on the campus after the grant period is completed. Advice for other groups considering establishing a campus farmers market is to begin with students and to look to Student Health Centers and health educators. Beginning with these groups ensures not only that the students who have the most motivation are involved with the project from the outset, but that students in general will have ownership over the project and the process

### **Davis Joint Unified School District (DJUSD) and DFMF-DF2SC**

DJUSD was a primary partner in the portion of the grant that focused on the K-12 education context. The Director of Student Nutrition Services, Rafaelita Curva (RC), worked together with the Project Coordinator and the Market Manager in several areas. These included arranging purchases from local farmers for inclusion in the school lunch program; collaborating on a Food Fair on the High School campus; and arranging taste tests and nutrition education lessons in the classrooms. RC assisted in identifying and helping to coordinate the professional development opportunities for the student nutrition service staff including the Farmers Market Chefs' Walk and Farm Tour and the follow-up monthly cooking lessons with Georgeanne Brennan. She continues to support innovation in the school lunch program to incorporate Farmers Market products.

Other groups offering various kinds of support, input and contributions to this part of the project were some of the school PTA groups, who assisted in the initial work on alternative fundraisers. Also, Community Alliance with Family Farmers Growers Collaborative played a significant role in negotiating purchases from local farmers for the school lunch program. For the Chefs Walk and Cooking Lessons, Slow Food Yolo/ Yolo Ag Initiative representatives were instrumental. And offering overall support were the members of Davis Farm to School Connection, a group with a ten-year history of supporting farm to school efforts in Davis. This group was also responsible for putting language into policy with the Parcel Tax to ensure that a portion of the monies raised would go towards purchasing fresh, local produce for the district. This was a remarkable achievement and was made possible by leveraging the funds and activities associated with this grant.

### **UC Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program (SAREP) for Evaluation**

UC SAREP was subcontracted to conduct the evaluation for this project. Contributions in this area involved collecting data on farmer sales at the campus farmers market; conducting interviews of farmers and customers; conducting a Rapid Market Assessment to determine customer frequency and preferences. At the school district level, activities included collecting data on produce purchasing practices and trends; collecting data and information on the alternative fundraisers; tracking farm visits, classroom nutrition education lessons and taste tests; interviewing the Student Nutrition Services Director as well as the Project Director and the Market Manager. This information has been collated and reported on quarterly.

## 4. Results, Conclusions, Lessons Learned

### 4a. Lessons Learned: UCD East Quad Farmers Market

As reported above, East Quad Farmers Market vendors viewed the East Quad Farmers Market as a valuable extension to their normal market sales. In general, the campus market afforded them additional profits, although sales fluctuated according to season and weather. A summary of sales follows:

	Fall 2006 (5 days)	Spring 2007 (5 days)	Fall 2007 (8 days)
Total Sales	\$5,687	\$14,963	\$15,916
Average per day	\$1,137	\$2,993	\$1,990
Average per farmer/day	\$127	\$272	\$233

The major factors relating to the success of the market were weather and promotion. Obviously, an outdoor market on a college campus should be planned for times of good weather; if inclement weather occurs, there is not much that can be done about it. At the time of the first market, there were some days of windy and wet weather, and that—on top of the fact that it was new on campus—had an effect on sales. Also, availability of fruit affects sales. Farmers felt that the spring sales were higher because of the abundance of fresh fruit and the more predictable pleasant spring weather.

Marketing and promotion are a crucial aspect of rolling out a project such as this. After the first fall market, the planners seriously ramped up the marketing strategies, plastering the Memorial Union with table tents, flyers, posters, and banners, and featuring the EQFM in the campus newspaper, on the front page of the Web site, and so forth. This increased effort in public relations had a noticeable effect, and many customers mentioned having seen or read about the market in various venues around campus.

In general farmers were pleased with the market, both in sales and in the relationships established. Qualitative interviews indicated that this campus market was good because it brought farmers into a new venue, so it exposed them to a new customer base. At the same time, it exposed new, young customers to a farmers market. They felt that there was great educational value in this exchange. Farmers also reported that the EQFM made a bridge between the campus and the city's Davis Farmers Market, with more people from the campus visiting the market than previously.

The East Quad Farmers Market is successful in as much as it has become an institutionalized feature of the campus. DFMF developed formal contractual arrangements with UCD for the continuance of the market beyond the grant period. Through this project, we were able to establish, in collaboration with others, the role of a permanent sponsor for the market to exist within the walls of the university and its mission.

### Recommendations:

- **Begin the process of planning and negotiation with campus offices and facilities very early—at least six months before the planned opening of the market.**
- **In negotiations, emphasize student groups, such as a Health and Wellness Committee, Sustainability Committee, etc. If student groups can claim ownership, there is much more likelihood that the project will be sustainable.**
- **Situate the campus market in a place and time of high traffic.**
- **Plan to hold the market during good weather (to the extent possible).**

- **Use every promotional outlet at your disposal: posters, table tents, campus newspaper, web site, email list serves, freestanding sandwich boards, and banners.**
- **If possible, establish the campus market on a day when farmers are already coming into town. The UC Davis campus market was held during the lunch period preceding the regular City of Davis Farmers Market. Therefore, the farmers were not making an additional trip just for the campus market.**

**Specific recommendations from farmers:**

- **Keep it regulated properly. Be sure there aren't too many growers selling the same product. Some competition is ok, but too much of the same cuts into everyone's profit margin. Keep the numbers (of growers) appropriate to the size of the market—allows for healthy competition.**
- **Be sure the farmers are certified and that all the safety and health regulations are being adhered to.**
- **Be sure there is good access. For this market, they can bring their trucks in and leave them right there where the market is located—makes it all much more convenient and easy.**

**4.b. Lessons Learned: DJUSD Local Purchases**

Goal two of the project was to assist Davis Joint Unified School District with the implementation of its Wellness Policy, particularly in relation to the purchase of local produce. Results of the district's purchasing practices show that the Student Nutrition Services Director did indeed purchase more fruit and vegetables from local farmers as the school year progressed. The number of individual local farmers the district purchased from went from two in 2006-07 school year to 19 in the 2007-08 (to date) school year. An additional set of purchases were from a consortium of growers located in Northern California. The remainder was purchased from a distributor who buys California product when available, or from various retail outlets such as Safeway.

Percentages of local purchases varied throughout the project period, but in the latter months averaged about 22% of total produce purchases. Total produce purchases in dollars (from August 2006 through March 2008) is approximately \$80,000, while of that, local purchases were about \$17,400.

**Recommendations:**

- **It is desirable for there to be a designated distributor or person in the role of "broker," to act as a go-between for farmers and district food service. In this instance, the Project Coordinator also worked part-time for the nonprofit organization, CAFF, which already has an established structure for contacting local farmers, offering them a fair price and arranging for the produce to get to the district. Without an arrangement like this, it becomes difficult for a school food service to negotiate many small accounts from individual farmers. However, once systems are in place and the staff becomes motivated,, they can do the ordering locally themselves if suppliers have product available.**

**4.c. Lessons Learned: DJUSD Alternative Fundraiser**

DFMF and DJUSD developed a model for a gift basket based on fresh fruits and vegetables and other delectable products from the Davis Farmers Market. However, it met with several challenges. First, for the PTA to arrange for the finances to back the project up and for volunteers to put the baskets together, we needed to begin the process in the spring, preceding the winter season that the baskets were distributed. PTAs plan their finances and volunteer activities the spring of the year before the next

school year. Since we had begun this project in the fall, we did not have adequate time or sufficient resources to carry it out. The result was only a very small profit for a lot of work by a few people. To address this, DFMF decided to develop a “How To” informational bulletin for PTAs wanting to pursue this model in the future, and to re-direct the project activities elsewhere.

The alternative fundraiser activity was well received, but did not bring in enough money to justify the labor that had to go into it. A couple of lessons can be taken away from this project: first, it is very important to plan a project like this far in advance of the time that the Market Baskets are to be sold. The logistics and timing involved are more complicated than expected, and thus require quite a bit of up-front planning. Second, it should be noted that it is better not to spread staff and volunteers too thin. Although the Project Coordinator allocated some time to the alternative fundraiser, when this was combined with the many other, higher priority, activities associated with the project, it proved to be overly taxing. It was difficult to organize a large enough volunteer force to make the project less demanding for the Coordinator because of the timing, and the Project Coordinator herself had to spend more time attending to more urgent parts of the project.

#### **4.d. Lessons Learned: Student Nutrition Services Professional Development**

As reported above, an innovative outcome of this project was the program designed to work with DJUSD food service staff and bring them together as professionals with the local professional chefs and caterers beginning with the Farmer’s Market Chef’s Walk and continuing with monthly cooking lessons. A great challenge in changing the perspectives of food service in public institutions is finding ways to integrate their knowledge and experiences with new ways of working with fresh and local foods. Food service staff, and particularly Student Nutrition Services Directors face serious constraints in their operations—budgetary, health, scale of operation, etc. To make changes in this context requires dedication, commitment and fresh experiences. Bringing the food service staff together with chefs in the community and placing them both in the Farmers Market venue offered this unique opportunity to be exposed to new products and new ways of preparing fruits and vegetables.

