AMERICA'S BEST Farmers' Markets

Whether you're in a big metropolis or a tiny town, producer markets are popping up all over the country in spades. Here, *Clean Eating*'s culinary travel writer Peter Agostinelli reveals our top 50. Here are America's best local food dealers (listed by state, not rank).

armers' markets across the United States appear to be everywhere. In most states and growing regions,

from small towns to big cities and seemingly every community inbetween, consumers are shopping at a wider variety of producer markets for farm-fresh foods with seasonal availability.

Demand for these foods is driving the trend. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the main federal resource for agricultural marketing and resources, reports that the number of farmers' markets has surged by 76% since 2008 to over 8,200 markets. Many communities have multiple markets, depending on their size and the interest in locally grown foods.

Why is this happening? For starters, the sheer demand for fresher, local foods has taken root. Markets are also successfully communicating the nutritional advantages and safety of eating locally. In addition, many consumers are drawn to the principles of spending their dollars locally, supporting area producers and reducing the so-called "food miles" behind the meals on their tables.

If you're unsure of where to start, the following is our top 50 list of suggested farmers' markets across the United States. But let your eyes and taste buds be your guide. The best new farmers' market may be the one you're about to discover – either close to home or on your next road trip.



1. ALABAMA

Birmingham (year-round) One of the oldest producerowned markets in the United States, the Alabama Farmers' Market runs throughout the year and features foods from small farms across the state. The market has operated at its current Birmingham location since the 1950s by offering fruits, vegetables and other goods – think sweet corn, squash, grapes and peppers – that thrive in the hot climate zone of this southern state.

alabamafarmersmarket.org

2. ALASKA

Anchorage (May to mid-October)

The growing season may not be terribly long in this cold-weather state, nor does sunlight abound, but the Anchorage Farmers' Market is a Saturday staple for lovers of local foods despite those disadvantages. Producers like Arctic Organics cultivate produce in the soils of a glacial valley and employ greenhouse growing for specific plants. The market is proof that even hardy apples can thrive in an arctic climate.

anchoragefarmersmarket.org

3. ARIZONA

Prescott (year-round)

The Prescott Farmers' Market hosts more than 60 producers selling everything from plants to local fruits and vegetables. The market places a specific emphasis on showcasing sustainable producers from within Yavapai County, where it operates. Family farms like the one run by the Hernandez family in Chino Valley exemplify the type of small, diversified produce growers who make up the market's vendor lineup. **prescottfarmersmarket.org**

4. ARKANSAS

Fayetteville (year-round) This market often pops up on lists for the top-10 farmers' markets in the US, and for good reason. The Fayetteville Farmers' Market is a cornerstone of downtown-area social activity as well as the local food economy within this thriving university community in the state's Ozark region. The market operates with limited winter hours but is open three days per week during peak season.

fayettevillefarmersmarket.org

5. CALIFORNIA

San Diego (year-round) The North Park Farmers' Market brings everything from California avocados and citrus, fresh eggs, honey and meats to local consumers every Thursday. The lineup of more than 50 vendors also includes flower producers and craft beer breweries. The market is a noted spot for a casual dinner and enjoying San Diego's idyllic coastal weather. northparkfarmersmarket.com

6. CALIFORNIA

Aptos (year-round) This market in Aptos along the central coast of California is part of the Monterey Bay Certified Farmers' Market network, a family of markets including two seasonal producer markets and two year-round ones. The Aptos market is open all year no matter the weather with the regional bounty of small local farms. Think local olive oils, artisanal breads. fermented foods such as smallbatch sauerkraut and organic juices. And of course locally grown nuts, fruits and vegetables abound. Music and special events are additional attractions. montereybayfarmers.org

7. COLORADO

Boulder (early April through late November) Shoppers visit the Boulder Farmers' Market for Front Range foods from this town north of Denver at the base of the Rocky Mountains. Seasonal vegetables and fruits, pasture-grazed meats (including grass-fed beef and local lamb) plus other delicacies that thrive in the region's nearconstant sun abound. Weekly Saturday markets are joined by a Wednesday installment most of the year.

boulderfarmers.org



Prescott Farm Stand in Arizona





South Kona Green Market in **Captain Cook**



Traders Point Creamery

8. CONNECTICUT

Hartford (May through October; one location is open year-round)

