

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ALEXANDRIA FARMERS MARKET OFFERS PRODUCE CONSIGNMENT VIA THE COMMUNITY PRODUCE TABLE

Calling backyard gardeners, very small farms, and new/beginning farmers to sell produce and support community food access in rural Louisiana

ALEXANDRIA, LA – Beginning immediately, the Alexandria Farmers Market is accepting applications from gardeners and very small farms, to sell produce on consignment at the Tuesday Alexandria Farmers Market. This will help farm entrepreneurs learn about direct to consumer sales of farm products, and make it easier for shoppers to buy and eat a diversity of fresh, local produce. Interested gardeners and farmers can apply online and find more information at www.louisianacentral.com/afm.

The Community Produce Table is a pilot project to help increase the amount of direct to consumer sales access for very small farms and home gardeners, and help increase the amount of produce available to shoppers at the market every week. High quality fruits and vegetables are in demand year round at every farmers market in the state, but especially at the Alexandria Farmers Market. The Farm & Food team at Louisiana Central is excited to demonstrate creative scalable solutions for increased food security in Central Louisiana through this pilot project.

“Not everyone can grow enough, or be available to staff a vendor booth every week at our farmers market. The Community Produce Table will create more opportunities for folks that work on Tuesdays, grow small amounts, or have singular seasonal crops (like blueberries) to connect with the shoppers at the market,” said Bahia Nightengale, Executive Director of Farm & Food for Louisiana Central. “Our team is excited to showcase the diversity of produce that our home gardeners and very small farms are growing.”

Anyone growing fresh fruits and vegetables on a very small scale who isn't able to set up a full time vendor booth at the market is invited to explore the produce consignment option. **Market Staff will be hosting an in-person Open House on Monday, May 6 from 6-7pm at the Louisiana Central office in Downtown Alexandria.** Interested gardeners and farmers can stop by to chat. Pre-registration is encouraged but not required. To register, click here > <https://cleda.wufoo.com/forms/zwrfyty1jcsx5j/>

If you cannot make the in-person Open House, there will be an online Open House via Zoom on Thursday, May 23 from 11am - Noon. Registration is required to attend the online Open House. Register here > <https://cleda.wufoo.com/forms/zz7czap1aks7kx/>

The Alexandria Farmers Market is celebrating its 10th year as a community food hub in 2024, with an average of 25 approved vendors every year, and a long history of successful programs. The Community Produce Table will add a new element to the vibrant market every week. The market vendors emphasize Louisiana Agriculture and provide a variety of products that include: pecans, nursery plants, jams, jellies, pickles, preserves, cane syrups, homemade baked sweets,

sourdough breads, grain fed and 100% grass fed beef and pork, eggs, gourmet mushrooms, mens and womens bodycare, housewares, handmade fragrances, pies, cake, pralines, seasonings, and much more.

“Access to fresh food is an important issue, both for consumers and farm and food businesses,” said Nightengale. “Our market’s location and environment make it accessible and welcoming by car, bus, or even biking or walking from the surrounding neighborhood. This new program improves the market’s accessibility from a totally different perspective.”

Chris Richmond, the Alexandria Farmers Market Vendor and Market Specialist, said The Community Produce Table pilot program at the Alexandria Farmers Market was made possible through community partnerships and strong support from very small farms, and gardeners.

The Alexandria Farmers Market is open every Tuesday from 3-6 pm. in the First United Methodist Church of Alexandria parking lot at 2727 Jackson Street.

To connect with Market Staff, email info@louisiana-central.com.

Follow the Alexandria Farmers Market on Facebook at www.facebook.com/AlexandriaFarmersMarket.

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About The Alexandria Farmers Market - Connected by Louisiana Central

The Alexandria Farmers Market exists to help connect people with the hands that grow and raise our food. Connecting to our local food goes hand in hand with connecting to our community. Learn more about the market at www.louisiana-central.com/afm.

About Louisiana Central

Louisiana Central is the regional economic development organization for Central Louisiana. It is a pivotal connector uniting leaders in the region to work together to make Central Louisiana a thriving hub for sustainable economic growth. The organization exists to grow the ten-parish region of Allen, Avoyelles, Catahoula, Concordia, Grant, LaSalle, Natchitoches, Rapides, Vernon, and Winn. To learn more about Louisiana Central visit www.louisiana-central.com.

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