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## **In season**

### **Farmers markets promote local shopping, agriculture**

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Editor

Another way to shop locally and promote the State of Michigan is now in bloom across western Wayne County.

The beginning of spring spells the return of farmer's markets in places like Canton Township, the City of Plymouth and the City of Northville. Next week, the City of Wayne will join the group when the market returns for the second year, said City Planner Matt Miller.

"We're trying to make it a mini-event," said Miller. "We want to encourage local shopping."

In Wayne, the farmer's market will be open every Wednesday from 3- 7 p.m. in the parking lot of the State Wayne Theater on Michigan Avenue. Framed by the Wayne History Mural, the market opened to astounding results last year.

"It was very popular," said Miller. "We had a busy market every week."

This year promises to be the same, he said. The success last year means that all vendor spots have been filled for the entire season, which runs through October. In addition to the flowers, plants, baked goods and entertainment, there will be five crafters that rotate throughout the season.

Miller said a wide variety of Michigan made products will be for sale and each week will have a different theme, too.

"We're trying to keep it alive and growing and different," said Miller. "You have to keep it fresh and new."

Markets are also open now in Canton, Northville and Plymouth.

In Canton Township, they take place from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. every Sunday at the newly named Preservation Park, which is just north of Cherry Hill Road off Ridge Road in Cherry Hill Village.

Market Manager Tina Lloyd said new and returning vendors will offer everything from seasonal fresh fruits and vegetables, baked goods, to gourmet flavored popcorn, hand cut jerky, smoked fish and hand made crafts and jewelry. She said there is still room for additional vendors, too.

"We're always looking for new and unique vendors to add to our outdoor market, especially meat, cheese, seafood, and dairy vendors," said Lloyd.

In Plymouth, the markets are open from 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Saturdays in The Gathering, which is across from Kellogg Park. Teri Fry, events coordinator for the Plymouth Community Chamber of Commerce, said the market will again feature fresh produce, eggs, meat and poultry and baked goods along with handmade items including aromatherapy candles, soaps, hand-painted furniture and frames, children's clothing, aprons, purses, pottery, jewelry, birdhouses and more.

In Northville, the market is open from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. every Thursday off Center Street, across from Northville Downs. Miller said it was a no-brainer to bring the market back to Wayne, although changes at the State Wayne Theater may make for some crowded parking situations. The theater is now open seven days a week and will show first-run movies. He said the market will help bring exposure to that change, too.

"We attract people from all over," he said. "It brings a lot of people into the city."

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