



# Farmer's market hot spot for local produce

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TRAVERSE CITY— Rain or shine, nothing will stop the Downtown Traverse City Farmer's Market.

"We're here," Market Master Betty Boswell said. "Sometimes it's really nasty, but we don't mind."

Boswell, who has been market master for 10 years, said weather sometimes affects the number of customers, however.

Cold weather didn't stop co-workers Karen Otto, Lorrie Schneider and Liz Yarch from coming to the market. Otto and Schneider said they have been coming for the past two years, but Yarch was a first-time customer.

"I got an apple crumble," Yarch said. "I'm very excited for it, but I'm not going to eat it all myself."

The trio works just across the street from the market, making it a good place for an afternoon snack.

"The vegetables are always really good," Otto said. This time she bought a soup mix after trying a sample.

"We give them some business every year," Schneider said. "We support our local farmers."

The market is a gathering of merchants selling plants and home-made, home-grown fresh goods from fruits and vegetables to

baked goods and sweets.

Melissa Rice of Traverse City was representing Great Harvest Bread at the market. She said cinnamon rolls were the most popular sale.

"It's fairly easy to get set up," Rice said. "Basically you come out here and try to sell your product. You get to see people from all over northern Michigan."

**"I always tell people to come here because it's so nice."**

**Hilda Sundstrum,  
local vender**

Sharon and Shawn Gray from Benzie County said they had never sold at the farmer's market before this season. They were selling home-grown strawberries.

"It's been kind of slow, but it's picking up," Sharon said. "At least, they told us it's slow, but we've been doing well."

Tillandsia Bromeliads, or "Air Plants" are Hilda Sundstrum's specialty. She has been selling the plants at the market for five years.

"I do really well with them," she said. "It's a quick market, especially after Cherry Festival."

Sundstrum, who lives in Copemish, said the market is one of her favorite places to sell.

"I always tell people to come here because it's so nice," she said.

Bill Hathaway, of Hathaway Farms in Suttons Bay, said smaller crowds on Wednesdays offer a different dynamic from the more fast-paced, "wall-to-wall people" rush of Saturdays.

"I can take time out with these individual customers," he said. "The interaction between the customer and the vendor is a unique occurrence that is really rewarding."

The market's unique communication environment allows Hathaway to explain the honey-making process and also to make a more personal connection, he said.

"One Saturday morning there was a little youngster who broke away from his mother and ran down here to get a sample," he said. "By the time he got back, his mother had gone to look for him. I told her, 'If he comes by here you'll find him sitting on this seat.'"

The Farmer's Market is open Wednesdays and Saturdays from 8 a.m. to noon.

The market is located at the city parking lot east of Union Street along Grandview Parkway.



Record-Eagle/John L. Russell

Top: Area farmers grow a variety of produce from strawberries to green peppers. Bottom: Paul Eppe from St. Joseph, Mich. sells raspberries and blueberries.