



## **INSTITUTE FOR AGRICULTURE AND TRADE POLICY**

### **PRESS RELEASE**

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#### **Press Contact**

Ben Lilliston  
Communications Director  
+1 (612) 870-3416  
ben@iatp.org

#### **About IATP**

Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy works locally and globally at the intersection of policy and practice to ensure fair and sustainable food, farm and trade systems. IATP is headquartered in Minneapolis, Minnesota with an office in Geneva.

# **Mini farmers markets expand to bring local produce to Minneapolis neighborhoods**

## **Popular markets reach communities with limited access to healthy food**

**MINNEAPOLIS** – The number of mini farmers markets that provide fresh, local produce to Minneapolis neighborhoods has more than tripled in the past two years, announced the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP) today.

Located primarily in Minneapolis neighborhoods with limited access to healthy foods, the mini farmers markets feature five or fewer farmers selling locally grown vegetables, fruits and flowers at community centers, senior housing facilities, hospitals, churches and other neighborhood hubs. Since 2008, the mini farmers market initiative has grown from six markets to 21 scattered around the city.

“The rapid growth of these markets reflects the remarkable energy of neighborhood groups in meeting the needs of their community,” said IATP’s Local Food Program Director JoAnne Berkenkamp. “These markets are often located in neighborhoods that don’t have ready access to fresh produce. They are a great way to bring neighbors together while celebrating healthy eating and local agriculture.”

The markets were made possible by an innovative public policy creating a protocol specifically for mini markets. That policy was developed by the City of Minneapolis in collaboration with IATP. By working with community groups, IATP assists in obtaining city permits, training market organizers and connecting the groups with local farmers. In addition, IATP serves as an umbrella to allow interested markets to accept WIC and Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) food assistance coupons. Many participating farmers also donate some of their unsold produce to local food shelves. The City of Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support provided funding for the project’s early years including training and a “how-to” manual.

“These successful markets benefit our city in several ways,” said Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak. “They provide access to fresh, healthy, local food in neighborhoods where residents need and deserve it, they connect local farmers with economic opportunity and open a world of opportunity to our children. They build our communities and strengthen our economy at the same time.”

The 21 markets serve a wide variety of Minneapolis communities. For instance, the Streetwerks Youth Farmers Market serves a northside neighborhood and includes produce from a youth garden project run by Emerge Community Development. The Brian Coyle Community Center hosts a market primarily serving the Somali community on Minneapolis’ West Bank. St. Olaf Community Campus hosts a market at a senior nursing home and apartments. The new market at Children’s Hospitals was launched this summer in response to employee requests. Ebenezer Park and Ebenezer Tower Markets serve two high rises that are home to seniors and disabled veterans.

“The Streetwerks youth market has proven to be a great opportunity for our youth to learn entrepreneurship, and also interact with seniors in the community,” said Timothy Page, manager of the Streetwerks youth market. “When we’re at the urban farm it’s not unusual for seniors to stop in and give advice on how to grow the produce they want to buy.”

You can find out more about the mini farmers markets, including locations, dates and times at [www.iatp.org/minimarkets](http://www.iatp.org/minimarkets).

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