Seven farmers' markets throughout the Hartford area present locals with farm-grown foods on weekdays. Producers from throughout the state gather to showcase produce, meats and other goods in a region classified as the largest perishable food distribution facility between Boston and New York City.

hartfordfarmersmarkets.org

9. DELAWARE Lewes (May through

November)

The Historic Lewes Farmers' Market is a producer-only market hosting more than 30 vendors. Organizers host the weekly market in the heart of historic Lewes, a prime location that attracts visitors who can bike or walk to the market. Producers also gather excess produce at market closes for a soup kitchen in nearby Milton. historiclewesfarmers market.org

10. DISTRICT OF

COLUMBIA (WASHINGTON, DC)

Dupont Circle (year-round) The local-food advocacy and environmental group FRESHFARM Markets operates 13 producer markets throughout the District of Columbia and nearby states, and Dupont Circle is one of its premier spots. The market sits in one of the district's most eclectic neighborhoods and highlights fresh vegetables and fruits, meats and fish from the Mid-Atlantic Chesapeake Bay region. More than 50 farmers sell goods during peak growing season.

freshfarmmarkets.org

11. FLORIDA

Vero Beach (year-round) Set on a beach on the Atlantic coast of Florida, Farmers' Market Oceanside has one of the best backdrops imaginable for a producers' market. In addition to fresh Atlantic seafood, quests can find pasture-grazed beef, seasonal Florida produce and more. Growers like Linda Hart, owner of Crazy Hart Ranch in Fellsmere, sell farm-fresh chicken and eggs. Locals and visitors alike flock to this small but vibrant, pet-friendly market for great foods plus a day at the beach. verobeachoba.com/ #!farmers-market/cev

12. GEORGIA

Athens (early April to mid-December)

The Athens Farmers' Market is a hub for local food in one of the country's most lively college towns. Home to The University of Georgia, Athens sits squarely in a hot, humid region of the southeastern US where many plants and livestock thrive think eggplant, peppers and other warm-climate vegetables plus fruits and bee products. The market is also a source for prepared foods, local art and artisanal goods like handcrafted soaps. athensfarmersmarket.net

13. HAWAII Captain Cook (year-round)

Hawaii may have as many farmers' markets as it has islands, sunny days and palm trees. As a result, residents have the luxury of countless local producer markets where farmers, artisans and vendors of all kinds sell their wares directly. The South Kona Green Market is a fine example. Guests can select from tropical fruits, island-grown vegetables, prepared foods and more. Want local macadamia nuts, papayas, coconuts and even botanical skincare products made from local ingredients? Look no further than this green market run by husband-and-wife team Karen Kriebl and Tim Bruno.

skgm.org

14. IDAHO

Bonners Ferry (late April to early October, plus holiday market hours)

One of the oldest farmers' markets in Idaho, the Bonners Ferry Farmers' Market has expanded steadily over its 35-year run. Local farmers showcase lamb, chicken and other pasture-grazed meats. Producers sell organic fruits and vegetables, including sweet corn, herbs and, of course, Idaho potatoes.

bonnersferryfarmers market.org

15. ILLINOIS

Evanston (early May to early November)

In the thriving community of Evanston, just north of Chicago, farmers' markets are a huge part of local culture. The Downtown Evanston Farmers' Market is a destination for nearly 60 vendors selling local meats, cheeses, milk, produce and other goods. The market has even been a launching pad for producers like Illinois farmer Henry Brockman of Henry's Farm, a longtime market purveyor of fine heirloom vegetables and other products.

evanstonfarmersmarkets.org

16. INDIANA

Zionsville (June to August, plus winter market hours)

The Green Market at Traders Point Creamery is uniquely held on the rolling grounds of Traders Point Creamery, an organic dairy farm where Brown Swiss cows graze on green pastures. The fields and barns make for an appropriate backdrop as meat producers, produce growers and other vendors gather to sell their fresh foods. The winter market finds many of the same producers on hand selling their foods and products.

traderspointcreamery.com/ farmstore/farmers-market



The Downtown Evanston Farmers' Market

17. IOWA Des Moines (May

through October, plus holiday market hours)

