AG-MARKETING NEWS

DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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2010 Farmers' Market Season Tops $1.3 Million

Dover- The 2010 Delaware farmers' market season has ended and for only the second time, the markets earned more than $1 million. This year's 14 community-sponsored farmers' markets brought in a total of $1.3 million (an 18-percent increase over last season). This season kicked off in April and ended two weeks ago for participating farmers.

"Congratulations to everyone connected with Delaware's Farmers' Markets for reaching a new sales record of $1.3 million," said Agriculture Secretary Ed Kee. "This reflects the good work of the volunteers who manage the markets as well as the tremendous commitment from our farmers who provide fresh, locally grown produce and farm products for Delawareans and our guests who buy at our farmers' markets. I challenge everyone to keep our five year-streak of increasing sales alive for next year."

Sec. Kee went on to say, "Our Department's advertising efforts will continue in various forms again in 2011. I also am very much interested in developing a successful farmer's market in the City of Wilmington. Preliminary discussions are being held and we will be in touch with our farming community to evaluate the possibilities for our state's largest city, a city with a long tradition of farmer's markets that dates back to the 1800s. Again, my sincerest thanks and appreciation to each Farmers' Market and all the vendors who made it a success. Best wishes for a Happy Holiday and prosperous New Year."

The Delaware Department of Agriculture promoted the 14 statewide markets this year, a decrease from 15 last year. Of the $1.3 million in total sales, $672,271.00 (52-percent), came from fruit and vegetable sales alone. Last year, the markets earned $1.1 million, with 60-percent of sales coming from fruits and vegetables.

"More than ever before, an overwhelming number of Delaware farmers stepped up to the plate this year and got involved in these farmers' markets," said DDA Marketing Communications Officer Kelli Steele. "It's essential that farmers continue to be involved to make these markets a success. It's also extremely important that cities and towns up and down the state where these markets are located support them. The market managers and volunteers are also to be commended for a job well done."

If you're interested in becoming a vendor at any of the state's farmers' markets in 2011, contact Kelli Steele at (302) 698-4519, or by e-mail at kelli.steele@state.de.us, or log on to www.dda.delaware.gov and click on farmers' markets for a complete list; you can then contact each market manager individually.

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