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Fairfield's farmers' market aims to be destination event

Inaugural farmers' market to feature music, library story time every Wednesday.

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FAIRFIELD — The inaugural year for the weekly Fairfield Farmers' Market won't be just about fresh, locally produced food as it will also be about family and fun.

In Fairfield fashion, Tiffany Acuff, the city's farmers' market manager, said the weekly market at the city's Village Green will be a destination event, and that entertainment value is "something the people of Fairfield have come to expect."

"It's going to be a place where people can meet and spend time to together," she said. "It's not going to be just a shopping center."

About 20 to 25 vendors every week will set up booths from 4 to 7 p.m. at Village Green Park and Amphitheater, and those vendors will vary slightly as types of fruits and vegetables come in and go out of season. But there will also be musical acts playing at the Village Green's amphitheater, and the Fairfield Lane Library moved its weekly family story time event a day sooner to be a part of the event.

Fairfield Lane Library Branch Manager Cynthia Stafford said she's more than happy to involve the library in any event at Village Green.

"One of the things we look at are ways we can function as part of the Village Green campus," she said.

And though it took some time for the farmers' market to grow from an idea to reality, Stafford said it's exciting to see this launch.

"We're trying to promote literacy, and hopefully people passing through will stop by and do activities," she said. "People can make a whole family day out of it. I think it's something that's going to be great for the community. I think it's going to be very inclusive."

Family story time is for those families with grade-school children and younger.

The parks department received the go-ahead from the city council and city administration about nine months ago to pursue the market, said Ben Strickler, the city's parks events manager.

"It's another event we can bring to the community, and engage more folks at the Village Green," he said. "We've had a lot of feedback over the years to do something like this."

Acuff was one of those people wanting a farmers' market when she moved from Ann Arbor, Mich., four years ago.

"The first thing we said was, 'Where's the farmers' market?' And we were shocked when we found out there wasn't one," she said.

While Acuff believes the market will be "a resounding success," the proof of that success will be known by the success of the vendors.

"Ultimately, if the vendors are happy, then everyone is happy," she said. "That means people are buying things they want and are probably going to be enjoying themselves enough to come back every week to patronize the vendors."

There will be around 20 core vendors every week, Acuff said, and they'll top out at around 25, which she said is "a nice number."

"That will be a good number for the city to be at ... any more would over saturate the market," she said.

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