This has without a doubt been one of the most successful strategies that the Davis Farm to School Connection has employed over the past ten years of collaboration with DJUSD Food Service. The pride that the food service staff has taken in creating and preparing new recipes as a result of this experience is evident. And the feedback from parents and students has been positive as well. The SNS Director has received unsolicited letters of appreciation from parents about the new food items (soups, pastas, salads) on the school lunch menu. The Davis Farmers Market Foundation is writing grants and seeking funding to continue the cooking lessons and development of new menu items using seasonal produce.

#### **Recommendation:**

- **Find creative ways to engage food service staff, to draw upon their professional expertise and to involve them in the enterprise of working with new types of food and recipes. Often food service staff are relegated to the status of “worker.” But they themselves are passionate about feeding students good, healthy food. If they can be supported in their professional development as chefs who understand how to incorporate systematically the flavors of different cuisines using seasonal produce to enhance dishes made from commodity items (E.g. pasta, chicken), they will in turn support the efforts to bring in fresh produce to the lunch room and begin, within the seasonal framework they have learned, to apply their own creativity.**

## **5. Current and future benefits to be derived from the project**

This project has been exemplary in many respects. It can be looked to as a model for developing **partnerships** that extend far beyond the parameters of the project and can be replicated in other locales.

- First, the partnership formed between the Davis Farmers Market Manager and the Director of Cowell Student Health Center (as well as other university representatives) resulted in the East Quad Farmers Market becoming an established presence on UC Davis campus. This has long-lasting implications for educating members of the campus community on the origins of their food and introducing them to regional farmers. It reinforces the message that fresh, local food is healthy and available, and connects “town and gown” by making the link to the city’s Farmers Market. More and more college and health care institutions are becoming interested in serving fresh, local produce in their dining services, and this project has been instrumental in exemplifying how these kinds of arrangements can be actualized on a college campus. Establishing the link between the agriculture and farming community and the health sector is an important strategy, and an important lesson of this project.
- The partnership emerging out of this project between Davis Farmers Market Foundation, Davis Joint Unified School District and Slow Food resulted in an innovative approach to engaging K-12 food service staff in designing new recipes based on fresh and local produce. The Chef’s Walk described above was truly a new and very successful event that legitimized the role that food service play in the ongoing health and well being of young students. This model involves bringing together food service staff with local chefs, restaurateurs, and caterers, touring the farmers market, visiting a local farm and sharing expertise and recipes. The original Chef’s Walk event was followed by a series of systematic, monthly cooking classes, during which food service staff and professional chefs explored new, seasonal, fresh ingredients along with flavor profiles and how to integrate these with their commodity product to create new to-scale recipes. These activities have received positive feedback from participants. It constitutes a model that is replicable and should be trialed in many public school districts.
- Finally, this project afforded leverage to the Davis Farm to School Connection (a program of DFMF) to help design the Parcel Tax policy in such a way that it allocates funding specifically for the purchase of fresh, local produce at the rate of \$70,000 per year for the next three years. This, as far as we know, is unprecedented in school districts, and the partnerships among these groups were key to the success of this effort.

## **6. Recommendations for future research needed**

1. How to set up distribution systems that bring produce from small, local farms to school districts while maintaining a fair price to the farmer, a reasonable price for the food service buyer and a streamlined system that assures a small profit margin for the distributor.
2. The design and delivery of a matrix of cooking lessons for school food service that integrate flavor profiles, seasonal fresh produce and commodity products into the basic meals provided by school food service (such as pasta, soup, salad) such that local produce is used for more than a raw salad bar.
3. Further piloting and development of alternative fundraisers for schools that use local farmers market products.

## **7. Contacts for the project**

Deborah Bruns  
Administrative Director  
Davis Farmers Market Foundation  
[dfmf@dcn.org](mailto:dfmf@dcn.org)  
530-681-6769

Randii MacNear  
Market Manager  
Davis Farmers Market Association  
[rmacnear@dcn.org](mailto:rmacnear@dcn.org)  
530-756-1695

## **8. Attachments**

1. Power point summary of project accomplishments
2. “Farmers market project ends, but market is here to stay,” *Sustainable Agriculture*, Vol. 20, No. 2, Summer 2008. Available at <http://www.sarep.ucdavis.edu/newsltr/newsletters.htm>
3. Promotional and Media Materials – UCD East Quad Farmers Market (EQFM)
  - EQFM flyer
  - “Farmers bring produce to UCD”, *Davis Enterprise* May 9, 2007
  - “Farmers market comes to the Quad”, *Cal Aggie*, May 8, 2007
  - “Market seeks to improve habits of college students”, *Vegetable Growers’ News*, November 2006
4. Media – K-12 Partnership with Davis Joint Unified School District (DJUSD)
  - “Citrus tasting, lemon curd demonstration planned”, *Davis Enterprise*, December 12, 2007
  - “A taste of the market”, *Davis Enterprise*, November 16, 2007
  - “School cooks get kitchen pointers”, *Davis Enterprise*
  - “Cooks upgrading school lunches”, *Davis Enterprise*, January 27, 2008
5. Measure Q Parcel Tax description of passage

Davis Farmers Market Foundation

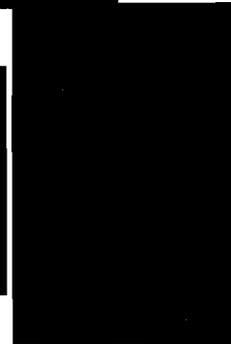
“Improving Farmer Profitability By Forging  
Community Partnerships in Education”

USDA/AMS Farmers Market Promotion Program  
October 2006 – March 2008



Project Goal

- Create new market opportunities for farmers' market vendors by partnering with public education institutions



## Strategic Objectives

- University Partnership: Establish a satellite farmers market on the University of California, Davis (UCD) campus
- K-12 Partnership: Increase use of farmers market products in the Davis Joint Unified School District (DJUSD) schools through marketing, education and professional development for student nutrition services staff

## University Partnership:

### UCD East Quad Farmers Market (EQFM)

- Fall 2006 (5 days)
  - ┆ Total Sales: \$5,687
  - ┆ Avg. per day: \$1,137
  - ┆ Per farmer: \$127
- Spring 2007 (5 days)
  - ┆ Total Sales: \$14,963
  - ┆ Avg. per day: \$2,993
  - ┆ Per farmer: \$272
- Fall 2007 (8 days)
  - ┆ Total Sales: \$15,916
  - ┆ Avg. per day: \$1,990
  - ┆ Per farmer: \$233



*UCD Chancellor Vanderhoef chats with Davis Farmers Market Manager Randii MacNear at the East Quad Farmers Market on the UCD campus*

## University Partnership: UCD East Quad Farmers Market (EQFM)

### What the farmers say:

- "The EQFM made a bridge between campus and the city farmers' market, with more people from campus visiting the market than previously."
- "Warm reception from students and faculty"
- "The market should be a mainstay here on campus"



## University Partnership UCD East Quad Farmers Market (EQFM)

### What the customers say:

- "We never had this in 2002 when I was a student."
- "It's great."
- "It should happen more often for staff...all summer long."

Average customers per  
market: 200



## UCD East Quad Farmers Market: Partnerships

- UCD Co-sponsors
  - ┆ ASUCD Coffee House
  - ┆ Sodexo Student Dining Services
  - ┆ Cowell Student Health Center
  - ┆ Campus & Community Relations
  - ┆ Students for Sustainable Agriculture
  - ┆ USDA/ARS/Western Human Nutrition Research Center
  
- In-kind market fees and services sponsored by:
  - ┆ Cowell Student Health Center
  - ┆ Sodexo Student Dining Services
  - ┆ Campus and Community Relations
  - ┆ Davis Food COOP



*Student interns from UCD Cowell Student Health Center Wellness Committee promote healthy lifestyle choices at East Quad Farmers Market*

## UCD East Quad Farmers Market: Partnerships Bring Sustainability

- The Cowell Student Health Center Wellness Committee and the Students for Sustainable Agriculture have worked to ensure that the East Quad Farmers Market will remain on campus.



