

AgNews



DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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Cold and wondering where the spring went? There is hope! The new Milton Farmers' Market opens in two weeks.

On Friday, March 25, Delaware Market Masters gathered at the Delaware Department of Agriculture to plan for the upcoming season. Fifteen farmers' markets and more than 60 on-the-farm markets will be opening at various times during the spring. The new Milton Farmers' Market will be the first on deck. The market will be located at 624 Mulberry Street in Milton and will be open on Fridays, April 15 – October 28, at 4 PM – 7 PM. For the complete list of farmers markets and on-the-farm markets in Delaware and opening dates, hours, vendor application information, etc. visit www.dda.delaware.gov and look under *Hot Topics*.

The markets will be offering a vibrant medley of just picked, local Delaware produce as it comes into season. Visit www.dda.delaware.gov/marketing/2009_AvailabilityChart4BlockGrantFINAL.pdf to access the *Availability Chart* to see when produce comes into season. Fresh, crisp asparagus is right around the corner.

Depending on the vendors, other products such as cut flowers, bedding plants, baked goods, jams, jellies, honey, and more may also be found. Depending on the markets, consumers will also be able to attend special programs/presentations, pick up information on nutrition, community events, recipes, and much more.

Ed Kee, Delaware Secretary of Agriculture said during the market master meeting, "Historically, farmers' markets in Delaware have also served as a community gathering place where people go to buy food and at the same time meet their neighbors while farmers bring the ambience of the farm for all to enjoy. Bringing consumers face to face with farmers heightens the appreciation for farmers' service and contributions to the community."

"Our Farmers' Market program continues to grow, which is good for farmers and for consumers who buy local fresh produce," said Governor Jack Markell. "Farmers' markets support jobs in the agriculture industry and help us preserve our valuable farmland and open space." Last year's 14 community-sponsored farmers' markets brought in a total of \$1.3 million (an 18-percent increase over the 2009 season).

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