



# STATE OF ALABAMA FARMERS MARKET AUTHORITY



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Director

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## **ALABAMA FARMERS MARKET AUTHORITY PREPARES FOR BUSIEST SEASON EVER**

Montgomery, AL – The Alabama Farmers Market Authority (FMA) is looking forward to the most active season to date with the opening of farmers markets across the state. “We are very excited to open this season with 125 farmers markets in Alabama. It shows the demand for safe, homegrown produce,” said Don Wambles, FMA Director. In 1999 only 17 farmers markets existed in Alabama, with 125 markets scheduled to open this season that’s a growth of 635% in a decade.

A full listing of markets in Alabama can be found at [www.BuyLocalAlabama.com](http://www.BuyLocalAlabama.com). “Market season typically begins in the southern part of the state and expands north as the harvesting season for fresh fruits and vegetables progresses,” said Wambles. A directory of the markets, u-pick operations and roadside stands is cataloged by counties on the website. Each listing details market name, address, time and dates of operation and, when applicable, a Google map to the site. Be sure to check out our new promotion of “Feature Market of the Month,” highlighting a market and their activities for the season.

There are several reasons to ‘Buy Fresh, Buy Local’ in Alabama this season; among them are improved taste and a boost for your local economy. Locally grown produce from Alabama tastes better than food that is shipped long distances from other states or countries. Local farmers can offer produce varieties that are grown for taste and ripe with freshness, verses produce grown for shipping and a long shelf life.

Buying local food keeps money in your local economy thus improving your community. Purchasing at farmers markets also gives you the opportunity to put a face with the food you eat. Knowing where your food comes from and how it is grown or raised allows you to choose from farmers who are also concerned about the safety of your food and the environment. Those same farmers also eat the food they grow and reside in the communities where they farm.

The FMA encourages consumers to shop and interact with vendors in Alabama. “You can learn so much from vendors who grow their own produce, from how it is planted to the variety of their produce and possibly even new a recipe using their fresh ingredients,” says Wambles. “We want people to get to know who grows their food. Chances are they will learn something new and make a new friend in the process.”

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