Clemson Farm Fresh Market opens on campus today

BY MIKAYLA KREUZBERGER
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CLEMSON — Sarah Otte is one busy student.

A junior agriculture mechanization and business major at Clemson University, she co-manages the bi-monthly Clemson Farm Fresh Market that opens today at Cox Plaza on campus.

"We have eight or nine vendors who sell everything from squash to tomatoes to cucumbers, and even jams, jellies and salsas," Otte said. "We also have Gibson Beef Farm from Westminster at our market, which is the only certified organic beef farm in the state, so you can buy meat, too, if you wanted."

The Farm Fresh Market began in 2009 as part of one student's creative inquiry research project. Otte and her co-manager, senior Nicole Schutte, have managed the project since 2011.

"We are pretty much completely self-sufficient. Our faculty advisor helps us when we need it, but students have managed it since it began," Otte said.

Funding for the project is scarce, but Otte said the market does receive a small amount of money each semester to keep it running as a creative inquiry project. It also received a much larger state grant in 2009 to boost its inception.

Otte also said students involved in the project do their own advertising and manage the market's Twitter and Facebook pages (@CUFarmFresh and Clemson Farm Fresh Market).

"We have over 1,000 'likes' on Facebook, so I think we're doing a pretty good job about spreading the word," she said.

The market is open to students, faculty and staff, and is also open to the public, Otte said.

The fall semester market schedule is 11 a.m. until 2 p.m. today, Oct. 10, Oct. 24 and Nov. 7 (every other Wednesday).

"Being from a farm family in Indiana, I love knowing where my food comes from, and I love meeting the people who make my food," Otte said. "I think it's important to give other college students a healthy option for food choices. If you want to pick up an apple on the way to class, you can grab one at the market."

Cox Plaza is located in front of the Student Union building on campus.

For information about the Clemson Farm Fresh Market, contact Otte at (864) 386-6036.

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