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FEATURED

Safety encouraged at Beloit Farmers' Market

By HILLARY GAVAN Senior staff writer
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The Downtown Beloit Farmers Market was held last Saturday with only 27 vendors and other precautions in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Farmers Market again will be held on Saturday with the same restrictions.

Photo by Debra Jensen DeHart

BELOIT — Downtown Beloit officials and volunteers are urging visitors to the Beloit Farmer's Market to observe safe practices and understand the rules have been put in place for a reason.

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The first Beloit Farmers' Market of the season was held June 6 with new precautions put in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic. With 27 vendors, the market attracted 1,086 people. It typically has 93 vendors and attracts about 7,000 people, according to Downtown Beloit Association Promotions Coordinator Crystal Cribbs.

To follow Beloit Emergency Operations Center guidelines of no more than 200 people at a time in light of COVID-19 safety considerations, volunteers used a system to count those entering.

This year the market offers vendors deemed essential, such as farm-based product sellers including those with produce, cheese and honey. Vendors with the most seniority had the first right of refusal.

Cribbs said she was aware some vendors who were unable to be part of the market are participating in the Kauffman's Country Store Market in Newark Township, and she wishes them well.

"We care about our vendors and are supportive of pop-up markets if they help out the vendors," she said.

Cribbs encourages anyone with rural property outside the city to consider making space for vendors who may need it during this time.

At the Beloit Farmers' Market, Cribbs reminds attendees of the new rules to keep visitors as well as vendors safe.

- Hours are from 9 a.m.—noon each Saturday.

- 200 guests will be allowed into the market at one time. It is suggested to only send one member per household to give everyone an opportunity to shop at the market.
- The entrance to the market will be at Broad and State streets. There will be a line at Broad Street with 6 feet distancing between individuals. The market exit will be at Grand Avenue and Pleasant Street.
- Vendors will be limited to essential food-only sales. Only 27 vendors will be featured at the market to allow for 15 feet between each vendor booth.
- Customers are prohibited from touching food items prior to purchase. The vendors are required to have one employee select the food and another employee handle the purchases. Customers can plan their purchases prior to attending the market by viewing offerings at www.downtownbeloit.com/farmers-market-2.
- Visitors should not eat their food while in the market or gather with others and should exit the market after making purchases to allow others to enter the market.
- Vendors are to sanitize their hands between transactions and maintain 6 feet of physical distancing.
- Market staff, vendors and volunteers will be wearing face coverings. Market visitors are highly encouraged and recommended to wear a face covering while at the market.
- People are recommended to bring your own hand sanitizer to the market. However, the market will have hand sanitization stations available to those who need it.
- Pets are not allowed in the market; pets have not been allowed since September 2014.

The 27 vendors who are going to be at the market are: Hank and Kathy Baumann, Natalie's Garden and Greenhouse, The Shady Tree Farm Market, Brad and Cindi's Produce, DL Aqua Farms LLC, Montero's, Steele's Greenhouse & Produce, Van Laars Farm Market and Bake Shop, CC Angus Beef, GBM Elk Farm Inc., Wright Way Farm, South Padre Sea Food, Carousel Acres, Johnson Family Produce, Lilies N Pots, Marie's Bees, Nina & Family Garden, Sai Thor, The Cheese People Bli's Home-Grown Produce, Kopp's Krops, Seng & Pai Lee Thao, Willow Creek Acres, Xiong Family, Dilly Creations, Pheasant Hill Farm and The birds & the bees.

Hillary Gavan