An enormous market hosting hundreds of vendors from more than 50 lowa counties, the Des Moines Downtown Farmers' Market is consistently rated as a top-10 destination for locally grown foods. Shoppers can select from a variety of lowa sweet corn, fresh berries, pastured pork, farmfresh eggs, organic vegetables and other treats. This year the market celebrated its 40th anniversary milestone as a mainstay of Des Moines life. desmoinesfarmers market.com

18. KENTUCKY

Lexington (year-round) This market has grown to operate five days a week during peak market months. Area producers attend the market to merchandise tomatoes, sweet corn and other seasonal specialties. Others are on hand to sell fresh eggs, pastured meats and other goods.

lexingtonfarmersmarket.com

19. LOUISIANA

Delcambre (February through June; August through December)

The Delcambre Seafood and Farmers' Market in south Louisiana is known for Gulf seafood and produce from Acadiana, or the Cajun country of the local bayous. Producers gather at the market to showcase locally grown okra, squash, eggplant and other vegetables and fruit that thrive in the region's intense heat. Boaters are encouraged to tie their vessels to the newly finished market's docks to purchase crab, shrimp, crawfish, alligator and other seasonal delicacies directly from vendors.

delcambremarket.org

20. MAINE

Portland (year-round, varies by location)

Maine's biggest city sits right on the Atlantic coast, so it's no surprise the Portland Farmers' Market's locations carry some of what the New England region is famous for - and it's not necessarily lobster. Farmers display a mix of local vegetables, fruits, pasture-grazed meats such as lamb, beef and pork, and artisanal cheeses. The market may have some of the deepest roots of any North American farmers' market, dating back to 1768 when the first public market opened in the town hall.

portlandmainefarmers market.org

21. MARYLAND

Frederick (year-round, varies by location)

Frederick has nurtured a grassroots movement for great local food, and its farmers' markets reflect that quality reputation. County-wide, Frederick is home



Open five days a week during peak season, Kentucky's Lexington Market is a culinary destination for locals and travelers alike with over 75 vendors to choose from.

to more than a dozen market locations on varying days, with producers at each showcasing fresh produce, seafood, meats and cheeses. Honey and other bee products are also available. **frederickfarmfresh.com**

22. MASSACHUSETTS

Lexington (late May through October, plus holiday market hours)

Located just west of the Boston metro area, Lexington is home to a thriving farmers' market showcasing locally produced organic vegetables, fruits, regional Atlantic seafood and freshly baked goods. Several wine and hard cider producers are on hand displaying their beverages for quests to enjoy while shopping and to take home for pairing with meals made from market goods. An on-site knife sharpener hones and sharpens guests' chef's knives, gardening tools or pet-grooming shears. lexingtonfarmersmarket.org

23. MICHIGAN

Kalamazoo (May through November)

The Kalamazoo Farmers' Market is a thriving market in Michigan, a state known increasingly for its craft beer community, cherry harvests and a gradual rebound from its industrial past. The market is a destination for fine seasonal produce, such as the smallbatch vegetables cultivated by farmer Gina Wertz. At Under the Stone Garden, her farm that she founded in 2012, Wertz harvests mushrooms, kohlrabi, cabbages, potatoes, onions, beets and peppers for display at the market (depending on the season). farmersmarket

kalamazoo.com

24. MINNESOTA

Saint Paul (May through November, plus winter hours) This fixture of Saint Paul – the "twin city" of Minneapolis – has a 150-year history of bringing fresh

best farm markets

Lexington Farm Market in Massachusetts, just west of Boston





The Cherry Street Farmers Market, Tulsa, Oklahoma



The Kalamazoo Farmers' Market

foods to local residents. Today the Saint Paul Farmers' Market brings local fruits and vegetables to shoppers along with buffalo, pastured beef and pork, eggs, baked goods and numerous other delicacies. Seasonal offerings from area producers at the winter market in downtown Saint Paul helps locals make it through the long Minnesota winter. stpaulfarmersmarket.com

25. MISSISSIPPI

Oxford (May through October)

In the southern United States, Oxford is considered a premier college town as home to The University of Mississippi, otherwise known as Ole Miss. The Midtown Farmers' Market here is a Saturday community fixture for farm-fresh chicken and duck eggs, pastured chicken and pork, artisanal grits, and varieties of okra, peas, watermelon, peppers and other vegetables and fruits. Also open on Wednesdays.

