

Clemson Farmers Market kicks off 2012

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BY GREG OLIVER
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CLEMSON — The Clemson Farmers Market opens for its third season today and the Patrick Square site will feature a new full-time market manager and more than 20 vendors participating.

Held rain or shine, the market will take place from 3:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. each Friday at the Town Center through Oct. 26. Kathi Dimmock, who brings experience working with the Augusta, Ga., Farmers Market, said she thinks the number of vendors will increase as more products become available and positive word of mouth spreads.

"We hope that the good experience vendors have here with the market will bring in others," Dimmock said. "We also don't compete with other markets since we're open on Fridays, so we're trying to build that base."

The market will feature fresh, locally grown vegetables, fruits, herbs, plants and flowers along

with certified USDA organic beef, eggs and poultry. Artisan breads and pastries, jams, preserves, salsa, barbecue sauces and ribs are also included. Area artisans and craftspeople will be demonstrating and selling

handmade clothing, earrings, necklaces and bracelets, pottery and nature-based arts and crafts.

Dimmock said this year features another first with entertainment. Clemson's own Tony Tidwell performs from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. Another new offering is

First Friday at the Market, held from June through October, featuring food vendors, demonstrations by local artists and a free outdoor movie starting at 8:30 p.m. At the first event June 1, "We Bought a Zoo," starring Matt Damon will be shown.

"We're kind of experimenting to see if First Fridays will enable us to build a larger audience," she said.

Vendors must sell products they have grown and any jams, jellies or other foods must be prepared through a certified kitchen. Participants must also live within a 70-mile radius of Clemson.

Dimmock said she eventually hopes to see the market open year-round, building partnerships with the community and developing corporate sponsorships.

"This is a great location for the market, easy and very accessible to get into and also good for the city because it's activity-based," Dimmock said. "This meets all of those goals."

The market is sponsored by the city of Clemson and Patrick Square. A complete list of vendors and special events planned can be found on www.clemson-farmersmarket.org.

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The Clemson Farmers Market opens its third season today and continues every Friday through Oct. 26 from 3:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. The market, which features more than 20 vendors, is free and takes place rain or shine.

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