



Weekly Farmer's Market News May 31, 2008

Yes there are vegetables at Jasper Farmers Market And no it is not too late to grow your own

By Darla Huffman

With food cost rising, more and more people are thinking about raising some of their own vegetables; an earth saving as well as money saving idea. If you don't have the room or the time for a traditional garden, try a few plants on your patio, in containers or incorporate some into your landscape. Several market vendors have plants for sale that are locally grown, large and healthy, and they are all willing to share their expertise and experience to help you grow your own. This week Gene Stewart had tomato plants and sweet potato slips; Kathy Bell and Terry Berrier had tomato plants and a variety of herbs and Zach White had tomato and pepper plants and will likely have more next Saturday.

There were a lot more vegetables and in greater variety at the market this week. Lettuce, spinach and other greens were still plentiful and yellow squash, zucchini, onions, cabbage, new potatoes, radishes and garlic were available from several different vendors. We can expect to see more each week as the summer progresses.

Two familiar vendors made their first appearance this year. A lovely fragrance was the first notice of Addie's Potpourri being back at the market. Another favorite from last year, Lynn Archer and her mother Sue Wheeler were once again in their colorful booth full of little girls clothing and accessories.

Three Jasper women, Betty Miller, Diane Hogue and Chrissy Stamey have gotten together to start a business of making unique gift packages. They make, what looks like a 3 tiered cake, or a wreath to hang on the door; but it's not what it seems to be. It is made up of useful items, such as disposable diapers, toys

and other infant accessories for baby shower gifts and towels or whatever you choose, to make gifts for other occasions.

Buying locally is not just for vegetables. All the reasons that make that a good idea are also true for handmade items. (Ok, except for the taste and nutrition part.) The quality and workmanship of the handcrafted items at the market are usually superior; it wasn't shipped a long distance, and it contributes to the economy of your own community. In addition to that, the things you buy are often unique and one of a kind and the craftsman may be willing to custom make something just for you. There are several furniture makers at the market that fit this description. Lee Prince said that she has taken over the whole basement and pushed husband Darryl into a corner, but he seemed to be happy to be a helper to his wife's woodworking activities. She enjoys making, what she describes as her country style furniture, tables, clocks and birdhouses. Other furniture makers often (or always) at the market include Roy Stanaland, Leo Beller and Billy Hunt, the last two specializing in lawn furniture. Although other woodworkers often build a few birdhouses, the two vendors' best know for their birdhouses are Larry Wright and Floyd Reed. They both have a wonderful variety to choose from and are always coming up with something new.

The Jasper Farmers Market is held every Saturday from now until October 28, from 7:30 am to 12:30 pm. The exceptions will be the Saturdays of July 5 and Oct 4. During the peak season there will be a Wednesday market from June 18 to August 27, with the same hours. The location is the Park & Ride Lot, beside Lee Newton Park, off of Highway 53, near downtown Jasper, Georgia. Only handmade or homegrown products can be sold at the Jasper Farmers Market. Watch this newspaper for any exceptions to time or location and other up to date information regarding the farmers market or go to Master Gardener web site at www.pickensmg.com. For any farm and garden questions call the Pickens County Agents office at 706 253 8840.