## K-12 Partnership

### Increase local produce in school district

- Strategies: Marketing, education & professional development for student nutrition services staff
- Build on programs established by Davis Farm to School Connection, a project of the Davis Farmers Market Foundation
- During the period of the project, local produce purchases averaged 22% of total produce purchases by the school district

## K-12 Partnership

### Marketing Local Produce to Students

- Weekly taste testings introduce students to fresh produce served in school lunch
- Results of tastings are communicated to staff in charge of menu planning and ordering



*Farm to school intern from CSUS Nutrition Department offers local produce samples to students at Cesar Chavez Elementary School*

## K-12 Partnership Linking to Classroom Education

### Farm Visits

- 400 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students visit local farms and participate in on-farm projects (*Spring 2008*)
- Davis Farm to School Connection intern visits classrooms to present lesson before farm visits



## K-12 Partnership Farmers Market Cooking Connections

- Classroom lesson featuring seasonal recipes using local produce provided to teachers
- Cooking demonstrations at Farmers Market showcase recipes
  - ┌ Fall: Sugar Pie Pumpkin Pie
  - ┌ Winter: Lemon Curd & citrus tasting
  - ┌ Spring: Strawberry jam



*Sugar Pie  
Pumpkin Pies at  
Fall Festival (left)*

*Lemon Curd &  
Citrus Tasting  
(below)*



## K-12 Partnership Professional Development for Student Nutrition Services Staff



*DJUSD Student Nutrition Services staff (bottom row) pose with local chefs, caterers and culinary staff from UCD Dining Services at the Farmers Market Chefs' Walk, Saturday, November 10, 2007*

### Farmers Market Chefs' Walk, Farm Tours and Cooking Classes

- A model for engaging food service staff in designing new recipes and menus based on seasonal, local produce

## Professional Development for Student Nutrition Services Staff

### Farmers Market Chefs' Walk

- Student Nutrition Services staff from DJUSD, culinary staff from UCD Dining Services and local chefs and caterers tour the Saturday Farmers Market, meeting farmers, sharing recipes, cooking techniques and information on preparing specialty vegetables
- Co-sponsors
  - Slow Food Yolo
  - Yolo County Agricultural Marketing Initiative
  - Produce Express
  - Community Alliance for Family Farmers (CAFF) Growers' Collaborative



*Student Nutrition Services Director Rafaelita Curva tours market with local chef, Pru Mendez (above) and consults with Annie Main (left), Good Humus Farm (below).*

## Professional Development for Student Nutrition Services Staff

### Farm Tour

- Following the Chefs' Walk (and a seasonal lunch catered by a local chef) the student nutrition services staff visited local farmer, Robert Ramming, at his farm, Pacific Star Gardens



## Professional Development for Student Nutrition Services Staff

- Cooking Classes to support "Delicious Meals from Scratch"
- Transforming the school lunch menu through classes that provide student nutrition services staff with the experience to develop recipes using local, seasonal produce



## Professional Development for Student Nutrition Services Staff



Cookbook author, Georgeanne Brennan led the monthly cooking lessons to develop new menu items using Farmers Market products

*(Clockwise from above)  
Soups from scratch featured on school lunch menu; Cookbook author Georgeanne Brennan (center) works with staff; DJUSD staff with local chef, Pru Mendez, show-off new menu items, learning to cook with fresh ingredients and flavors.*



## New Menu items

### What students and parents are saying

- *"I really love the food at the cafeteria. The choices are great and healthy. My daughter also loves the school lunches. She'll eat things at school that she won't eat at home. She says they taste better at school"* (parent)
- *"Wow. Best pasta I've had from school. School lunch isn't supposed to be this good."* (high school student)

## Sustainability for K-12 Program:

### Parcel Tax Provides Ongoing Funding

- In November 2007, 73 percent of Davis city residents approved a parcel tax to support K-12 school district programs.
- This year for the first time, the measure included an innovative proposal to allocate \$70,000 in annual funds to "improve nutrition at schools by providing students with fresh farm produce."
- A poll of voters prior to the ballot showed very high support for including this item, which is designed to bring healthy, fresh produce into the school lunch program.

## Current and Future Benefits

- University partnerships developed during pilot program lead to ongoing campus farmers market
- Model developed for engaging K-12 food service staff in designing new menu items using local produce and other farmers market products
- Parcel tax provides ongoing funding to improve nutrition for students using farm fresh produce

## Program Evaluation

Thanks to the  
UC Sustainable Agriculture Research and  
Education Project (SAREP)  
for project evaluation

See article in the Summer 2008 issue of *Sustainable  
Agriculture*, "Farmers market project ends, but market is  
here to stay" for more on this project  
<http://www.sarep.ucdavis.edu/newsltr/newsletters.htm>

---

## Davis Farmers Market Foundation Contact Information:

Deborah Bruns  
Administrative Director  
Davis Farmers Market  
Foundation  
[dfmf@dcn.org](mailto:dfmf@dcn.org)  
530-681-6769

Randii MacNear  
Market Manager  
Davis Farmers Market  
Association  
[rmacnear@dcn.org](mailto:rmacnear@dcn.org)  
530-756-1695

---



**The Davis Farm to School Connection is a project of the Davis Farmers Market Foundation, a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization.**

**The mission of the Davis Farm to School Connection is to create an educational and cultural environment within the schools of the Davis Joint Unified School District that connects food choices with personal health, academic achievement and preservation of the farmland around us.**

For more information  
[www.davisfarmtoschool.org](http://www.davisfarmtoschool.org)

## PROJECT UPDATE



Davis Joint Unified School District chefs Renee Hannah (left), Davis Senior High School, and Rita Harvey, Holmes Junior High School, visit Davis Farmers Market during Chef's Walk. (photo by Jen Ohmart)

# Farmers market project ends, but market is here to stay

by Jeri Ohmart, ASI/SAREP, Student Farm

How do we gauge sustainability? With grant-funded projects, we often look for evidence of the project's continuation after the grant has ended. By this measure, "Improving Farmer Profitability by Forging Community Partnerships in Education" a project funded by USDA Agricultural Marketing Service's Farmers Market Promotion Program is a success story.

The goals of this project were to increase consumption of farm-fresh fruits and vegetables by students in kindergarten through college, provide alternative markets for local farmers, and explore creative ways to enhance the health and wellness on campuses. The project was a collaboration among the Davis Farm to School Connection (DF2SC), the Davis Farmers Market, Davis Joint Unified School District (DJUSD), and UC Davis Cowell Student Health Center Wellness Committee. UC Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program (SAREP) coordinated the evaluation of the project.

**Gail Feenstra**, food systems analyst at the UC Davis Agricultural Sustainability Institute (ASI) and the statewide Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program (SAREP), has coordinated the evaluation of the Davis project. Feenstra and I have been evaluating the Davis Farm-to-School Program for the last eight years.

A satellite farmers market on the UC Davis campus was a prominent feature of this project. Each Wednesday in the fall and spring, farmers from the city's farmers market set up their booths and sold fresh-picked veggies, fruit, nuts, olive oils, fresh squeezed apple juice, and more. Cherries, apricots and strawberries in the spring were a big draw, as were apples in the fall. Customers were just as keen to buy bok choy, kale, spinach and sugar snap peas. The UC Davis College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences' Student Experimental Farm has been among the dozen vendors participating in the market.

Dubbed the "East Quad Farmers Market" (EQFM), the market quickly became a recognizable part of the campus landscape. Students, faculty and staff alike were enthusiastic and appreciative. Sample comments included, "The market should be a mainstay here on campus," and, "We never had this in 2002 when I was a student—it's great!"

Farmers saw increased profits as the market became more recognized, and they acknowledged its value, not just for themselves, but for educating students and other consumers about farms and farm-fresh food. When we interviewed them for our evaluation, comments included, "Selling people plants and vegetables brings people back to their connection with the foods they eat," and "This market has been fantastic for relationships with new customers."

Through the efforts of **Randii MacNear**, Davis Farmers Market manager, and **Michelle Johnston**, director of UC Davis Cowell Student Health Center Wellness Committee, the market will now be a permanent feature on campus. In fall 2007, a visit from the UC Davis Chancellor **Larry Vanderhoef** underscored the university's commitment to maintaining the EQFM. Vanderhoef, who stops by the campus market when it's part of his route, is a regular at the Davis Farmers Market.

Another focus of the project was to develop innovative strategies for increasing the use of fresh fruit and vegetables in the Davis Joint Unified School District (DJUSD) K-12 school food program. During the grant period, purchasing of local produce by DJUSD increased from approximately 15 percent to 22 percent of total produce purchases.

While these results are notable and accomplished the goals of the grant, the institutional changes that resulted from activities related to the grant are even more significant. In November 2007, DJUSD food service staff visited the Davis Farmers Market in a "Chefs' Walk," a meeting with local restaurateurs, chefs, and caterers arranged by Davis Farm to School Connection. All decked out in their "whites," food service staff and other culinary professionals toured the farmers market, met with farmers, learned about new products, and shared ideas on how to use various produce as ingredients in recipes. The Chef's Walk event concluded with a visit to nearby Pacific Star Farm.

This innovative event led to changes within the culture of the food service staff. Culinary classes were designed specifically for DF2SC food service staff and taught by internationally renowned cookbook author, **Georgianne Brennan**. Brennan meets with staff monthly to introduce them to new

ingredients and ways of preparing food. In these fun and informative classes, Brennan and staff together develop recipes that use fresh, local and seasonal ingredients and are also appropriate for the scale and scope of their operation within a K-12 context. "From Scratch Soup," basil and fresh tomato pasta, Indian and Thai dishes are among the recipes developed thus far. These classes have been extremely popular among food service staff, and have given them a renewed sense of professionalism.

Projects developed with grant funding are wonderful, but where does the funding come from once the grant comes to an end? Probably the most impressive result of this project is the way the Davis Farm to School Connection negotiated a funding strategy to ensure the sustainability of the school program.

Every four years, the citizens of Davis vote on a Parcel Tax, which allocates money to the school district for a variety of programs. This year, with the Parcel Tax due for a renewed vote, the DF2SC conducted a survey of the community to see whether they were interested in supporting a portion of the



UC Davis Chancellor Larry Vanderhoef stops by the campus farmers market. (photo by Jeri Ohmart)

tax going to the school lunch program. The answer was overwhelmingly positive, and as a result of the vote, \$70,000 per year will be allocated to the school lunch program specifically to support the purchase of local produce. As far as we know, this kind of support for local purchasing has never been accomplished before, and we view it as a model that can be replicated by school districts across the state and nation.