mtfarmersmarket.com

26. MISSOURI

Columbia (April through October, plus winter hours) Missouri may be home to much bigger cities, but Columbia has bragging rights for having one of the state's finest producer markets. The "mid-Missouri" foods available at the Columbia Farmers' Market include a range of farm-fresh eggs, locally grown vegetables and fruits, pasture-raised meats and honey. Live bands perform every Saturday. columbiafarmersmarket.org

27. MONTANA Helena (late April to

mid-December)

For more than 40 years, the Helena Farmers' Market has supplied locals with freshly grown foods from the region surrounding Montana's capital city. It's the longest-running market in the state with seasonal produce, locally roasted coffees and handmade crafts.

helenafarmersmarket.com

28. NEBRASKA

Lincoln (May to early October)

The Haymarket Farmers' Market in historic downtown Lincoln is a regional destination for freshwater fish, game meats such as elk and buffalo, and, of course, fine seasonal produce. Market organizers present live music shows and other performing artists. A market whistle kicks off festivities every Saturday when nearly 200 local and regional producers converge.

lincolnhaymarket.org/events/ farmers-market-vendors.html

29. NEVADA

Las Vegas (year-round) Despite being in the middle of a giant desert, the Fresh52 Farmers' Market is a haven for home cooks craving fresh, locally grown foods. They flock to the market every weekend for organic fruits and vegetables, vegan baked goods, essential oils and soaps, and even handcrafted jewelry. A Nevada-Certified Farmers' Market. Fresh52 is a fantastic place to learn about the role of irrigation and aquaculture in local food systems. fresh52.com

30. NEW HAMPSHIRE

Salem (year-round)

The Salem NH Farmers' Market is one of the largest producer markets in southern New Hampshire and a top stop for the area's eat-local movement. With live music, kids' activities and cooking demonstrations, the market offers prime New Hampshire specialties like maple syrup. Fresh seasonal vegetables, locally roasted coffees, artisanal cheeses, farm eggs and pastureraised meats of all kinds round out the list of market offerings. salemnhfarmersmarket.org

31. NEW JERSEY Metuchen (June through November)

The Metuchen Farmers' Market is a popular foodie destination in this

northern New Jersey community in close proximity to the region's small farms and producers. Guests can find varieties of pickled vegetables, artisanal cheeses, fresh baked goods, pastured pork and free-range eggs. Whistling Wolf Farm is among the attractions with its transitional organic produce that rotates with the seasons. Whistling Wolf even offers creations like its pepper wreaths, which are both beautiful and edible.

metuchenfarmersmarket.com

32. NEW MEXICO Albuquerque (mid-April

to early November)

The Downtown Growers' Market is a hotbed in this largest city of New Mexico, and its lineup of farmers reflects the cultural fabric of Albuquerque as well as its growing conditions. Local and organic vegetables, honey and Native American art are just a few of the attractions. The Land of Enfigment – one of the few fig tree nurseries in the state sells more than 50 climatized fig varieties. Need some fig leaf tea for balancing blood sugar? How about fig tree wood for a distinctive barbecue or smoker? Or perhaps Chinese dates and Spanish plums? It's all here. downtowngrowers.com

33. NEW YORK

Ithaca (year-round)

This acclaimed producers' market in the Finger Lakes region of west-central New York thrives due to the city's demand for high-quality local foods. (Farmers cultivate many fine greens and other vegetables in greenhouses throughout the long winters.) Five weekly markets operate during the peak growing season, with a regular winter market held in event space owned by Ithaca co-op GreenStar Natural Foods.

ithacamarket.com

34. NORTH CAROLINA Raleigh (year-round) The State Farmers' Market

BATT YPAN SQUASH PHOTO LEXINGTON MA MARKET STAFF, CHILD PHOTO EVAN TAYLOR PHOTOGRAPHY, FRUIT PHOTO KALAMAZOO FARMERS' MARKET

best farm markets



Known as one of Missouri's finest markets, Columbia's Farmers' Market boasts live bands every Saturday.

in Raleigh is staged in a 30,000-square-foot building, where fresh, local foods are on display daily. Enormous varieties of regionally grown vegetables, fruits, flowers and prepared foods are available throughout the year. Meats, cheeses, local wines and baked goods are also available. ncagr.gov/markets/facilities/ markets/raleigh/index.htg

