



North Coast Growers' Association

Humboldt County Farmers' Markets

www.northcoastgrowersassociation.org

PO Box 4232 Arcata CA 95518

(707) 441-9999

Press Release - For Immediate Release

Contact: Portia Bramble, Executive Director 707-441-9999
portia@northcoastgrowersassociation.org

Re: North Coast Growers' Association Merges with Southern Humboldt Farmers' Market Association

The North Coast Growers' Association is excited to announce its merger with the Southern Humboldt Farmers' Market Association. Starting in 2020 the Garberville, Shelter Cove and Miranda farmers' markets will join NCGA's other successful markets under the umbrella of NCGA as the operator. NCGA is a 501 c 3 non profit organization with the primary mission to operate certified farmers' markets for the benefit of both producers and consumers, to promote awareness of and support for farmers' markets, to work with other direct marketing associations to share resources and improve market management, to educate consumers, and to promote and improve access to local agricultural products for the community.

NCGA and the Southern Humboldt Association both operate with a member-driven vision wherein vendor-members make decisions collectively, shaping the operations of the organization and the farmers' markets. The Southern Humboldt Farmers' Market Association members voted in the spring of 2019 to join with NCGA. Following a successful market season where NCGA staff worked closely with the SoHum volunteer board of directors and market managers to provide assistance and develop goals for the merger, the NCGA membership voted with an overwhelming majority in support of merging on November 6 at the bi-annual NCGA membership meeting in Bayside. NCGA will provide all administrative support for the southern Humboldt markets out of its Arcata office, while maintaining a transition committee of volunteer members who will ensure the unique characteristics of each community market are valued and maintained.

"This move is exciting because it brings together ag producers from across the county, and allows NCGA to share its resources and provide help to Southern Humboldt farmers' markets which will benefit everyone across Humboldt County" says Ginger Sarvinski of Sarvinski Family Farm in Pepperwood and past NCGA President.

The Garberville market was founded in 1994 and has thrived under tremendous support from the local community. The market takes place Fridays, 11am-3pm on the beautiful Town Square at Church and Locusts streets in downtown Garberville.

Over twelve years ago the Miranda Farmers' Market began with one farmer, and has now grown to an average of seven vendors, with up to seventeen vendors on special occasions. With the support of dedicated crafters, farmers, local businesses, tourists, and customers, the Miranda Farmers' Market vendors are proud to be a part of the community. Aside from the usual produce, they have offered mushrooms, beef & pork, dog treats, honey, sweet breads, crafts, body products, jewelry, jams, prepared foods, and even knife sharpening services! Miranda market will take place on Monday from 2pm-6pm, May-October.

Miranda Farmers' Market Manager and SHFM board member, Toni Stoffel says, "Over the years, in times of trouble or doubt, I have leaned on the NCGA staff and board members for their support and expertise, and they were always more than willing to share their wisdom with me. By combining these two groups, we will be unifying ALL of the existing, certified farmers' markets in Humboldt County, allowing complete coverage for marketing our locally produced items. Each of our markets will continue to retain their individuality and personality. Our association has been able to pay only one part-time employee, and in order to keep our markets up-and-running, we have always relied heavily on the volunteer hours that our members could donate. The NCGA is a non-profit organization, with well-established, (and happy!), employees who can even access funds from grants that will now benefit our own Southern Humboldt communities. It will be a pleasure being full-time partners with the North Coast Growers' Association!"

Shelter Cove market takes place each Tuesday, at Mario's Motel and Marina, from 11am-3pm from May through October.

NCGA is now the operator of all Certified Farmers' Markets in Humboldt County. A number of independent markets and farm stands continue to operate in various communities. For a full listing of Certified Farmers' Markets, community markets, farm stands and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farms as well as a directory of all farmers' market vendors please visit www.northcoastgrowersassociation.org

NCGA has been providing administrative support for the Market Match healthy food nutrition incentives program for the Garberville market for the last 3 years, and in 2019 assisted Miranda and Shelter Cove markets to become EBT/CalFresh accessible and offer Market Match. NCGA is very pleased to share the announcement of a 3 year award from the National Institute of Food and Agriculture through the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program and the California Nutrition Incentive Program to the California Market Match Consortium which will support the program in Humboldt County. NCGA also receives funding support through a contract with the Humboldt County Department of Health and Human Services for CalFresh Outreach. Shoppers can now use CalFresh and receive Market Match at all Humboldt County Certified Farmers' Markets.

NCGA Executive Director Portia Bramble says "NCGA is very proud of the success and growth of the Market Match program and the tremendous benefits it brings to the community. To now be able to extend our resources beyond the CalFresh and Market Match programs and collectively manage all Humboldt County farmers' markets, we will reduce the number of fixed costs, reduce annual fees farmers pay to attend markets, and significantly improve our marketing and outreach. We are very excited to work closely with Southern Humboldt and promote farmers' markets county-wide."

While most seasonal markets are closed for the winter, market goers can visit the Arcata Plaza Farmers' Market every Saturday year round. The Arcata Plaza market is the largest in the North Coast region and the longest continuously-running market in the state of California. Membership in the North Coast Growers' Association is open to residents of Humboldt County who grow or raise what they sell within Humboldt County. Working collaboratively, NCGA staff and members represent agricultural interests in Humboldt County through community partnerships that promote local and healthy foods, programs that increase access to local food, participation in local and statewide policy-making, and coordination of ten Certified Farmers' Markets.