The outcomes of "Improving Farmer Profitability by Forging Community Partnerships in Education" have far exceeded expectations. The goals, which seemed ambitious and laudable at the time, have resulted in much deeper and more long-lasting changes within the culture of the university, school and city communities. It is a true testament to the power of engaging the community in the local food system.

## First food systems course at UC Davis

UC Davis is offering its first undergraduate course specifically about food systems in the fall quarter 2008 through the Department of Human and Community Development.

"The course will focus on contemporary agri-food systems and assess the possibility for agricultural sustainability and equity," said course instructor **Ryan Galt**, assistant professor in the Department of Human and Community Development, and one of the new faculty affiliated with the Agricultural Sustainability Institute.

Galt said the course will include examination of commodity chains in historical and geographical context, and the importance of environmental and social outcomes at various scales, including

impacts on the environment, producers' livelihoods, citizens, and communities.

Students will document various aspects of the food system in specific locales, conducting interviews and observations, analyzing data, and creating multimedia reports. The course will include field trips to meet with different stakeholders in the food system.

The food systems course will become the introductory social science course of the new sustainable agriculture and food systems major, which is expected to be approved within the next 18 months. The food systems course will meet Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4:10 to 5:30 p.m. in 226 Wellman Hall. For more information, contact Galt at [regalt@ucdavis.edu](mailto:regalt@ucdavis.edu).

Another focus of the project was to develop innovative strategies for increasing the use of fresh fruit and vegetables in the Davis Joint Unified School District (DJUSD) K-12 school food program. During the grant period, purchasing of local produce by DJUSD increased from approximately 15 percent to 22 percent of total produce purchases.

While these results are notable and accomplished the goals of the grant, the institutional changes that resulted from activities related to the grant are even more significant. In November 2007, DJUSD food service staff visited the Davis Farmers Market in a "Chefs' Walk," a meeting with local restaurateurs, chefs, and caterers arranged by Davis Farm to School Connection. All decked out in their "whites," food service staff and other culinary professionals toured the farmers market, met with farmers, learned about new products, and shared ideas on how to use various produce as ingredients in recipes. The Chef's Walk event concluded with a visit to nearby Pacific Star Farm.

This innovative event led to changes within the culture of the food service staff. Culinary classes were designed specifically for DF2SC food service staff and taught by internationally renowned cookbook author, **Georgeanne Brennan**. Brennan meets with staff monthly to introduce them to new

ingredients and ways of preparing food. In these fun and informative classes, Brennan and staff together develop recipes that use fresh, local and seasonal ingredients and are also appropriate for the scale and scope of their operation within a K-12 context. "From Scratch Soup," basil and fresh tomato pasta, Indian and Thai dishes are among the recipes developed thus far. These classes have been extremely popular among food service staff, and have given them a renewed sense of professionalism.

Projects developed with grant funding are wonderful, but where does the funding come from once the grant comes to an end? Probably the most impressive result of this project is the way the Davis Farm to School Connection negotiated a funding strategy to ensure the sustainability of the school program.

Every four years, the citizens of Davis vote on a Parcel Tax, which allocates money to the school district for a variety of programs. This year, with the Parcel Tax due for a renewed vote, the DF2SC conducted a survey of the community to see whether they were interested in supporting a portion of the



UC Davis Chancellor Larry Vanderhoef stops by the campus farmers market. (photo by Jeri Ohmart)

tax going to the school lunch program. The answer was overwhelmingly positive, and as a result of the vote, \$70,000 per year will be allocated to the school lunch program specifically to support the purchase of local produce. As far as we know, this kind of support for local purchasing has never been accomplished before, and we view it as a model that can be replicated by school districts across the state and nation.

The outcomes of "Improving Farmer Profitability by Forging Community Partnerships in Education" have far exceeded expectations. The goals, which seemed ambitious and laudable at the time, have resulted in much deeper and more long-lasting changes within the culture of the university, school and city communities. It is a true testament to the power of engaging the community in the local food system.

## First food systems course at UC Davis

UC Davis is offering its first undergraduate course specifically about food systems in the fall quarter 2008 through the Department of Human and Community Development.

"The course will focus on contemporary agri-food systems and assess the possibility for agricultural sustainability and equity," said course instructor **Ryan Galt**, assistant professor in the Department of Human and Community Development, and one of the new faculty affiliated with the Agricultural Sustainability Institute.

Galt said the course will include examination of commodity chains in historical and geographical context, and the importance of environmental and social outcomes at various scales, including

impacts on the environment, producers' livelihoods, citizens, and communities.

Students will document various aspects of the food system in specific locales, conducting interviews and observations, analyzing data, and creating multimedia reports. The course will include field trips to meet with different stakeholders in the food system.

The food systems course will become the introductory social science course of the new sustainable agriculture and food systems major, which is expected to be approved within the next 18 months. The food systems course will meet Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4:10 to 5:30 p.m. in 226 Wellman Hall. For more information, contact Galt at [regalt@ucdavis.edu](mailto:regalt@ucdavis.edu).



Davis Joint Unified School District chefs Renee Hannah (left), Davis Senior High School, and Rita Harvey, Holmes Junior High School, visit Davis Farmers Market during Chef's Walk. (photo by Jen Ohmart)

## Farmers market project ends, but market is here to stay

by Jeri Ohmart, ASI/SAREP, Student Farm

How do we gauge sustainability? With grant-funded projects, we often look for evidence of the project's continuation after the grant has ended. By this measure, "Improving Farmer Profitability by Forging Community Partnerships in Education" a project funded by USDA Agricultural Marketing Service's Farmers Market Promotion Program is a success story.

The goals of this project were to increase consumption of farm-fresh fruits and vegetables by students in kindergarten through college, provide alternative markets for local farmers, and explore creative ways to enhance the health and wellness on campuses. The project was a collaboration among the Davis Farm to School Connection (DF2SC), the Davis Farmers Market, Davis Joint Unified School District (DJUSD), and UC Davis Cowell Student Health Center Wellness Committee. UC Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program (SAREP) coordinated the evaluation of the project.

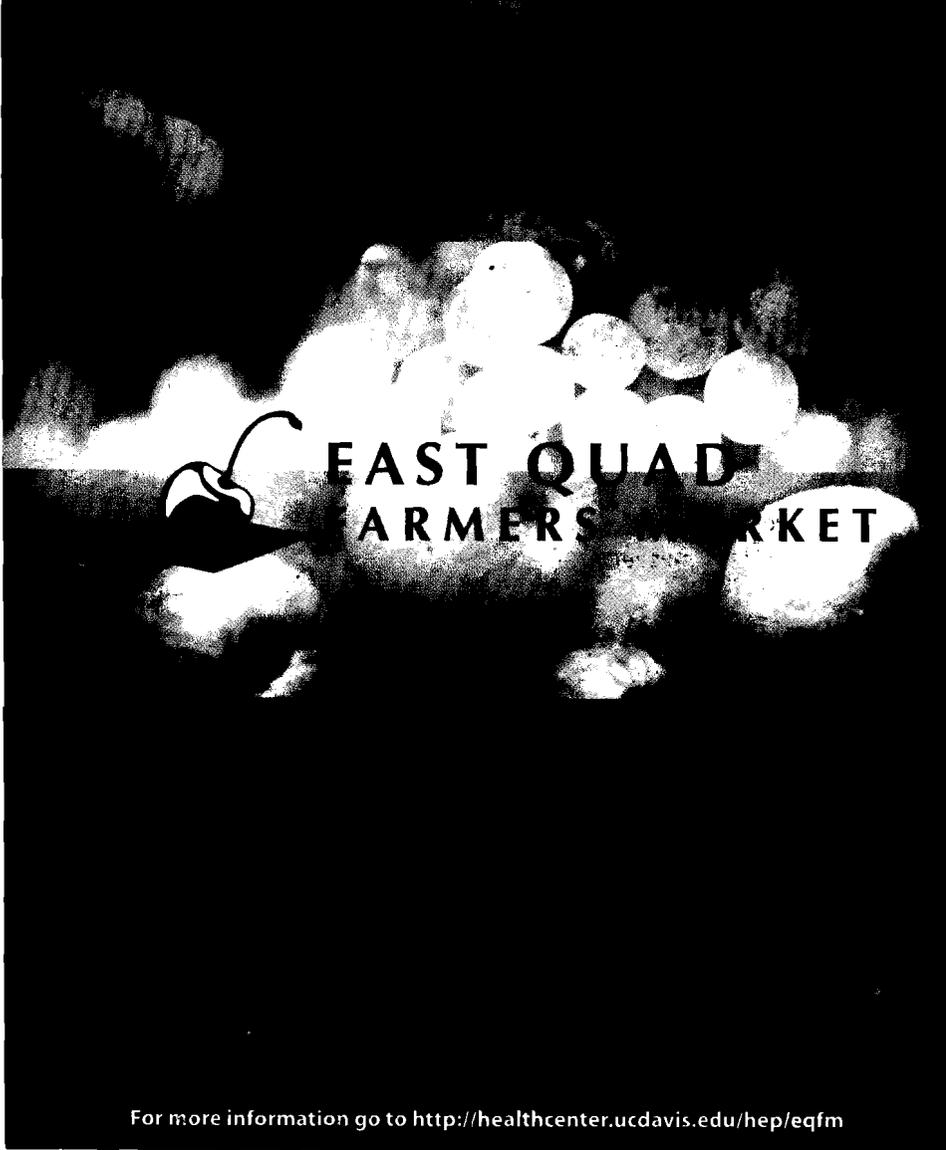
**Gail Feenstra**, food systems analyst at the UC Davis Agricultural Sustainability Institute (ASI) and the statewide Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program (SAREP), has coordinated the evaluation of the Davis project. Feenstra and I have been evaluating the Davis Farm-to-School Program for the last eight years.

