

MARKET GUIDE

Farmers markets find new life with autumn harvest

BY SARAH HENRY

Record-Eagle staff writer

At the tail end of summer, when the leaves begin to show blushing tints of red, yellow and orange and the once refreshing breeze carries a brisk nip to it, it's clear that autumn is just around the corner.

While locals and tourists may be pondering exchanging their bikinis for woolly sweaters, local farmers swap their summery produce with winter squashes, pumpkins, pears and apples.

Some of the appeal of farmers markets is that the produce is fresher than in supermarkets, and often picked only a few hours prior to being sold.

"This is the ultimate fresh," said Sara McGuire of Elk Rapids Royal Farms Inc. "I think in general the atmosphere at a farmers'

market is relaxed."

McGuire said though she sees a slight decrease in the number of customers during the fall, they generally buy more produce in bulk to snatch up the last of the growing season's yield.

But for Richard Friske, owner of Friske Orchards Farm Market in Atwood, fall means more customers and an even busier time of year.

"October is our biggest month of the year," he said. "Fall is just such a farm market time. Families really love to go to farm markets on the weekends in the fall. (In the summer) there's more exciting things to do, like beaches."

Friske grows 25 varieties of apples — his biggest fall crop — spread over 125 acres. The market sells Friske's own apple cider, applesauce and apple cider donuts.

Farther south from Friske's is Amon Orchards Farm Market in Acme. Dave Amon, owner of Amon Orchards, has celebrated summer success with some national coverage of his cherry jam.

"The food editor from the New York Times was up here and was just raving about our jam," Amon said. "He says we have absolutely the best cherry jam."

(In fact, the entire region was featured in a lengthy piece in the New York Times in July.)

Amon Orchards' fall produce fares well, too. As the self-proclaimed "Squash Capital of Acme," the orchard hosts squash cooking demonstrations on Saturdays in November. The demonstrations include tips and recipes for many varieties of squash, including acorn, butternut, buttercup,

sweet dumpling, spaghetti and hubbard.

On weekends in October, the orchard offers fall activities including hot dog roasts, corn or tree mazes,

antique cider press demonstrations and of course, fresh donuts.

One farmers market item

PLEASE SEE PAGE 22

24 hours a day • 7 days a week • 365 days a year

Visit our online
Directories



Find out what's going on Up North

www.record-eagle.com

DIRECTORIES

Realtors

Downtown Traverse City
UpNorth/Arts&Entertainment

UpNorth/Autos

UpNorth/Builders

UpNorth/Golf

UpNorth/Dining

UpNorth/Lodging

UpNorth/Summer

UpNorth/Wine

UpNorth/Winter

TRAVERSE CITY
RECORD-EAGLE

For more information call Sue Murchie at
231-933-1510 or 1-800-968-8273 or e-mail at
smurchie@record-eagle.com

8-29.su.714021



Record-Eagle/Sarah Henry

Cherries from Leo Ocanas Farms at the Farmers' Market in Traverse City.

24 hours a day • 7 days a week • 365 days a year