

December
2004

Green Sheet

www.napmm.org

The Newsletter of the National Association of Produce Market Managers

ABOUT NAPMM

Founded in 1947, NAPMM strives to help market managers improve facilities, increase services and encourage cooperation and exchange of ideas between members. More than 110 produce market managers are members of NAPMM.

NAPMM Officers

Sheree Brannan, President
James Farr, 1st Vice President
Ronnie Best, 2nd Vice President
Stephanie Massel, Treasurer
David Tompkins, Secretary

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President's Message from Sheree Brannan

As we near the close of 2004, we are proud of the accomplishments that NAPMM has achieved and of our continued efforts toward the completion of other projects.

For the first time in many years, regional meetings were held, one in St. Augustine, Florida and the other in Dallas, Texas. Both meetings were extremely successful, offering valuable information, networking opportunities, and a chance for non-members to "take a look" at our organization and become members. I know that you share with me in congratulating everyone, particularly Terry Driggers and Troy Thorn, for all of their hard work and planning to make these meetings possible. We hope that the success of these meetings will inspire other regions to host meetings in the future.

Very shortly, we will begin using "Memberclicks" as our website management company. This "user friendly" website will offer a variety of options to our members. Don Coker and his staff created and have maintained our current website for a number of years. All of the many hours of volunteer work Don and his staff have given to NAPMM are both recognized and appreciated.

Our thanks to Greg Grajewski, USDA and Mike Janis for their combined time and efforts in making the "Major Capital Improvement Survey" a success. If you haven't already submitted information about projects that have taken place at your market over the past three years, please take a minute to do so. To access this survey, go to: <http://216.235.248.162/survey/27801/df10/>.

This year, it would be great if every market would place an ad in the 2005-2006 Handbook. Full page to business card ads are available and at very affordable prices! Bill Mulligan, Jr. has once again graciously volunteered to handle the compilation and printing of the Handbook. Bill would like to have final copies in the mail by mid-January.

Please be sure to mark your calendar for the Rochester Conference, April 28 - May 2, 2005. We look forward to a great turnout and seeing many new members and of course being hosted by the "one and only", Jim Farr!

I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and healthy and Happy New Year.

Sheree Brannan

Planning Continues for Rochester Conference April 28 – May 2, 2005

Before you know it, the winter snows will be melted and Bill Mulligan and I will be welcoming you to Rochester for the 59th annual NAPMM Conference. We've put together a program that is educational, interesting and relevant (draft schedule follows). The conference hotel, The Strathallan, which features large and spacious suites and a AAA, 4-Diamond restaurant (www.strathallan.com), is located in the heart of Rochester's museum, cultural and arts district, within walking distance of The International Museum of Photography and Film at the George Eastman House (www.eastman.org), The Rochester Museum and Science Center and The Memorial Art Gallery (www.mag.rochester.edu) as well as shopping, restaurants and entertainment. Upstate New York is beautiful in the Spring and we've arranged an interesting schedule of activities for your guests and family to enjoy while you are busy at conference sessions.

It's not too early to register. A registration form and hotel reservation information is included in this edition of the GreenSheet. If you have any questions feel free to call Bill or me. See you in Rochester -- www.visitrochester.com.

Hotel reservations must be made by April 1, 2005 in order to receive the special conference rate of \$129/night. This includes a full breakfast. Reservations can be made by calling The Strathallan at 1-800-678-7284 or on line at reservations@strathallan.com. Make sure to identify yourself as a NAPMM Conference delegate.

Jim Farr

2005 NAPMM Conference Schedule Draft

THURSDAY – APRIL 28

12:00-6:00 PM	Registration
2:00-4:00 PM	Board of Directors Meeting
6:30-8:00 PM	President's Reception / Welcome Mayor William A. Johnson Loretta Scott (Commissioner, Department of Parks Recreation and Human Services) Maggie Brooks (Monroe County Executive)
8:30 PM	Hospitality Suite Open
Optional trip to Toronto aboard the Fast Ferry. Go to www.thebreeze.com for more information.	