35. OHIO

Cleveland (year-round) The West Side Market is known simply as Cleveland's oldest public market, and for good reason. The indoor and outdoor marketplace reflects the depth and diversity of the Cleveland area's ethnic traditions and fresh-food bounty. Fresh produce, meats, seafood, baked goods and dairy products are displayed in full force throughout the market. The historic building itself is a draw with its dramatic vaulted ceilings and enormous clock tower. For living, edible proof of the city's European and African-American influences, this market just west of downtown Cleveland is exemplary.

westsidemarket.org

36. OKLAHOMA

Tulsa (April through October) The Cherry Street Farmers' Market (aka Tulsa Farmers' Market) is a hub of Tulsa's local food movement. Growers gather on Saturdays to show off hormonefree beef, pork and lamb plus seasonal produce and dairy products. Since its launch in 1998, the Cherry Street Farmers' Market has grown into the largest producer market in Oklahoma. This year saw the introduction of a wholesale component that fosters direct purchasing options for area chefs and food-related businesses and organizations to shop locally and seasonally.

cherrystreetfarmers market.com

37. OREGON Gresham (May through October)

This dynamic market east of Portland reflects a mission focused on helping consumers connect directly with growers and building greater awareness of spending food dollars locally. The region's heritage of berry farming helped inspire the market's inception in 1986. Today's market lineup includes many vegetable and fruit producers, of course. One newer example is Slice of Heaven Farm in Sandy, Oregon, where farmers Brandon and Marieta Easley recent arrivals from Louisiana - harvest varieties of green beans, red potatoes, eggplant, peppers and even okra, a vegetable most commonly grown in southern states.

greshamfarmersmarket.cog

38. PENNSYLVANIA

Lancaster (year-round) Southeastern Pennsylvania is home to Pennsylvania Dutch Country, and Lancaster sits at its heart. That's where the country's oldest farmers' market operates three days per week throughout the year. Amish farmers and other area producers showcase local favorites such as pickled vegetables, specialty meats, fresh produce and regional favorites like scrapple, a breakfast meat of cornmeal and pork scraps.

centralmarketlancaster.com

39. RHODE ISLAND

Wakefield (year-round) The South Kingstown Farmers' Market is the longest-running market in Rhode Island and one of the state's best. Varieties of beef, pork, lamb and poultry are available from local producers. Seafood vendors show off fresh fish, clams, mussels and oysters from coastal Rhode Island waters. southkingstownfarmers market.org

40. SOUTH CAROLINA

Charleston (April through November, plus holiday hours) The Charleston Farmers' Market has been ranked as a top producer market in the United States, and its geographic coastal positioning is a prime reason why. The market boasts fine local produce, Atlantic seafood, organic herbs and pastured beef, chicken and lamb. Live music, the Piccolo Spoleto Outdoor Art Exhibit (a visual fine arts show) and celebrations of literary and performance art, are additional market highlights throughout the year.

charlestonfarmersmarket.com

41. SOUTH DAKOTA

Rapid City (May through October)

Set in South Dakota's Black Hills region, Rapid City is home to a growing farmers' market that celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2014. Seasonal vegetables and fruits, jerky and baked goods are some of the local specialties that draw guests from Rapid City and the surrounding area to the Black Hills Farmers' Market. In peak growing season, the market operates on Tuesdays and Thursdays in addition to regular Saturday hours.

blackhillsfarmersmarket.org

42. TENNESSEE Memphis (April through

October)

The Memphis Farmers' Market is set in downtown Memphis, a major port on the Mississippi River and a historic city steeped in food traditions, civil rights heritage and great regional music. This producer market is relatively new on the scene, having launched in 2006. Seasonal vegetables and fruits, locally roasted coffees, cow and goat milk products and cured meats from pastured pork are among the market offerings. A pavilion added in 2011 provides sheltered outdoor space for some of the market's vendors.

memphisfarmersmarket.org

43. TEXAS

Austin (year-round) The most dynamic city in Texas, the capital is home to the "Keep Austin Weird" philosophy that infuses local culture and commerce alike. And while Austin hosts a variety of terrific

best farm markets



The Downtown Market in Salt Lake City, Utah features meat from 100 ranches.

