

Summer Fun Guide: Farmers markets



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With dozens — literally dozens — of farmers markets in the region, the only problem is figuring out which ones to go to. Or better still, making a plan of attack to try to visit them all during the summer. There is nowhere better for the freshest produce, meat, eggs and a tempting array of assorted goodies. Here are some of our favorites.

Belleville Old Town Market: This year marks the 200th anniversary of the founding of Belleville, so the market will note the event with special programs throughout the summer. And of course 40 vendors, including about six farmers, will sell everything from produce to arts and crafts.

When 7:30 a.m.-noon Saturdays, through Nov. 1 • Where West Main and First streets, Belleville • More info 618-233-5877

City Greens Market: Now you can eat well while doing good. Sponsored by the Catholic Charities Midtown Center, the market aims to help its neighborhood by selling healthy, Missouri-grown goods at or below cost. Open to everyone.

When 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Tuesdays through Fridays and 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturdays • Where 4260 Manchester Avenue • More info 314-833-3811; midtowncitygreens.org

Ferguson Farmers Market: Go for the food; stay for the farmers market. The food, in this case, is both breakfast and lunch, including barbecue, Jamaican favorites and omelets. Other enticements include wine tastings, cooking demonstrations, food contests and live music.

When 8 a.m.-noon Saturdays, through Oct. 25 • Where Ferguson Citywalk, 20 South Florissant Road • More info 314-324-4298; fergmarket.com

Hillsboro Farmers Market: Brand-new this year, but only sort of, the Hillsboro market is basically a continuation of the now-closed Crystal City farmers market. That means you can look there for your favorite produce, beef, eggs, honey, jams, herbs, plants and crafts.

When 3:30-6:30 p.m. Wednesdays, through Oct. 8 • **Where** Fletcher House, Elm Street and Highway BB, Hillsboro • **More info** 314-550-7122

Lake Saint Louis Farmers and Artists Market: One of the largest markets in the area, the Lake Saint Louis farmers market distinguishes itself with its offerings of original art and handmade crafts, along with such extras as yoga and live music.

When 8 a.m.-noon Saturdays, through Oct. 25 • **Where** The Meadows Shopping Center, Highway 40 and Lake Saint Louis Boulevard, Lake Saint Louis • **More info** 314-495-2531, lakestlouisfarmersandartistsmarket.com

Melting Pot Market: This Granite City staple is not just a farmers market; it's an "open-air, European-style" market. Much of the produce sold there is from community gardens and private gardens, making it extra-local and fresh.

When 9 a.m.-1 p.m. the second Saturday of each month, through Oct. 11 • **Where** Niedringhaus Avenue and 20th Street, Granite City • **More info** 618-570-8676; alfrescoproductions.org

Midtown Farmers Market: The vendors may look familiar (many were at the Clayton Farmers Market when it was held on Saturdays), but the location does not; it's at the University City Market in the Loop. That's where you'll find fish, chocolate and furniture, along with the more usual items.

When Saturdays, 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., through November • **Where** 6655 Delmar Boulevard (back lot) • **More info** 314-913-6632; on.fb.me/ljriikd

Soulard Farmers Market: In operation since 1779, this is the oldest in the area (and one of the oldest in the nation), as well as the largest. Among other things, it is noted for its selection of meat, spices and fresh herbs — and don't forget the mini-doughnuts.

When 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Wednesday-Thursday; 7 a.m.-5 p.m. Friday; 7 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Saturday, year-round • **Where** 730 Carroll Street (at Seventh Street) • **More info** 314-622-4180; soulardmarket.com