FRIDAY – APRIL 29

7:00-8:00 AM	Breakfast
8:15-9:15 AM	Keynote Speaker - Nathan Rudgers, NYS Commissioner of Agriculture & Markets
9:30 AM	Buses leave-Genesee Regional Market Tour
12:00 PM	Lunch at Regional Market
1:00 PM	Visit Hydroponics Plant & Apple Processing Center
5:00 PM	Return to Hotel
6:00 PM	Dinner at Red Wings Baseball Game
9:00-11:00 PM	Social at High Falls (Entertainment District)
11:00 PM	Return to Hotel

SATURDAY – APRIL 30

6:30-7:30 AM	Breakfast
8:00 AM	Buses leave-Rochester Public Market Tour & Presentation
11:30-12:45 PM	Lunch at Foodlink - Regional Food Issues
1:15-2:30 PM	Market Presentations: 15 Minutes to Highlight Your Market
2:30-2:45 PM	Break
2:45-4:00 PM	<u>Retail</u> : Rapid Market Assessment (University of Rochester Anthropological Study of the Public Market) <u>Wholesale</u> : Dock Safety & Role of Government in the Food Distribution System
4:00-5:30 PM	Board Meeting
6:00 PM	Dine around local restaurants
8:00 PM	Hospitality Suite Open

SUNDAY – MAY 1

11:00 AM-Noon	Brunch at Hotel
12:15-1:45 PM	Plenary Session: Insurance Liability (Tim McNelly) Trash Can Be Your Friend (Ronnie Best)
1:45-2:00 PM	Break
2:00-3:15 PM	Legislative Issues Affecting our Industry
3:15-3:30 PM	Break
3:30-4:30 PM	<u>Retail</u> : NY's Comprehensive Market Support Programs (Bob Lewis, NYS Ag and Markets) <u>Wholesale</u> : Update, Planning for the Future of Wholesale Markets (Moderators: Michael Janis, Don Darnall, Fidel Delgado)
4:45-5:30 PM	Board Meeting
6:00 PM	Dinner on your own
7:30 PM	Hospitality Suite Open

MONDAY – MAY 2

7:00-8:00 AM	Breakfast
8:00-9:30 AM	Plenary Session: Leases, Term, Details, Comparisons (Jerry Mackee)
9:30-9:45 AM	Break
9:45-11:00 AM	A. Markets & Malls-What do we have in common? B. Strategic Plans C. Energy Management Organized around issues (each given twice)
11:10-12:30 PM	Same as above
12:30-1:30 PM	Lunch with Trade Speaker
1:30-2:15 PM	<u>Retail/Wholesale</u> : Panel -- Cracker Barrel Bring topics to discuss
2:15-2:30 PM	Break
2:30-3:30 PM	General Membership Meeting
4:00-5:00 PM	Board of Directors
6:30 PM	Awards Banquet

NAPMM 2005 Conference Registration Form

Visit Rochester - www.visitrochester.com

NAPMM Annual Conference and General Membership Meeting

April 28 - May 2, 2005

Hosted by: Rochester Public Market and Genesee Regional Market Authority

REGISTRATION INFORMATION (Please print or type)

First Name	Middle Initial	Last Name	
Spouse/Guest Name			
Company Name		Company Website	
Street Address			
City	State	Zip	Country
Phone	Fax		E-Mail

What day do you expect to arrive? _____

When do you expect to depart? Morning Afternoon After 6:00 p.m.

Job Function (Please check one)

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> CEO/Company Owner | <input type="checkbox"/> President | <input type="checkbox"/> Vice President |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Executive Director | <input type="checkbox"/> Operations | <input type="checkbox"/> Market Manager |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sales & Marketing | <input type="checkbox"/> Retired | |

Registration Fees (U.S. Dollars)

REGISTRATION PACKAGE	By 3/31/05	After 3/31/05
<input type="checkbox"/> Members	\$170	\$180
<input type="checkbox"/> Non-Members	\$200	\$220
<input type="checkbox"/> Guest Registration	\$105	\$115

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED IN THIS REGISTRATION \$ _____

Completed registration forms should be sent to the Genesee Valley Regional Market at the address below:

**Genesee Valley Regional Market Authority
900 Jefferson Road
Rochester, NY 14623**

Payment must be made by check or Money Order to **NAPMM, Rochester**. All amounts are in U.S. dollars. Payment must accompany the registration. There will be no billing.

Cancellation Policy: All requests for cancellation must be made in writing and received by April 5, 2005. There is a \$60 processing fee for cancellations received by April 5, 2005. No refunds will be made after April 5, 2005.

After you have registered, you will receive a confirmation letter by fax within seven business days of your form being received.