farmers' markets throughout its growing confines, the Hope Farmers' Market in East Austin may be its most eclectic – and the locally grown foods are just a part. The market also showcases HOPE FM Live, a spotlight on local music, and a poster-art program featuring Austin artists. Oh, plus there's excellent seasonal produce, meats and more.

hopefarmersmarket.org

44. UTAH

Salt Lake City (June through October, plus winter hours)

The Downtown Farmers' Market in Utah's largest city is a showcase for fine local produce, grass-fed meats, fresh juices and dairy products, among other things. More than 100 ranches and farms, all from within 250 miles of Salt Lake City, take part in the market. A separate art and craft component is another attraction, with ceramics, glasswork, leatherwork, sculpture and textiles on display. slcfarmersmarket.org

45. VERMONT

Burlington (year-round) The Burlington Farmers' Market is a year-round producer market set in Vermont's largest city and within its historic downtown district. Prepared foods, fresh flowers, seasonal vegetables and fruits as well as pastured pork are available. Artisanal goat milk products and fresh baked goods abound. The market even offers valet parking for shoppers arriving on bikes. **burlingtonfarmersmarket.org**

46. VIRGINIA

Charlottesville (April through December)

Located in an eclectic college town that's home to the University of Virginia, the Charlottesville City Market is a producer-only market with more than 100 vendors. Producers set up on Saturdays to sell grass-fed meats, eggs, seasonal produce, baked goods and crafts. Most of the producers are clustered around the Charlottesville area (located northwest of the capital city of Richmond) and reflect the town's wealth of regional food, wine and craft beer specialties. charlottesvillecitymarket.com

47. WASHINGTON

Tacoma (May through October, varies by location)

Tacoma Farmers' Markets are a prime destination for seasonal vegetables and fruits, including kale, cabbages, Brussels sprouts and apples. The markets' locations throughout the Tacoma area are also great sources for locally raised meats, Pacific Coast seafood, prepared foods and crafts. The Tacoma market also functions as a business incubator for new producers and supplies healthy-eating options for lowincome households.

tacomafarmersmarket.com

48. WEST VIRGINIA

Washington has multiple

outposts of Tacoma

Farmers' Markets.

Morgantown (May to early November, with winter hours) The Morgantown Farmers' Market holds its own as a local attraction in a town where West Virginia University (WVU) football games and other sports draw in large crowds. Set in downtown Morgantown, which is also home to WVU's main campus as well as local shops, the market is a central source for farm-fresh food in a largely rural state. Pasture-grazed beef and pork and seasonal vegetables from small growers in the Mountain State are just part of the lineup on market Saturdays. morgantownfarmers.org

49. WISCONSIN

Madison (year-round, with seasonal market hours)

The Dane County Farmers' Market is considered the largest producer-only market in the United States, and the crush of vegetables and fruits during peak growing seasons is one reason shoppers flock to it. So are the artisanal cheeses, another pillar of Wisconsin's agricultural economy. Pasture-raised bison, chicken, emu, turkey, smoked salmon and trout, not to mention some of Wisconsin's trademark bratwurst and other sausages, are additional draws for meat lovers. A regular Taste of the Market Breakfast made primarily with ingredients from the market is a highlight of the winter session.

dcfm.org

For home cooks and food enthusiasts of all kinds, the search for the best food often centers on freshness and variety. Local farmers' markets can be perfect sources for top-quality foods and a mix of producers selling directly to consumers.

But where to begin? Are you new in town, or just looking for a new market? Or are you a farmers' markets novice, or even a rookie cook?

No matter your expertise, information is as bountiful as the seasonal produce on farm stands right now. The following links can help steer you in the right direction for the closest market near you plus other local-food resources:

USDA.GOV/FARMERSMARKETS

USDALOCALFOOD Directories.com

PBS.ORG/FOOD/FEATURES/ FIVE-TIPS-FARMERS-Market-shopping

50. WYOMING

Casper (June through September, plus winter market hours)

Casper's Food for Thought Farmers' Market is the place for fresh foods in this rural western state. Seasonal produce, local meats, baked goods, jams, honeys, personal care products and dog treats make up part of the market's list of offerings. The summer market features food trucks with local vendors selling prepared foods and snacks. Monthly winter markets help shoppers stock up on meats and vegetables as well as prepared foods throughout central Wyoming's long, frigid winters. casperfarmersmarket.com @