A satellite farmers market on the UC Davis campus was a prominent feature of this project. Each Wednesday in the fall and spring, farmers from the city's farmers market set up their booths and sold fresh-picked veggies, fruit, nuts, olive oils, fresh squeezed apple juice, and more. Cherries, apricots and strawberries in the spring were a big draw, as were apples in the fall. Customers were just as keen to buy bok choy, kale, spinach and sugar snap peas. The UC Davis College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences' Student Experimental Farm has been among the dozen vendors participating in the market.

Dubbed the "East Quad Farmers Market" (EQFM), the market quickly became a recognizable part of the campus landscape. Students, faculty and staff alike were enthusiastic and appreciative. Sample comments included, "The market should be a mainstay here on campus," and, "We never had this in 2002 when I was a student—it's great!"

Farmers saw increased profits as the market became more recognized, and they acknowledged its value, not just for themselves, but for educating students and other consumers about farms and farm-fresh food. When we interviewed them for our evaluation, comments included, "Selling people plants and vegetables brings people back to their connection with the foods they eat," and "This market has been fantastic for relationships with new customers."

Through the efforts of **Randii MacNear**, Davis Farmers Market manager, and **Michelle Johnston**, director of UC Davis Cowell Student Health Center Wellness Committee, the market will now be a permanent feature on campus. In fall 2007, a visit from the UC Davis Chancellor **Larry Vanderhoef** underscored the university's commitment to maintaining the EQFM. Vanderhoef, who stops by the campus market when it's part of his route, is a regular at the Davis Farmers Market.



**EAST QUAD  
FARMERS MARKET**

For more information go to <http://healthcenter.ucdavis.edu/hep/eqfm>



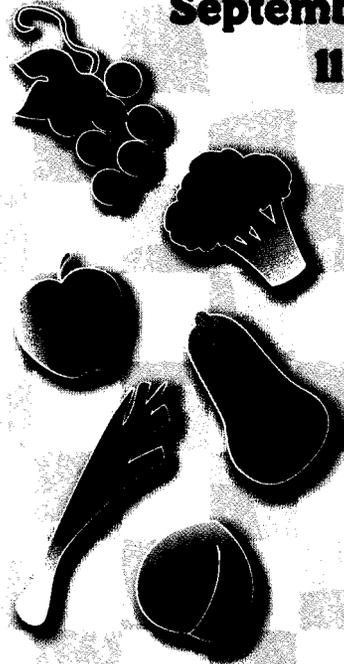
# EAST QUAD FARMERS MARKET

---

**Wednesdays**

**September 26th - November 14th**

**11:30 AM - 2:30 PM**



- ▶ **Great fresh, local produce**
- ▶ **Conveniently located on the East Quad at UC Davis**
- ▶ **These items and more will be available: nuts, vegetables, flowers, grapes, apples, tomatoes, melons, peaches, & nectarines**
- ▶ **Support local farmers**

**For more information go to <http://healthcenter.ucdavis.edu/hep/eqfm>**

*Co-sponsors: Campus Unions, Cowell Student Health Center Health Education & Promotion,  
Davis Farmers Market Foundation, Davis Food Co-op, University Dining Services,  
USDA Farmers Market Promotion Program*

# Farmers bring produce to UCD

## Weekly market comes to Quad

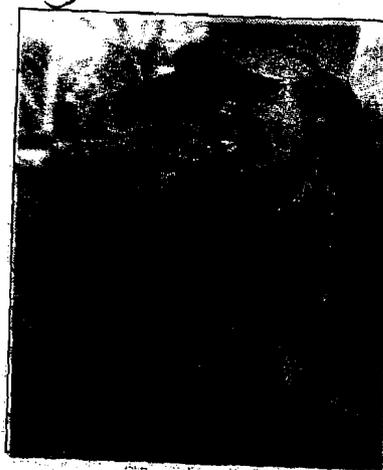
SPECIAL TO THE ENTERPRISE

Fruits and vegetables are more than the subject of research and study at UC Davis. The campus community will get a taste of juicy strawberries, tangy cherries and organic vegetables during a farmers' market on campus on Wednesdays, starting today and continuing through June 6.

The East Quad Farmers' Market is part of a larger pilot project of the Davis Farmers' Market Foundation to expand sales of local produce, promote the use of farm-fresh foods in K-12 schools and on the campus, and educate consumers about nutrition and healthful eating.

The pilot project could serve as a model for other universities and their local farmers' markets.

The campus farmers' market is being launched at the



UC-Davis students will have a chance to pick up fresh fruits — like these mandarin oranges being tasted by Kelly Van Boxel — at a campus farmers' market on Wednesdays starting today.

GREG RIHL/  
ENTERPRISE  
FILE PHOTO

same time that UCD's own Foods for Health initiative, an interdisciplinary effort, is addressing issues including nutrition, obesity, the availability of healthy foods, organic farming and industrial food production.

The Student Experimental Farm of the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences will be among the dozen vendors participating in the market. In addition, Gail Feenstra and Jeri Ohmart of the Davis-based

See FARMERS, Page A10

# FARMERS: Survey found most students eat only two daily servings of fruit, veggies

From Page A1

UC Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program will evaluate the project. And interns from the Cowell Student Health Center's Health Education and Promotion unit on campus will promote nutrition education with games and prizes during the market.

The farmers' market will set up on the east side of the grassy Quad from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. every Wednesday through June 6. Vendors will sell cherries, strawberries, apples and apple juice, organic vegetables, nuts, olive oil and flowers.

As part of the pilot project, the campus hosted its first farmers'

markets last fall in tandem with the Campus Community Book Project. The book selection, "The Omnivore's Dilemma," highlights the benefits of eating locally grown food.

Michelle Johnston, health promotion supervisor at the Student Health Center, said the reception was positive and she hopes the longer hours this quarter will draw more students.

A 2005 survey of UC Davis students found that 60 percent eat two or fewer servings of nutrition-packed fruits and vegetables a day.

"One of our goals is to improve the overall nutrition of students," Johnston said. "By increasing access to fresh produce, we hope

to make it easier for students to incorporate more fruits and vegetables into their diet.

"We realize that students are pressed for time, so this gives them the opportunity to stop by between classes or during a lunch break to pick up good, fresh produce," she said. "The fresher the food, the better it tastes — and we all like to eat tasty food."

Randii MacNear, manager of the Davis Farmers' Market, said the campus farmers' market is meant to complement the market held downtown on Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings. The market is held in Central Park, Fourth and C streets.

The larger project is supported by a \$40,000 grant to the Davis Farmers' Market Foundation under the Farmers' Market Promotion Program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The grant is also helping the Davis Joint Unified School District im-

plement its Wellness Policy by using market produce for meals, snacks and fund-raisers.

Sponsors of the campus farmers' market in the fall and spring include the Associated Students of UCD Coffee House, Cowell Student Health Center's Health

Education and Promotion, Sodexo Dining Services, the Office of Campus Community Relations, Davis Food Co-op and the Davis Farmers' Market Foundation.

— UC Davis News Service

# Farmers market comes to the Quad

## First of five weekly events to be held on east Quad Wednesday



**Farmers market  
on the Quad**  
Wednesday, 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.  
*Let's Eat!*

By J. DANA STUSTER  
Aggie News Writer

The Davis Farmers Market will be coming to campus starting Wednesday. Local vendors will be selling a variety of seasonal fruits, nuts and vegetables on the north edge of the east Quad between 11:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Wednesday's market is the first of five weekly markets scheduled. The farmers market on the Quad will occur each Wednesday through the remainder of the academic quarter, with the last scheduled market on June 6. It marks the return of the farmers markets that were held on the east Quad last fall.

See FARMERS, page 3

## FARMERS

Cont. from front page

The farmers market will be "tremendously different" from the Saturday and Wednesday markets in Central Park, said Randi MacNear, market manager for the Davis Farmers Market, in a telephone interview. Organizers are planning on what MacNear called a "small, diverse farmers market" of 10 to 12 stands "to offer fresh, nutritious food to students, faculty and staff."

MacNear said the expected produce for Wednesday includes "cherries, strawberries, garden plants, almonds, flowers, organ-

ic vegetables and apple juice." MacNear said she hopes the farmers market will "actively demonstrate UC Davis' agricultural roots to students, faculty and staff." The UC Davis student farm will also have a booth to sell some of its campus-grown produce.