2005 NAPMM Conference Guest Program		THURSDAY – APRIL 28	
		7:30 AM - 4:30 PM	Optional Fast Ferry trip to Toronto (\$100 per person - contingent on restart of service)
		6:30-8:00 PM	President's Reception
		Go to www.thebreeze.com for more information on the ferry.	
FRIDAY – APRIL 29		SATURDAY – APRIL 30	
9:30 AM	Tour Genesee Regional Market Tour	8:00 AM	Visit Rochester Public Market
12:00 PM	Lunch at Regional Market	11:30 PM	Lunch & Presentation at Foodlink
1:00 PM	Visit Eastview Mall and Pittsford Wegman's	1:00-5:00 PM	Visit Memorial Art Gallery and George Eastman House and Museum
6:00 PM	Dinner at Red Wings Baseball Game	6:00 PM	Dine around local restaurants
9:00 PM	Social at High Falls (Entertainment District)		
SUNDAY – MAY 1		MONDAY – MAY 2	
11:00 AM-Noon	Brunch at Hotel	On Your Own	
12:00-5:00 PM	Finger Lakes Winery Tour	6:30 PM	Awards Banquet

Thoughts from the Editor

I've had the pleasure of attending both of the recent NAPMM Regional meetings. Not only was it great to see friends and colleagues, but it also reinforced my belief in the value of our organization. Although we operate diverse markets with unique problems and opportunities, it's still amazing how much we have in common and how much we can learn from each other. I've never been part of a group where the membership is so anxious to share their expertise.

The regional meetings provide yet another chance for this exchange of information to continue and allow folks who may not be able to attend a national meeting, a chance to benefit from each other's experience. I hope we can continue these regional mini-conferences and thank Troy Thorn and Terry Driggers for breaking the ice and reestablishing this NAPMM tradition.

Southeast Regional Meeting a Great Success

The NAPMM Southeast area held a regional meeting October 2-4 in Augustine, Florida. Twenty participants from throughout the Southeastern United States enjoyed a program which featured speakers ranging from waste management to attracting vendors as well as market and farm tours and a visit to a potato chip factory.

I found the farm visits particularly important. We sometimes forget the link from producer to our markets and it was enlightening to hear the farmer's perspective firsthand. I didn't realize that Northern Florida has some of the most productive cropland in the nation.

I also had a memorable evening with Nick Zorn and the Alabama boys. Ask me about it in Rochester. Thanks to all the Florida Department of Agriculture staff for hosting the meeting - especially Terry Driggers, Carl Penn and Jessica Basham.

NAFMNP Meets in Hershey, PA

I had the pleasure of attending a couple days of the NAFMNP (National Association of Farmers Market Nutrition Programs) Conference in Hershey, PA October 20-23. NAPMM members, Carl Penn from Florida and Don Wambles from Alabama, are both very active in this organization which strives to support and increase funding levels for both WIC and Senior Nutrition programs at Farmers Markets. Our good friend, Phil Blalock, formerly with the State Farmers Market in Raleigh, North Carolina is the Executive Director of NAFMNP. The conference also focused on ways to increase sales and coupon redemption rates at markets and included a legislative update.

Many of our member markets participate in the Farmers Market Nutrition programs in their states. Not only do these programs provide customer access to fresh product, they also infuse additional dollars into the farm economy. For more information about NAFMNP call (703) 837-0451, or check it out online at www.nafmnp.org.

Trying to Reason with Hurricane Season

Hurricanes Effect on Agriculture in West Central Florida

The Plant City area survived the wrath of four hurricanes this past summer. All throughout West Central Florida, power lines and huge trees were down, roofs and homes damaged by the ferocious winds. The strawberry and tomato fields were flooded for weeks with farmers feverishly pumping them out in order to prepare the ground for the planting of their fall crops.

The hurricane that most impacted West Central Florida was Hurricane Jeanne. Horticulture and citrus sustained significant damage, while tomato and strawberry farmers fared much better, in large part due to the plants not being in the ground

when the hurricane hit. The high sustained winds tore up a lot of the bedding and that had to be redone, putting the farmers behind schedule a few days.

By the first of November, most of the strawberry plants had been planted. If all goes well, the first harvest is expected to be approximately the first or second week of December.

Tomato harvest should begin toward the end of November.

A few Jalapeno peppers, squash and cucumbers have begun to be harvested the first week in November and quality is good. Harvesting of eggplant should begin by the end of November.

USDA Awards \$4.5 Million in Grants for Organic Agriculture Projects

WASHINGTON, Sept. 29--Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman today announced that USDA is awarding \$4,614,980 in grants for 11 projects in six states that will strengthen the Integrated Organic Program (IOP).

