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Subject: OSU South Centers to Host Farmers Market Conference March 11-12
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The Ohio State University College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences

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News from the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences

OSU South Centers to Host Farmers Market Conference March 11-12

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COLUMBUS, Ohio - Farmers, growers, farmers market managers, vendors and anyone else interested in farmers markets can learn tips for increasing a customer base, determine how to prepare for a disaster and get updates on key food safety regulations during a Farmers Market Conference March 11-12, organizers said.

Ohio State University South Centers will host the statewide conference as part of an effort to continue to offer new ideas, best practices and information to and from Ohio's farmers markets and vendors, said Christie Welch, farmers market specialist at OSU South Centers at Piketon.

The conference will be held at the Nationwide and Ohio Farm Bureau 4-H Center, 2201 Fred Taylor Drive, on Ohio State's main campus in Columbus.

OSU South Centers is part of Ohio State's College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences (CFAES).

"As with programs we have offered in the past, one of the greatest benefits is networking with others who are passionate about farmers markets and local foods," she said. "The conference is packed with practical information to assist Ohio producers and market managers to better their businesses."

The theme for the conference, now in its fourth year, is "Keeping it Fresh: Celebrating Ohio's Diverse Markets," and will feature several workshops and sessions designed to offer education relevant to advancing today's farmers market managers, vendors and producers statewide, Welch said.

Sessions will include:

- How Local Policy Makers Can Help Grow Your Market
- How to Talk to the Media

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The conference will offer group sessions as well as breakout sessions focusing on managers, vendors or new markets, she said.

"In addition to the informative presentations, there will be ample opportunity for networking with farmers market managers and vendors throughout the state with experience in both large and small markets," Welch said.

The conference is sponsored by OSU South Centers, CFAES, Farmers Market Management Network (FMMN) and Easton Farmers Market.

Registration for the statewide conference is \$70 per day or \$95 for both days for FMMN members. The cost for non-members is \$80 per day, or \$120 for both days.

Details on becoming a FMMN member can be found online at <http://fmmn.org>.

Registration includes refreshments, lunch and handouts. The conference runs from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. on March 11 and 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on March 12.

Registration can be done online at <http://ohiofarmersmarkets.osu.edu>. For more information, contact Melissa Carter at 740-289-2071, ext. 222 or at carter.1094@osu.edu.

Writer(s):

Tracy Turner
614-688-1067
turner.490@osu.edu

Source(s):

Melissa Carter
740-289-2071 Ext. 222
carter.1094@osu.edu

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