



Greene should help farmers markets thrive

Sunday, May 5, 2013

A farmers market, all the rage in many communities, was first introduced in Greene County eight years ago, and this will be the second year that area residents will have three locations from which to buy locally grown fresh produce.

This past Saturday, the Nathanael Greene Historical Foundation and the Greensboro Elm Street Project held its first market event of the year at the Greensboro Gazebo on Front Street. Then, on May 14, Greene Growers Farmers Market will kick off its second year at Franklin Township's municipal building on Rolling Meadow Road. Last year, Greene Growers set up its tents at the Yamaha shop on Route 21 eastbound between Interstate 79 and the county fairgrounds. This venture is a producer-only market selling strictly local products hailing from an area within a 25-mile radius of Waynesburg. A verification committee will visit the farms and confirm the items a vendor brings to the market are coming from that farm or producer.

And, on May 15, local farmers and others will once again peddle a variety of treats at the weekly Farmers' Market on Church Street in Waynesburg.

The most obvious question we must ask is, "How long can all three survive?"

And the most obvious answer is, "As long as they continue to offer quality products."

Each is held on a different day, and in a rural county such as Greene, there are ample numbers of growers to provide a bounty for consumers. The Greensboro site features fresh produce and eggs from Harden Family Farm, Brian's Tomatoes and Plum Run Winery. Harley Joe Gapen will offer farm-fed meats and Willow Tree Farm will offer homemade baked goods and desserts.

The aim of Greene Growers is to give local farmers and producers an outlet for their wares while providing

truly local items such as fresh meat, fruit, vegetables, eggs, baked goods and plants to customers. The Waynesburg Farmers' Market, spearheaded by Waynesburg Prosperous and Beautiful, is an event we have urged Greene County residents to support. That support is being extended to the two others because we can think of no better places to experience and purchase locally grown produce. Selection of items will vary, depending on the time of the year.

Later in the summer, more locally grown produce and other items will be sold at all three sites.

Greene County's festivals and pageants are usually one-day events, except for the fairs and the King Coal Show in Carmichaels. But the farmers markets are five-month open-air markets, and their success is often dependent on the weather. For the last eight years, people have supported the Waynesburg Farmers' Market, and we urge continued support for the others as well, recognizing the work farmers, nonprofit organizations and churches put into these enterprises.

It's the least Greene County can do.

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