"These awards will help provide information to assist farmers and ranchers increase the production of high quality products while decreasing costs," Veneman said.

The IOP supports research, Extension and higher education programs to help organic farmers incorporate new technologies into their operations and to develop innovative marketing strategies.

"The Integrated Organic Program helps address the challenges faced by growers," said Agriculture Under Secretary for Research, Education and Economics Joseph J. Jen. "The threat of pests, for example, can be much greater for organic farmers and ranchers because they rely on a system of natural checks and balances."

The 2004 grants were awarded to the following:

ARKANSAS--University of Arkansas, \$305,015, for slow-growing broilers in organic production: an alternative to supplemental methionine and a marketing opportunity

CALIFORNIA--University of California, Santa Cruz, \$571,902, for improving fertility and pest management strategies for organic crop production and strengthening researcher/grower network

To University of California, Davis, \$297,814, for nutrient dynamics, soil biota, and functional biodiversity at an organic farm

To University of California, Davis, \$186,624, for the activity and suppression of soil-borne pathogens and pests in organic vs. conventional plots with conservation vs. conventional tillage

MASSACHUSETTS--Tufts University, \$197,768, for strengthening the scientific foundation of organic standards on animal health and welfare

MINNESOTA--University of Minnesota, \$463,645, for soybean aphid suppression using a fall-seeded rye cover crop

NEW YORK--Cornell University, \$518,306, for the transitioning dairy: identifying and addressing challenges and opportunities in milk quality and safety

Cornell University, \$894,450, for the organic seed partnership

Cornell University \$575,028, for building on the best: a research and education partnership for increased competitiveness of organic grain and vegetable farms

VERMONT--University of Vermont, \$301,161, for profitability and transitional analysis of northeast organic dairy farms

WASHINGTON, USDA's Agricultural Research Service Tree Fruit Laboratory in Wenatchee, \$303,267, for use of resident biological resources for the management of replant disease in organic tree fruit production systems

USDA's Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) manages the IOP in collaboration with partners at universities, non-profit organizations and the organic industry through its many state partners.

To learn more about the CSREES Integrated Organic Program, <http://www.fedgrants.gov/Applicants/USDA/CSREES/OEP/USDA-GRANTS-041504-001/Grant.html>.

Historic Findlay Market Open Sundays Spring 2005

By Dyah Kartikawening, iRhine

Before Project for Public Spaces, a non-profit organization that promotes great public places around the world, nominated Findlay Market as one of the world's great public spaces, Cincinnatians were already aware that the market is an indispensable part of the City. Historic Findlay Market is one out of nine traditional markets that survived in Cincinnati, offering a combination between marketplace and gathering place.

It is a unique atmosphere where grocery shopping can be more fun than choosing refrigerated vegetables in a modern grocery store, but it also provides the opportunity to meet with a real person who sells fresh-picked vegetables. It is a pleasant environment to gather with other people from across the street and from the suburb, with various economic backgrounds and cultures. It is a different atmosphere where browsing for daily needs can be enjoyable while listening to real live music played by local musicians under direct sun without any electricity involved.

All year long, Findlay Market is always packed with visitors. Visitors come from Cincinnati, who visit Findlay as a necessity, or tourists who want to have a taste of this authentic and historic place. Safety has never become a real concern in this place as more and more people continue to come. Along with the thriving residential developments in Over-the-Rhine and Downtown, the market has been attracting more visitors.

This historic market is located on Elder Street between Elm and Race, a walking distance from North Main Street and Downtown neighborhoods, on the route of Metro Bus system, and complete with abundant parking lots nearby the square. It was first established in the 1870s, after a long period of construction that started in 1852. It is named after General James Findlay, a veteran of the 1812 War and a mayor of Cincinnati, who donated the land to the City of Cincinnati. It is one of the oldest open air markets in the country, and was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1972. The market has been open Wednesday through Saturday, but recently, the Corporation for Findlay Market decided to open the market on Sundays in the Spring of 2005.

Findlay Market has high quality fish, ethnic food, cheese, deli, meat, poultry, produce, herbs, and bakery goods, a number one choice for local cooks. Local family businesses such as Charles Bare's Meat, Kroeger's Meat, and Krause's of Findlay Market and other meat, fish, and poultry vendors are located inside the market house and storefronts, while farmers market, craft

vendors, flower growers and ready-to-eat food vendors and benches are located on the north side and outside the market house. Ethnic food stores enriched the market's authenticity, from Dean's Mediterranean Imports to Saigon Market that has been open since 1976.

