

MARKET: Farmers Market has new day, new look

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Foundation, XPress Printing, and She Soars Psychiatry. As sponsorships are added, a complete list of cash and in-kind sponsors will be listed by the market.

“Metabolic Maintenance is excited about sponsoring the Sisters Farmers Market,” said director of marketing Karla Cross-Green.

“We enjoy supporting events that foster relationships with local farmers, ranchers, and artisans that provide a healthy array of organically grown produce and items sourced from humanely treated animals. The Sisters Farmers Market creates a great opportunity to connect with the community, meet up with friends, educate your children, and it makes shopping for healthy local items a treat.”

Part of the market’s new approach began last year, shifting from a vendor-led market to a community-led model. Kelleher is not a farmer but a registered nurse. “At a farmers market you can learn how to take care of your body — by eating fresh fruits and vegetables,” she said.

The main reason for a farmers market is access to healthy, fresh locally grown food. Growers know once customers taste a carrot just pulled out of the ground, or lettuce picked that day, it’s hard to forget the superior taste of fresh food.

Living in Central Oregon with its short growing season and many frosty nights can make it hard for individuals to have a successful, edible garden. That’s the beauty of the Sisters Farmers Market. Local farmers have figured it out, and this summer they’ll be selling produce fresh out of the field or greenhouse.

Local grower Audrey Tehan of Seed to Table invited several farmers and community members to join a focus group at the Sisters Library. The group discussed the market’s values, new events for the whole family, and the challenge of reaching new visitors with a limited budget and low-visibility location.

Tehan teaches in the Sisters schools and mentors students at her farm. She’s passionate about the benefits of local farming and knows when children have access to the places their food is

grown, they’re more apt to eat healthier. Local farming also benefits the local economy.

“The beauty of buying produce that was in the field the day before or even that morning from a local farmer to your table means so much,” said Tehan. “76 cents of your dollar stays in the local economy if you buy locally. Farmers want to produce things that customers want. Everybody wants those fresh salad greens, so that’s what we’re producing.

It benefits everybody’s health, and we need people to show up and buy the best head of lettuce they’ve ever had,” she said.

Brown and Kelleher’s work on programs and outreach frees up local farmers to spend their time growing food. Former Market managers Carys Wilkins and Benji Nagel, growers at Mahonia Gardens, are excited to see the market enhanced and refreshed. They love the idea of switching the day to Sunday and envision more customers showing up and having more family time. They’re also hoping to see more tourists join regular

weekly shoppers.

Wilkins and Nagel are impressed with Kelleher’s work as market manager. “It’s great having Rachel on board. She has the energy to put into it. We didn’t have the time or energy because we were busy with farming and being vendors,” said Wilkins. They’re happy to see Plazm on board to help with branding, creating a new visual identity and logo for the market.

Brown is excited to see all the new activities and learning opportunities starting this June. “Community members and businesses will share their skills, talents, and expertise—how-to cooking for adults and kids, health and wellness workshops, artisan and craft projects,” she said.

In collaboration with Jennie Sharp of Starshine Theatre, Brown is working on a new Sunday Showcase series which will stage demonstrations and talent shows with space for kids, teens, and adults of all ages. Volunteers, stage managers, talent-show MCs, and potential performers are all invited to get in touch with her.

Brown can be reached at t@kidmadecamp.com. Volunteers are also needed for setting up the market, distributing flyers and posters, and helping with the information booth. Contact sistersfarmersmarket@gmail.com



PHOTO PROVIDED

Fir Street Park is the venue for the Farmers Market — now on Sunday.

to learn more.

To give input on future focus-group meetings, contact Audrey Tehan at

audrey@seedtotablesisters.org. Visit the Sisters Farmers Market website at www.sistersfarmersmarket.com.



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