WSU Farmers Market opens June 4

First Spring Salad Market pilot a success

The Wayne State University Farmers Market unveils its seventh season June 4. Open Wednesdays from 11 to 4 pm at its usual location in front of Prentis Hall, the market will run through October 29.

The market brings back products and vendors from past years and adds some new ones as well. For example, Detroit-grown produce will be on offer by D-Town Farm, Grown in Detroit Cooperative, and Brother Nature Produce. Produce anchors Van Houtte and Holtz will also return with their usual selections of fruits, berries, vegetables, flowers, herbs, potted plants, and eggs. Labrosse Farm, a new Detroit-based vendor with transplants, and Burda’s Berries, who joined mid-season last year, will be present at the June 4 kickoff.

Delicious hot and/or cold prepared foods and desserts will be sold by Russell Street Deli, Avalon Bakery, Brooklyn Street Local, and Sweet Potato Sensations, all returning vendors. Nikki’s Ginger Teas will offer a splash of freshness to warm afternoons, while Greentoe Gardens will sweeten them with several local honey flavors. Mystic Kettle—joining us for a first full season—will pop delicious popcorn right in front of you.

As usual, the market will accept cash, Bridge Card benefits, Double Up Food Bucks (DUFB), and WIC and Senior Project FRESH coupons. Sponsored by the Fair Food Network, DUFB matches Bridge Card spending at the market up to $20 per card per day. The market will also offer tips, resources, and workshops related to healthy, seasonal diets.

Students Gain Advantage

The Student Advantage Project starts June 11. For $5, students can (Continued on page 2)

St. Andrew’s Allotment Garden Awakens!

33 students, staff, guests work 19 plots

St. Andrew’s Garden burst back to life on April 26 as gardeners took off the fall leaves blanketing the beds and readied beds for the season’s plantings. That day and since, gardeners seeded and transplanted a variety of cold and hot crops, participated in several group work sessions, and are planning workshops on a variety of topics.

The group consists of 25 graduate and undergraduate students, three staff members including faculty, one alumna, and four guests (friends or kin of current members). Collectively, they are tending 18 beds that are 4’ by 8,’ and one that is 4’ by 4.’

Led by Garden Leader Hope Morrow, the kick off session began with raking leaves off the beds, which were deposited last fall during the take down. Another team led by SEED Wayne’s very first Garden Leader (2008-10), Will Ahee, was dispatched to fetch compost from SEED Wayne’s composters behind the Warrior Grille kitchens. The raked leaves were taken at the end of the session to the compost bins. An additional pile was transported to Earthworks Urban Farm for composting.

After brief introductions and an overview of the garden’s history, traditions, and rules, teams were assigned their plots. They got to work developing plans for planting, and sowed seeds and planted seedlings.

Several members are returning from (Continued on page 3)
Farmers Market, Cont’d from p. 1

purchase $10 in vouchers which are to be spent exclusively on fresh produce at the market. We are currently raising funds to offer these benefits for the entire season.

Student Advantage is motivated by several concerns: one, many students were ejected from the state’s SNAP rolls in 2011. SNAP, or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, previously called Food Stamps, assists households with limited resources to purchase food. Students also consume vegetables and fruits at levels that are much lower than those recommended. Targeting students helps open up a new market segment and, hopefully will cultivate future market customers. Finally, the 2013 pilot was a smashing success. (See also story on p. 4, this issue.)

First Spring Salad Market a Success!

Our first Spring Salad Market pilot this year also was a great success! It allowed customers to buy salad greens harvested in spring, prior to the start of the market in June. We partnered with Brother Nature Produce to create a salad subscription, April 30-May 28, to offer 40 half-pound bags weekly to participants, most of whom paid in advance. They came by SEED Wayne’s offices in the Faculty Administration Building, to pick up their bags, Wednesdays, 11 am to 2 pm. We hope to expand the salad market next year incorporating lessons from this season.

Brother Nature’s salads are grown in Detroit’s Corktown neighborhood, in several hoop houses in soil enriched with many layers of compost over the years. Owner Greg Willerer also sells at the Wayne State Farmers Market and other neighborhood markets, supplies area restaurants, and partners with compost operation, Detroit Dirt, to make and distribute compost around the city. While this year’s Spring Salad sales are understandably modest given the pilot nature of the effort—about $1,000, accomplished with the help of one volunteer, Susie Fenster—we hope that future years will see higher sales enabled by more distribution points around campus and well-developed logistics.

Market partnerships

The WSU Farmers Market would not be possible without assistance from many campus partners: Office of Campus Sustainability, Purdy-Kresge Library, the College of Business Administration, Marketing, and Public Safety are only some of the partners that offer much-needed support in staging the market, outreach, Bridge Card operations, public safety, and storage of equipment. Community partners include Eastern Market, Fair Food Network, Gleaners Community Food Bank, D-Town Farm, Keep Growing Detroit, and others. Later this season, a partnership with Gleaners’ includes a shuttle program to bring seniors from several residential centers in the area to the market. Seniors will also be offered $10 in vouchers to purchase vegetables at the market, and a chance to participate in workshops related to nutrition and physical activity.

Your market needs you! We seek volunteers for:

1. Campus outreach to bring more customers to the market. Letter-size flyers and quarter-page handbills can be sent to you, for posting in your building, department, or organization.
2. Market and special event set up and take down, at different times.
3. Assisting in other market tasks. Signing up for a two-hour slot is optimal but we will gladly accept less as well.
4. We also seek friends who love to cook, who will sign up for one or more days to prepare and bring to market vegetarian/vegan refreshments for five to six market volunteers.