As one of the historic and economic centers, Findlay Market became part of the City's revitalization agenda that draws more people to live in the neighborhood. The renovated 16,000 square foot market house is part of Findlay Market Revitalization Project that includes construction of the north parking lot on Findlay Street and the farmers market shed, purchase and partial renovation of retail shops, streetscape improvements on Elder Street, with total costs of \$12 million. Most of the renovated stores are occupied by old and new vendors, and some of them are still available for lease.

The Corporation for Findlay Market took over the market management from the City of Cincinnati in 2001 to focus on improving its management and efficiency. The Corporation manages and prepares programs and events in the market that could drive more people to come to the market. A recent achievement of the Corporation is collaboration with the Greater Cincinnati African American Chamber of Commerce that will bring new vendors into the new market house.

The Corporation will continue to bring Music in the Market on Saturdays, a project that started in collaboration with the University of Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music. After getting positive feedbacks from musicians for the experience, and vendors for the length of visitors' stay in the market, the Corporation for Findlay Market welcomes any local musicians who are interested to perform at the market. As one of the efforts to bring more people to visit the market, the merchants' association hosts several festivals such as Findlay Market Opening Day Parade that sponsors the opening of Cincinnati Reds baseball season and of course the Taste of Findlay Festival.

In this holiday season, the Corporation for Findlay Market launched "Food for Feast" that was held on Saturday, November 20, 2004, from 9:00 am to 6:00 pm. The event highlighted foods for the traditional Thanksgiving holiday, along with local Chef Cooking Demonstrations, seasonal decorations and announcement of Thanksgiving Raffle winners. Remember, Findlay Market is now open on Sundays...in Spring 2005.

Dyah Kartikawening, a writer and a neighborhood planner, who graduated with a master's degree in community planning from University of Cincinnati.

Supply Chain Management Study Update

We would like to congratulate Don Darnall on his recent three-year appointment by the University of Maryland as a Senior Research Fellow to the Supply Chain Management Center and a member of its Advisory Board. Don received this appointment in recognition of his significant expertise and stature in this field.

The purpose of the study is to determine how food markets in the United States can efficiently and effectively use logistics/

supply chain management best practices, state-of-the-art technology and modern facility design to break down perceived and real internal and external barriers and become more extended enterprises in the food industry, now and in the future.

We are grateful to Don for his dedication and commitment to this project because the findings from this study will provide invaluable information to the markets across the U. S.

Detroit

A Saturday morning tradition may soon come to Wednesdays, as well.

Detroit's Eastern Market is looking to add a midweek, scaled-down version of its Saturday farmers market that remains a favorite tradition of suburbanites and Detroit residents alike. Currently, restaurant owners and chefs prowl market stores for fresh produce on weekday mornings, but there is no retail activity in the covered sheds and open-air areas.

In an attempt to attract more shoppers, the Eastern Markets Association of Merchants has proposed a Wednesday Market Day to better compete with suburban alternatives.

Merchants are trying to lure at least 10 local vendors to offer a variety of goods, ranging from fruit to art in open areas from 8 a.m. to early afternoon on Wednesdays. The Wednesday market would begin sometime next month.

Were open every day of the week, not just on Saturdays, and wed like to see more of a turnout during the week, said Ed Deeb, spokesman for the Eastern Market Merchants Association.

Every Saturday, the market attracts more than 40,000 shoppers. More than 80 vendors come from as far as Ohio, offering fruits, vegetables, herbs, flowers, eggs, honey and other products.

During the week, however, the stores lining the market square don't see half that much traffic.

I'd love to have a reason to come down here during the week, but I think with everyone working nowadays, a weekday market wouldn't attract much of a crowd, said Evelyn Daniels of Southfield, an occasional Saturday shopper.

Most retailers in the area, such as Detroit Wholesale Produce, say their primary customers during the week are wholesale buyers, such as restaurants.

Brian Morgan, the general manager of Mr. Mike's restaurant in the New Center area of Detroit, makes three trips a week to the market, but wishes it had more shops and restaurants.

I enjoy coming down here because I can taste everything before I buy it, and the vendors are so hospitable it is like being at a country market, Morgan said.

Market officials hope that a midweek market day will attract more customers and developers, making the area a destination for tourists. A rise in gourmet produce shops and suburban farmers' markets have led to a decrease in the market's customers.

