



Farmers Markets Are Essential!

Farmers markets provide access to fresh, healthy food, a safe shopping experience, and immediate and long-term benefits for Illinois communities

-  Farmers markets provide access to **nutrient-dense foods** direct from local farms, including fresh produce, meat, dairy, and more.
-  Farmers markets offer a **safe alternative** to other means of purchasing food. Farmers markets are working to respond to community needs by offering handwashing stations, grab-and-go options, in-and-out markets, drive-through markets, and more.
-  Farmers markets often take place in a **spacious, open-air settings** that provide room for practicing social distancing measures. The temporary nature of farmers markets also means that food is not left on the shelf for days or handled or touched by multiple people.
-  Farmers markets offer **shorter supply chains** with less food handling. Farmers market food generally travels less than a few hundred miles from the field to the market, compared to 1,500 miles through conventional distribution channels.
-  Farmers markets provide **vital food access** to people across our state. Customers using SNAP benefits can double their dollars to buy fresh fruits and vegetables at over 100 Illinois farmers markets.
-  Farmers markets support **local farmers and food producers**. Investing in local food is critical to community food security, especially as we work to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. If we don't invest in local farmers markets now, we may lose them in the future.
-  Farmers markets **strengthen the local food system**, which is more important than ever for community health, the Illinois economy, and the environment.

Find your local farmers market today at www.buyfreshbuylocalillinois.org    