"The market is a pilot project to assess the response and feasibility of having a permanent market on campus," MacNear said in an e-mail. "The goal is to have the east Quad farmers market be a permanent fixture of UC Davis life on campus."

"I went in the fall," said first-year plant biology major Anjali Krishnan. "I'd probably go

again." Grace Mun, first-year chemical engineering major, said she also likes the idea of an on-campus farmers market.

"The farmers market over at Central Park is only twice a week. It's kind of hard to get there every time," she said. "Sometimes I miss it, but if it's right here then I can go there after class."

The limited run of scheduled markets is a trial period.

"Campus scheduling and seasonal weather factors are being tested and evaluated," MacNear said. "We are hopeful that logistics, campus support and a strong customer base will support a healthy future for the market."

The program is being funded by a grant to the Davis Farmers Market Foundation from the United States Department of Agriculture's Farmers Market Promotion Program. It also has the support of a multitude of organizations, including the ASUCD Coffee House, the Office of Campus Community Relations, the University of California Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program, the Cowell Student Health Center, the Davis Food Co-op and Students for Sustainable Agriculture.

J. DANA STUSTER can be reached at campus@californiaaggie.com.

# Farm Market

## Section

### Farmers' market seeks to improve habits of college students



Local growers started selling produce to students at the University of California in Davis in October. Photo courtesy of Tom Jobst

By Matt Milkovich  
Assistant Editor

College students aren't known for their healthful eating habits. Their diets are more likely to include pizza, beer and Ramen noodles than fresh fruits and vegetables.

If they had better access to fresh produce, however, they would eat more of it. That's the philosophy behind a new farmers' market on the campus of the University of California in Davis (UC Davis).

The Local Farmers Quad Market started Oct. 18 and was scheduled for a five-week test run. Another five-week stint is scheduled for next spring, said Randii MacNear, manager of the Davis Farmers Market and co-founder of the California Federation of Certified Farmers' Markets.

MacNear will manage the new campus market as an offshoot of the Davis market, which has been in the community for 30 years. For the last decade, the market and its farmers have been heavily involved in farm-to-school programs. Moving up to the college level seemed the next logical step.

MacNear and others thought opening a farmers' market on a college campus was a unique idea - and, apparently, USDA agreed with them. The Department of Agriculture's Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP) gave the Davis market a \$41,000 grant for its programs. Some of that money will be used to pay for the Local Farmers Quad Market. The grant was one of 20 awarded nationwide out of 370 applications, she said.

MacNear worked with university officials and student groups to get the project

approved. Sponsorship from the UC Davis Coffee House was instrumental, along with the USDA grant, said Tom Jobst, the Coffee House's marketing manager.

The Coffee House - a student-run, nonprofit operation - has more to offer than its name suggests. There is a deli, salad bar, bakery, espresso area, hot food line, Tex-Mex grill and pizza area. The building is on the east quad, a short distance from the location of the new farmers' market. It's a popular area for students to hang out and get a bite to eat, Jobst said.

The quad market will be open from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Wednesdays. Ten farmers from the Davis market will be on campus, where they will not only tap into a new customer base, but show off their products to campus dining halls.

One of MacNear's goals is for local farmers to make better connections with campus dining halls so they can see firsthand what area farms have to offer. The dining halls can purchase products in larger quantities than a farmers' market can facilitate.

"There's only so much produce that can move through a farmers' market," she said. "A lot of farmers can't get into a good market. We have a long waiting list."

With roughly 30,000 students (according to its Web site) and huge purchasing power, UC Davis has tremendous potential to expand the marketplace for local farmers.

The Coffee House, for example, puts an emphasis on buying local, nutritious

► See MARKET, page 15

## Eckert AgriMarketing

Website Design Services:

*Trust Your Website to Agritourism Experts*

- New Websites as low as \$995 (includes 12 months hosting)
- New Look, New Menus for Existing Sites
- We Design and Manage Your Email Newsletters
- Write and Manage Online Surveys



[www.farmwebdesign.com](http://www.farmwebdesign.com) - [www.farmsurveys.com](http://www.farmsurveys.com)

Phone: 314-862-6288

Email: [jane@eckertagrimarketing.com](mailto:jane@eckertagrimarketing.com)

Eckert AgriMarketing, 8054 Teasdale Ave., St. Louis, MO 63130

## MARKET

Continued from page 13

food, Jobst said. Its proximity to the campus farmers' market could lead to purchasing deals with vendors, but there are some challenges. The timing of deliveries and amounts required by both sides don't always match up. A regional distribution center is in the works to help make the delivery system more efficient, he said.

MacNear selected the farmers managing the booths at UC Davis. She wanted a diversity of products and people who would arrive on time and have a nice display. The products will be mostly fruit and vegetables, but there also will be dried fruit, nuts, olive oil, nursery stock, flowers and plants.

"It should be a big day for those farmers," she said. "They're very excited."

UC will evaluate the market's progress through its Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program. Hopefully, the project will be a success and will serve as a model for other universities looking to do the same thing, MacNear said.

"This is a huge step," Jobst said. "You could count on both hands how many campuses have something like this."

# Citrus tasting, lemon curd demonstration planned

SPECIAL TO THE ENTERPRISE

The tangy tastes of the season will be featured at Saturday's Davis Farmers' Market in Central Park, Fourth and C streets.

In the spirit of winter, the height of the citrus season, the market's foundation, with the help of a grant from the Farmers' Market Promotion Project of the USDA, is sponsoring its second recipe and demonstration using produce from Davis Farmers' Market vendors from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at market. This time a citrus tasting and a lemon curd recipe are featured.

The recipe and suggestions for tasting in a classroom setting then will be

made available to all second-grade classroom teachers within the Davis Joint Unified School District. This is part of an effort to encourage students to eat more fresh, local produce and to cook more at home with produce from the market.

The grant also funded the development of a farmers' market on the UC Davis campus and a chef's walk through the Davis Farmers' Market which was in partnership with Yolo County's Agricultural Marketing Initiative. This event was Nov. 10 at the market and attended by 10 area caterers, chefs and school food service personnel.

The public is invited, free of charge, to attend the Saturday's demonstration by Kelly Van Boxtel and discover the many tastes of winter citrus, watch lemon curd being made and take home the recipe.

Lemon curd, made with either sweet, thin-skinned Meyer lemons or the deliciously tart, thick-skinned Eureka and Lisbon lemons, is a winter classic, perfect for spreading on morning toasts or muffins, with scones for an afternoon tea, for filling tarts or pies, or to serve with vanilla ice cream and cake after dinner.

Children as well as adults like its bright yellow color, its creamy, rich

texture and its sweet tang on the tongue.

Lemons, however, are just one of many citrus fruits you'll find at the market. In winter, it is filled with oranges, lemons, grapefruits, tangerines and other mandarins, just right for seasonal desserts, salads, and fresh juices of December and January.

Citrus, which is grown locally in and around Yolo and neighboring counties, commercially and at home, is a great idea for introducing children to the seasonal tastes and for brightening their own palate during the cold days of winter.

For information, call 756-1695.

## *A taste of the market*

### First Chefs' Walk at the Davis Farmers' Market a success

By Ann M. Evans  
and Georgeanne Brennan  
SPECIAL TO THE ENTERPRISE

**T**he landscape of the Davis Farmers' Market was transformed on Saturday, when white-jacket clad chefs Tony and Rhonda Gruska of Monticello Bistro in Winters and Pru Mendez of Tucos Wine Market & Cafe in Davis led their peers through the market, introducing them to farmers, winemakers and purveyors.

As a film crew from Channel 13 in Sacramento shot the proceedings, curious consumers edged near the chefs, listening to their comments about the products and how they use them. There was a lot of buzz going on around the group of 21 chefs and produce distributors.

"I had no idea there was so much here," exclaimed Marnie Ashdown, one of four chefs attending from University Dining Services at UC Davis. "I'll definitely be back."

The Davis Joint Unified School Dis-



SUE COCKRELL/ENTERPRISE PHOTOS

Pru Mendez of Tucos Wine Market & Cafe, who led Saturday's Chef Walk through the Farmers' Market, jokes with fellow chefs and curious onlookers while looking over some local produce.

trict was well-represented, with seven attendees, headed by Rafaelita Curva (known as "RC"), director of student nutrition services for the district. She will be bringing guest chefs using local products into the district's central kitchen to give hands-on lessons to the district food service workers.

Curva met Annie Main of Good Humus Produce, who welcomes Davis second-graders to her farm for tours every spring through a program run by the Davis Farm to School Connection, a project of the Davis Farmers' Market Foundation.

Curva said a new goal for this year is to spend some time at the Farmers' Market every month so she will have the pulse of it — to determine menus, meet with farmers and to use them as a resource for planning menus. She wants to expand local products beyond the crunch mix salads to using it in hot items, with a goal of offering 12 to 13 hot entree menus at Davis High School.

Brad Cecchs and Drew Boyce, chefs at La Perla Bistro, a California-style bistro in Carmichael, said they love the market, and change their menu almost daily, using products from some of the same farmers at the market, but buying it through Jim Mills of Produce Express Distributors in Sacramento, one of the sponsors of Saturday's event.