There is more than just fruits and vegetables to Eastern Market. There are over 150 vendors selling goods from fine cheeses to antiques, Deeb said.

Six years ago, the market canceled a Tuesday market day because there weren't enough sellers to attract buyers.

Now, market organizers are preparing to add entertainment, such as cooking classes, which will help to compete with popular suburban green grocers and smaller farmers market on Saturdays and possibly Wednesdays.

It is not like years ago, when there were (Detroit) neighborhoods surrounding this area, said Carmen Spacca, owner of B&S produce.

Now, everyone is living in the suburbs where there are more choices. What Eastern Market has to do is give people a reason to keep coming down here.

New Manager at Hunts Point Produce Market

J. R. McIntyre has been selected as the new Market Manager at Hunts Point Produce Market effective December 1st. He has been the interim manager since June 1st when former manager and long-time NAPMM member, George Maroulis, accepted the challenging position of manager at the new Fulton Fish Market.

J. R. served as the General Manager at Hunts Point from 1992-1996. After returning home to Atlanta, he managed his own Facility Management Consulting business, serving a diverse client base throughout the U. S. and Mid-East. He brings with him a background in construction management, facility engineering and computer programming.

We welcome J. R. as a new member of NAPMM and congratulate him on his new position. We also congratulate George on his new undertaking as Manager of the Fulton Fish Market. We look forward to seeing you both at the Rochester conference.

Best of Luck to Stephanie Massel!

We recently were informed that Stephanie Massel, Kitchener Market, Ontario will be making a career change and leaving her position of Market Manager at the end of December, 2004.

Stephanie currently holds the position of Treasurer for NAPMM and has agreed to remain in the position until the end of the year. She has been a tremendous asset to our organization and we are very sad to see her leave. I know you share with me in wishing Stephanie the very best success, health and happiness in the future.

David Tompkins, the current Secretary, will move into the Treasurer position. As President and with the Board's approval, I have appointed Janel Leatherman, Market Manager of the City of Virginia Beach Farmers Market, to fill the vacant position of Secretary. Janel has shown her dedication and commitment to NAPMM by her offers of help and assistance on various projects. David and Janel will begin their terms January 1, 2005.

Kurt D. Schultheis

Herald Staff Writer

BRADENTON - Close to 50 vendors have signed up to work the coming farmers' market because of a price break and a promise that the downtown market is changing for the better.

Now, the newly named Old Main Street Market, which is scheduled to open Sept. 18, needs to draw customers. The event has had trouble attracting attention despite being visible from Manatee Avenue West.

New farmers' market manager Mark Eubanks waived a \$40 vendor-association fee for the first 50 vendors, and he gave vendors free Web site publicity, which has attracted 47 new sellers.

Eubanks and Kerry Ward, the president of Bradenton Downtown Progress, which runs the market, hosted a conference Friday at the Manatee Chamber of Commerce to show the community how this market is different from seasons past.

In past years, 15 booths was considered good vendor participation.

But with 50 vendors expected by opening day, a farmers' market that used to be confined to one block on Old Main Street will now extend from Manatee Avenue to Barcarrota Boulevard near the river.

"About 18 vendors are coming over from Lakewood Ranch," Eubanks said. The Lakewood Ranch Farmers' Market decided not to open this year after a two-year run. Officials cited heavy construction on Lakewood Ranch Boulevard and the opening of the Lakewood Ranch Medical Center as reasons for closing it.

Eubanks, a former retiree with a career rich in marketing, spent the past year researching markets that are successful in other areas, including Sarasota's market. Ward knows how popular Sarasota's farmers' market is.

"My sister drives by our market every Saturday on her way to Sarasota," Ward said. "I'm aiming to change her perception of our market this year."

Eubanks' goal in the coming years is to see 3,000 customers lining Old Main Street on Saturdays.

"We are not trying to revitalize downtown Bradenton," Eubanks said. "But by changing this market, we think that will happen."

A new logo, a Web site and green aprons for all vendors are some of the changes made this year. The market runs from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. every Saturday through May. Vendor space runs \$15 for a 10-foot-by-10-foot space.

At www.oldmsm.com, customers can also print coupons for certain vendors each week.

Jacki Dezelski, the Manatee chamber's vice president of community development and communications, is excited about the changes being made to the market.

"The community will attend an event worth coming to," Dezelski said. "I think this market will be much better than what it has been in the past."

Kurt D. Schultheis, Herald business reporter, can be reached at kschultheis@bradentonherald.com or at 748-0411, ext. 2120.