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Des Moines Marina market opens

The Des Moines Waterfront Farmers Market - the only farmers market in the state dedicated to environmental farming practices -- opens on Saturday, June 7, at the South Marina Park.

The Des Moines market is one of three in the Highline area. The Burien market operates Thursdays from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. at 10th Avenue Southwest between Southwest 151st Street and Southwest 152nd Street in Olde Burien.

The SeaTac Farmers Market will open its season on June 15 at Angle Lake Park. The market will be held Sundays from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Again this year, the Des Moines market will feature over 30 vendors with farm-fresh vegetables, fruits, eggs and cheese, as well as cut flowers and unique local crafts. Hours are 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.



Market-goers enjoy the sun and the sea during last year's Des Moines Waterfront Farmers Market at the Des Moines Marina. Stewardship Partners photo

"While Seattle has over a dozen farmers markets, people in Des Moines and surrounding areas also deserve access to fresh, local, and sustainably produced food," said Rikki Marohl, market manager for Stewardship Partners, the non-profit conservation organization that runs the market.

"This farmers market is also unique in that it supports farmers who are dedicated to sustainable practices and land stewardship."

The Des Moines Farmers Market was established two years ago by an organization called Farming and the Environment. Earlier this year, Stewardship Partners signed an agreement with the city of Des Moines to take over the management of this farmers market as part of their mission to support and promote conservation oriented farmers.

All of the participating farmers in the Des Moines market meet a basic set of environmental stewardship principles that ensure their practices protect the environment while sustaining the long-term viability of farmland.

These practices include protecting water quality, using natural methods of pest control, preventing soil loss, conserving energy, using water conservation measures, protecting fish and wildlife habitat, and enhancing genetic diversity.

Stewardship Partners is working with these farmers to bring them into the Salmon-Safe certification program, a regional third-party verified eco-label that helps farmers restore fish and wildlife habitat, protect water quality, and adopt sustainable farming practices.

Marohl notes that food in a conventional grocery store travels an average of 1,500 miles while food at the Des Moines market and other local farmers markets travels less than 200 miles and is generally harvested within 24 hours of being sold.

A survey by Seattle University students also found that the price of food at farmers markets is 14 percent lower than many conventional grocery stores.

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