Bruce Johnson, who runs the deli at the Davis Food Co-op, commented that he uses local products in some of his salads, but may now start labeling the source so consumers can learn more about what's growing locally and who is growing it. Frankie Medina, chef of Buckhorn Catering, came over from Winters to participate, meeting John Bledsoe, whose pork he buys, for the first time. Bledsoe and his son raise their pigs in northern Yolo County.

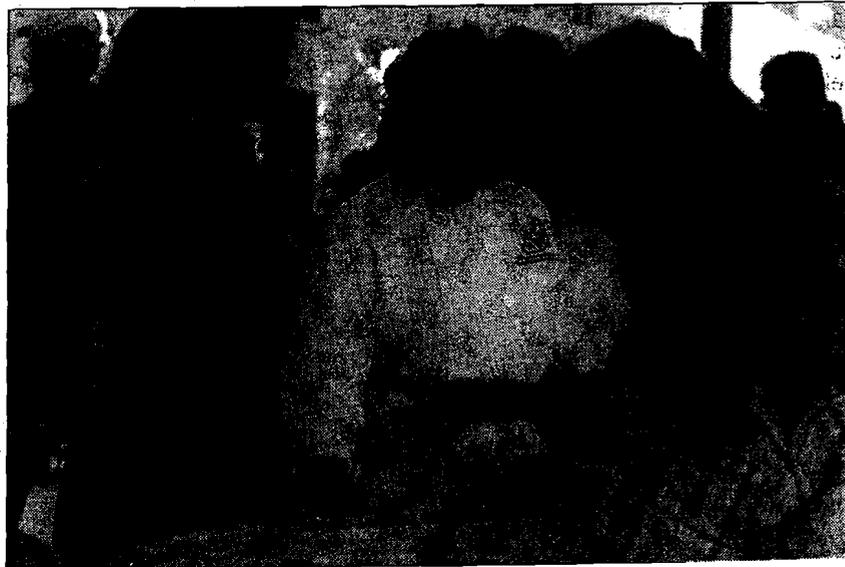
Shannan Berg, chef with the Paragarys' Restaurant Group (Bernardo's in Davis is a member of the group and also a sponsor of the Chef Walk), met Clarkshure-based grower and wine



Rafaelita Curva, director of student nutrition services for Davis Joint Unified School District, strolls with Mendez as they chat with market shoppers along the way.

*"Hosting an event for chefs at the market is a longstanding dream come true. It couldn't be more perfectly realized than with all the partnerships that allowed it to materialize. We'd love to think of this as the first inaugural chef walk."*

**Randii MacNear**  
Davis Farmers Market



Saturday's event.

Bruce Johnson, who runs the deli at the Davis Food Co-op, commented that he uses local products in some of his salads, but may now start labeling the source so consumers can learn more about what's growing locally and who is growing it. Frankie Medina, chef of Buckhorn Catering, came over from Winters to participate, meeting John Bledsoe, whose pork he buys, for the first time. Bledsoe and his son raise their pigs in northern Yolo County.

Shannan Berg, chef with the Paragarys' Restaurant Group (Bernardo's in Davis is a member of the group and also a sponsor of the Chef Walk), met Clarksburg-based grower and winemaker Mike Heringer of Heringer Estates. The restaurant group already carries one of the Heringer wines, and Heringer and Berg reviewed additional wines the group might consider. Berg was thrilled to meet Maria Vega of Vega Poultry Farms in Dixon, from which the restaurant group buys.



From left, Annie Main of Good Humus Produce chats with Rafaelita Curva about buying some chard for the school lunch salad mix. Good Humus is one of several area farms that second-graders from the district visit to learn where food comes from in a program run by the Davis Farm to School Connection.

*Hosting an event for chefs at the market is a longstanding dream come true. It couldn't be more perfectly realized than with all the partnerships that allowed it to materialize. We'd love to think of this as the first inaugural chef walk."*

**Randii MacNear**  
Davis Farmers Market manager

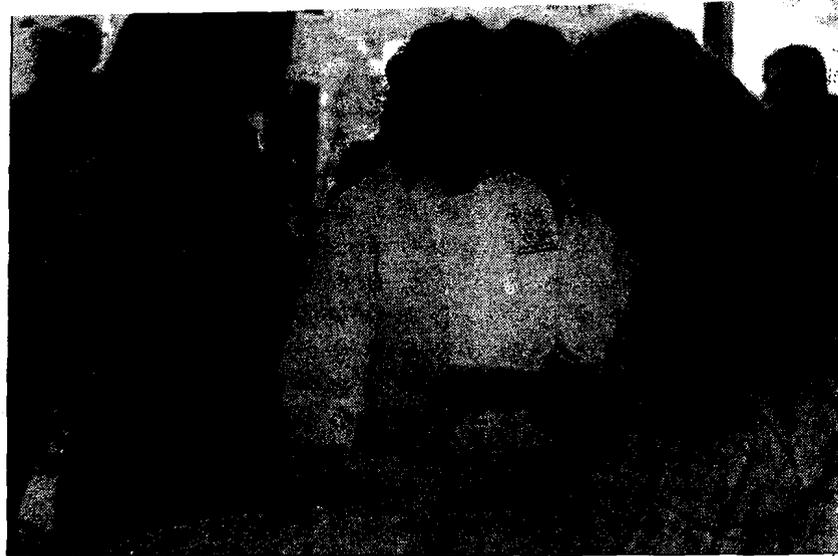
Vega was the only member of her family Berg hadn't met, and Vega was selling at the market that day.

Randii MacNear, Davis Farmers' Market manager, and Georgeanne Brennan and Ann M. Evans of the Yolo County Agricultural Marketing Initiative, co-sponsors along with David Levin of California Growers Collaborative Distribution, greeted the chefs as they arrived, offering them hot coffee and an array of pastries from Davis Bread and Desserts.

Before the walk, Mendez gave a brief introductory talk on how and why he shops at the Farmers' Market, how he uses flavor to enhance the quality of what he serves and how he builds his recipes and menu concepts based on what he sees and tastes at the market. That is his beginning.

In response, Curva said she and her co-workers wanted to learn as much as possible about the products at the market and how best to incorporate local foods into school lunches. The University Dining Service chefs from UC Davis couldn't have agreed more.

Tony Gruska summed it up. "For me, the best part was being able to



From left, Marni Ashdown of university dining services at UCD and Sylvia Hernandez of Davis Joint Unified School District nutrition services department sample produce at the market.

talk to other chefs about building relationships with farmers and all the people we work with. I've learned in the past year and half that's what it's all about — relationships."

"Hosting an event for chefs at the market is a longstanding dream come true," MacNear said. "It couldn't be more perfectly realized than with all the partnerships that allowed it to materialize. We'd love to think of this as the first inaugural chef walk."

The Yolo County Agricultural Initiative provided the staff support to help introduce caterers, restaurant chefs and food service personnel from institutions such as the schools to the market and Yolo County agricultural and viticultural product. The partnership included the USDA Farmers Market Promotion Project, which provided grant funding that covered the printing and mailing the invitations sent to caterers, restaurants and school districts throughout the county, as well as gift boxes of assorted fruits and vegetables purchased from vendors at the market.

At the end of the tour, the chefs,

some loaded with products they just couldn't resist, lined up for a group photo. All agreed they'd like to do this again in spring. So chefs, watch for the announcement in April.

In addition, the staff of the school district nutrition services department was treated to lunch prepared by Mendez and funded by the Farmers Market Promotion Project grant, followed by a farm tour. The district has a longstanding partnership with the Davis Farm to School Connection, sharing the common goal of outstanding school lunches composed of local produce where possible.

At the lunch, it was announced that grant funds also would be used to purchase produce from the Davis Farmers' Market over the next three months for Curva and her staff to pilot test in the district's state-of-the-art central kitchen for use in the school lunch program.

For more information about local produce and products, visit [www.atasteofyolo.com](http://www.atasteofyolo.com) and [www.davisfarmersmarket.org](http://www.davisfarmersmarket.org).

— For more photos, visit [www.davisenterprise.com](http://www.davisenterprise.com)

# School cooks get kitchen pointers

## Cookbook author puts focus on soup

ENTERPRISE STAFF

Members of the Davis school district's Student Nutrition Services team will participate in a hands-on cooking class Wednesday with Georgeanne Brennan, an award-winning local cookbook author and international cooking instructor.

The class is part of the Davis Farm to School Connection's grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, designed to promote the use of foods from the Davis Farmers' Market in school lunches.

The cooking class will feature made-from-scratch Italian white bean soup and Mexican pork soup, using recipes from Brennan's book, "Soup: Food Made Fast," published by Williams-Sonoma and Oxmoor House. All of the participants will receive a copy of the book.

"I look forward to this activity because not only will the class broaden the skills of Student Nutrition Services kitchen managers in basic culinary techniques, it is a wonderful way of team building within ... our organization," Raphaelita Curva, director of student nutrition services, said in a news release.

Added Brennan, "Fresh, local, foods in the schools is a concept I really believe in. It's good for the farming community, good for the students, and fresh, made-from-scratch food is the very best kind — every day."