If you can help out, please write our market leader at sylvia.tatman-burruss@wayne.edu or leave a voice-mail at 577-2398. To sign up to bring food, please write k.pothukuchi@wayne.edu.
St. Andrews Garden, continued from p. 1

previous years, thereby contributing to the continuity of garden operations and institutional memory. These ‘veterans’ also help ease the garden leader’s job of coordination and workshop development.

We are also grateful for our community partnerships. WSU gardens on campus benefit from membership in Keep Growing Detroit (KGD), in the seeds and transplants we get from them and educational workshops offered by KGD staff. Hope Morrow, SEED Wayne Garden Leader, participated in the Urban Roots training offered by KGD.

SLUGS lead Warrior Garden

Warrior Garden is ably maintained by SLUGS—Student Leaders in Urban Gardening and Sustainability—in their second year. With the help of volunteers, leaders Kat Krupsky and Jake Grobbel led garden kick off tasks, including clearing beds and planting seeds and transplants.

Although the initial plan was to replace the rotting bed frames prior to the kick off, SLUGS decided to hold off this work until the end of the season. Instead, they replaced rotting boards and bolstered weak ones to start the garden up to coincide with the start of the growing season. To volunteer at the Warrior Garden, write slugs.wsu@gmail.com.

The rooftop garden on Parking Structure 5 is also starting to come back to life as Morrow and volunteers work beds and maintain them. These beds take an especially hard beating year in and year out with the intense summer sun beating down on them, combined with the heat radiating from the structure itself. Nonetheless, the garden serves to illustrate an innovative design for growing on hot, concrete rooftops. We need volunteers to care for the rooftop beds! To help out, write hope.morrow@wayne.edu.

Student Advantage Benefits, continued from p. 4

than eight out of 10 (82%) reported recommending the project to peers. The main attractions of the project include the ability to double their market outlay, access to healthy/quality/local produce, and the convenience of the market’s location for students. Students tended not to offer very many suggestions for changes. The most common ones included making more vouchers available, being able to use the vouchers on more food items, and vouchers in $1 denominations (currently, vouchers have a $2 face value).

Separately, customer surveys taken prior to Student Advantage indicate that the $5 fronted by students in the project is more than the average spending by individual students on fresh produce at the market. Students tend to prefer prepared foods over fresh produce. Thus, the Student Advantage Project constitutes a win-win-win solution: for students in terms of increased budgets for fresh produce and therefore healthier diets; for produce vendors in increased revenues; and for the market, greater numbers of new customers and increased spending per customer.

Mark Your Calendars and Spread the Word

June-July-August 2014

6/4: WSU Farmers Market Opens! 11 am to 4 pm, all Wednesdays until October 29, 5201 Cass Ave (Prentis Hall)
6/4: Keep Growing Detroit (KGD)
Urban Garden Education Series,
Reduce, reuse, recycle workshop, 6-8 pm, 5926 Lincoln St. For info on this and other KGD workshops, call 757-2635.
6/12: KGD, Culinary herbs, 6-8 pm, 2202 Third St. Call 757-2635.
6/19: KGD, Garden pest and disease identification, 6-8 pm, 13703 Buffalo.
6/19: 3rd Monday Movie Night, Right out of History: The making of Judy Chicago’s Dinner Party. 6:30-8:30 pm, MSU Detroit Center, 3408 Woodward, 578-9700. (Browse gbd.org for July+ Monday Movie schedule).
7/10: KGD, Weed management, 6-8 pm, 2839 Wabash St.


Mid-August, Date TBD: SEED Wayne Farm Tour, all day. Information will be posted at clas.wayne.edu/seedwayne.

Readers are invited to submit news on teaching, research, engagement, or operations of interest to SEED Wayne. Contact k.pothukuchi@wayne.edu

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The Student Advantage Project at the WSU Farmers Market improves diets of participants while also increasing revenues for the market’s fresh food vendors. In exchange for $5 in cash, current students get $10 in vouchers which may be exchanged exclusively for fresh produce. The project started July 17, 2013, and went through the end of the season, October 30. The pilot created approximately $10,000 in additional sales.

In October, 58 participants—38 women and 20 men—completed a one-page survey about the project. A majority (62%) were 25 years or younger, with one in five under age 20. Survey findings include the following:

- 66 percent of participants were new shoppers to the market. Thus, the project was successful in bringing in new customers.
- One out of two participants heard of the program at the market itself. Another 14 percent discovered it via a flyer, 25% via email, and approximately 10 percent from a friend.
- A majority live in 48201 (28%) and 48202 (29%) zip codes. Thus, the project largely benefits students living on or close to campus.
- 31 percent reported that they used vouchers just once during the season; 28 percent, 2-3 times; 28 percent 4-6 times; and 13 percent reported using them 7 or more times.
- The Student Advantage program has affected grocery shopping. Eighty percent of participants report that they bought more fruits and vegetables as a result, 69 percent bought more varieties of produce, and 87 percent increased their trips to the market.

Cooking and eating practices have also been positively impacted as a result of the project. 24 percent of respondents reported cooking more at home; 43 percent ate more fruits and vegetables themselves or shared produce with friends and roommates; 15 percent tried new fruits and vegetables; and 16 percent ate less junk food as a result of the project.

The program has been very positively received by participants. More

(Continued on page 3)