With a background as a vegetable seed company owner (Le Marche Seeds), a high school history and English teacher (Dixon High School and Vacaville High School), and most recently a ca-



COURTESY PHOTO

Rafaellita Curva, left, director of student nutrition services for the Davis Joint Unified School District, and Miyuki Carson enjoy of taste of the Davis Farmers' Market at a Chefs' Walk this fall. Curva will buy all of the ingredients for her staff's cooking class from the market on Wednesday.

reer as a cookbook author and cooking school teacher, Brennan is well suited to work with school food service directors and their staffs.

"I'm looking forward to teaching the class," she said in a news release. "I met some of the staff at the recent Chefs' Walk at the Davis Farmers' Market and they were so enthusiastic about food and cooking."

Curva said the Davis Farm to School connection and the Davis Joint Unified School District have a common goal of increasing consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables while providing support to local farmers.

The salad bars and prepackaged salads using local farm produce continue to be a success in the schools. Now, consistent with Student Nutrition Services' 2007-08 theme of "delicious food from scratch," the district is ready to expand and promote the use of not only local farm produce in salads but in hot food as well. This will include the use of other agricultural products

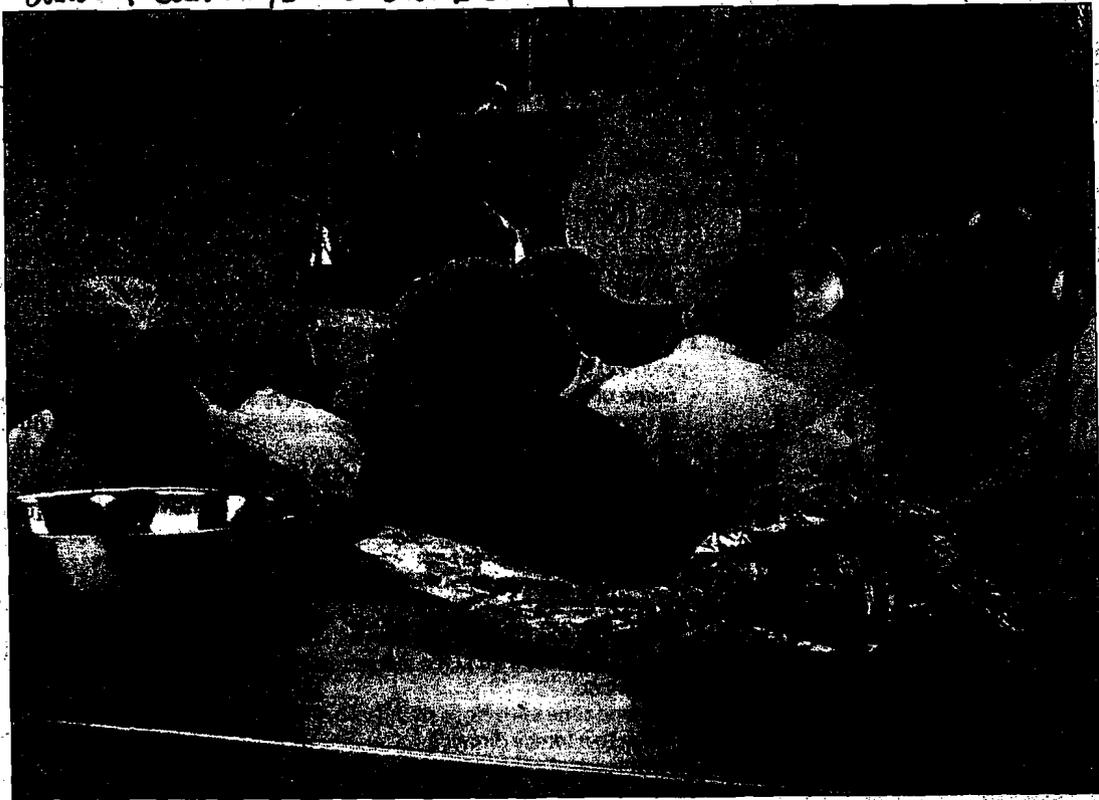
available from the Farmers' Market, such as cheese, meats and baked products.

The Davis Farm to School Connection is applying for additional grants that would include funding monthly cooking classes for Davis school district food service employees as well as a county-wide, one-day cooking camp for all school food service employees, to be co-sponsored by University Dining Services at UC Davis.

For more on the Davis Farm to School Connection, visit <http://www.davisfarmtoschool.org>.

Brennan will conduct cooking demonstrations at Chefs Holidays at the Ahwahnee in Yosemite National Park, Jan. 22-24, and will teach a class at Whole Foods in Sacramento in May.

For more information, visit <http://www.georgeannebrennan.com>. Her most recent book is a food memoir, "A Pig in Provence" (Chronicle Books, 2007).



COURTESY PHOTO

Kitchen managers in the Davis school district's Student Nutrition Services Department work with Georgeanne Brennan, center, an award-winning cookbook author and cooking instructor. She taught them how to make soup using farm-fresh produce from the Davis Farmers' Market. The soups will be served daily at the junior high and high schools and on Thursdays at the elementary schools.

## Cooks upgrading school lunches

ENTERPRISE STAFF

Students who buy hot lunches at the Davis public schools will be enjoying "soup from scratch," thanks to a cooking class offered last month for school district kitchen managers. Georgeanne Brennan of Winters, an award-winning cookbook author, cooking instructor and Davis Enterprise columnist, was the instructor.

The staff of the Student Nutrition Services Department was divided into groups of three, and each group made a soup from one of Brennan's cookbooks, "Soup: Food Made Fast," published by Williams-Sonoma and Oxmoor House.

Some groups made Italian White Bean Soup while others made Mexican Pork Soup. The produce for the soups was purchased at the Davis Farmers' Market, and the class was funded as part of the Farm-to-School grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The grant makes possible the purchase of local foods from the Farmers' Market to use in school lunches in the Davis Joint Unified School District.

After the soups were prepared and tasted for final seasoning, everyone gathered to sample each others' soups, and to share comments.

Lots of praise was offered, and all involved were excited that the soups, as well as others from the cookbook, would become part of a daily soup offering at the junior high schools, and at the high

schools. The elementary schools, which have limited facilities, will have "soup from scratch" one day a week, on Thursdays.

The new soup program dovetails with the Student Nutrition Services 2007-08 theme of "Delicious food from scratch." The school district is ready to expand and promote the use of not only local farm produce in salads but in hot food as well. The district also will include the use of other agricultural products available from the Farmers' Market, such as cheese, meats and baked products.

The staff will get another cooking class opportunity, again funded by the USDA grant. This time the guest chef instructor will be Pru Mendez, owner-chef of Tucos Wine Shop and Café in downtown Davis.

"I am excited about doing this," Mendez said in a news release, "and I want to spend the time creating some possible items for their menu, such as chicken pot pie and twice-cooked veggies."

He also said he wanted to discuss recipe development, creativity and tips.

The Farm to School Connection is applying for additional grants that would fund monthly cooking classes for school district food service employees as well as a countywide, one-day cooking camp for all school food service employees, to be co-sponsored by UC Davis Dining Services.

For more information, visit <http://www.davisfarmtoschool.org> or e-mail [info@farmtoschool.org](mailto:info@farmtoschool.org)

## **Davis passes Parcel Tax to support improved school nutrition**

In November 2007, 73 percent of Davis city residents approved Measure Q, a parcel tax that supports K-12 school district programs. This year for the first time, Measure Q included an innovative proposal to allocate between \$60,000 and \$80,000 in annual funds to "improve nutrition at schools by providing students with fresh farm produce." A poll of voters prior to the ballot showed very high support for including this item, which is designed to bring healthy, fresh produce into the school lunch program.

Since 2000, the Davis Farm to School Connection (DF2SC) has partnered with Davis Joint Unified School District (DJUSD) in efforts to improve school nutrition and support local family farmers by incorporating their produce into the school lunch program. To formalize this partnership, the Davis Joint Unified School District Board of Trustees voted unanimously to approve a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Davis Farm to School Connection. The MOU establishes four goals on which DJUSD and DF2SC will collaborate:

- **Increase the amount of farm fresh foods in school food offerings.** To the extent possible and with support from parcel tax funding, we will work toward a goal of 60% of total district produce being purchased from local growers by 2010.
- **Reduce solid waste through a comprehensive district recycling program.** We will continue to work together to develop and maintain a sustainable waste reduction program throughout the district.
- **Provide education opportunities to promote a healthy lifestyle and develop the whole child.** This will be accomplished through instructional school gardens, farm field trips and professional development opportunities for teachers and food service staff.
- **Research and evaluate programs and provide information to the community.** DJUSD and DF2SC will work together to identify community partners and resources to further the long term goals of the MOU.

The mission of the Davis Farm to School Connection is to create an educational and cultural environment in our schools that fosters awareness of the ways our food choices are intimately connected to personal health, our community, and our land. We are committed to partnering with the Davis Joint Unified School District to bring this awareness into students' everyday educational experience.

For more information, [www.davisfarmtoschoolconnection.org](http://www.davisfarmtoschoolconnection.org).