

HEALTH EVENTS

IMAGINE online auction

Through April, bid on auction items for Northern Virginia AIDS Ministry to raise money for AIDS awareness. Bid at imagine.cmarket.com.

Parent and family health event

Enjoy yoga, dance classes and more. Starts at 6 p.m. today at Shadd Elementary School, 5601 East Capitol St. SE, Washington. Child care is provided. Event is at 6 p.m. every Tuesday and Thursday. For more information, visit dc.gov.

Health day

The Fit 2 Live Community Health Day starts at 10 a.m. Saturday at the Turkey Thicket Playground, 1100 Michigan Ave. NE, Washington. The event will feature an obstacle course, a 3K Fun Run/Walk, health screenings, physical fitness tests and demonstrations. Visit dc.gov for more information.

Body Well Nutrition event

Meet a nutrition specialist and learn more about sports nutrition at the Body Well Nutrition event at noon Saturday at the Vitamin Shoppe, Rockville. Visit vitaminshoppe.com for directions and more information.

Health event

The Holy Name Catholic Church is sponsoring an informational health event from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. June 6 and June 13 at 920 11th St. NE, Washington. There will be free kidney screenings, as well as information on diabetes, cancer, Alzheimer's and more. Free to the public. Call 202-397-2525, visit kidneyfund.org/get-tested or e-mail stewart@kidneyfund.org for more information.

Volunteer opportunities

Unity Health Care

Unity Health Care Inc. is seeking volunteer patient greeters who will assist in facilitating consumer-centered care for patients. For hours, e-mail volunteer@unityhealthcare.org or call 202-715-7977. Unity Health Care, 1220 12th St. SE, Suite 120, Washington.

Hospice of the Chesapeake in Anne Arundel County

Outgoing people are needed to help staff the Hospice Information Booth at various health fairs and community events in both Anne Arundel and Prince George's counties. E-mail kbourgard@hospicechESAPEAKE.org or call 443-837-1549. Hospice of the Chesapeake, 8724 Jericho City Drive, Landover; 445 Defense Highway, Annapolis.

CONTACT

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COOKING with Kerry Dunnington

Supporting local farmers reduces carbon footprint

It happens every time I'm in the grocery store, people filling their carts with fruits and vegetables that aren't in season. The urge to tap them on the shoulder and fire off my thoughts about the benefits of eating foods in their growing season and the powerful effect it has on our environment abandons me.

While I'm an advocate, I never seem to drum up the courage to tell a perfect stranger the food he's putting in his cart has traveled thousands and thousands of miles. I've rehearsed the story a million times — do you know those peppers you are about to put in your cart have traveled from either South America or Holland; the asparagus you're contemplating hails from Peru; the strawberries from California; and those tomatoes flew in from Mexico?

I've often wondered, if grocery store produce departments offered frequent flier miles for fruits and vegetables purchased within a given year, which would accumulate the largest number of miles? Asparagus, (one of the biggest food mile defenders) generally logs more miles in a week than commercial airline pilots! By the time this delicate vegetable finds its way into your grocery store cart, it's traveled the globe and lost most of its nutrients with each passing mile.

This is true for most of the produce we purchase from the grocery store. As the crow flies, Peru is approximately 3,500 miles from the mid-Atlantic, China 7,500 and California 3,000! The fresh produce you buy may look as if it stands up to such vigorous travel itineraries, but from a nutritional standpoint it doesn't.

Recently I read if everyone in the United States ate locally grown foods only 10 percent of the time, we could save every small farmer in this country! That's one meal out of every 10 meals or a meal three days a month!

To protect, preserve and honor our local agriculture, we need to reverse the buying trend. To do this and to prevent the carbon footprint, (carbon footprint is a measure of the effect on the environment in terms of the amount of greenhouse gases produced, measured in units of carbon dioxide) from having more of an effect on our environment, we need to buy food from local farmers. By doing so we are supporting our communities, and eating the freshest and most flavorful food at the peak of its harvest with the most nutrients.

Kerry Dunnington is a food columnist and author of "This Book Cooks." She can be reached at thisbookcooks@verizon.net.

Washington, D.C., Farmers Markets

Adams Morgan Farmers Market
Columbia Road and 18th Street NW
8 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Saturdays, May 6 to Dec. 23

Anacostia Farmers Market
14th Street between U and V streets SE
3 to 7 p.m.
Wednesdays, June 7 to Nov. 15

Chevy Chase Farmers Market
5701 Broad Branch Road
(Lafayette School parking lot)
9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Saturdays, April 29 to Nov. 25

Dupont Circle FreshFarm Market
20th and Q streets NW
9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Sundays, year-round

Eastern Market Outdoor Farmers Market
225 Seventh St. SE
7 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Saturdays and Sundays, year-round

Foggy Bottom FreshFarm Market
I Street between New Hampshire Avenue and 24th Street NW
3 to 7 p.m.
Wednesdays, through Nov. 15

H Street FreshFarm Market
600 block of H Street NE
9 a.m. to noon
Saturdays, May 6 to Oct. 28

Historic Brookland Farmers Market
12th and Newton streets
12th Street: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Sundays, May 7 to Oct. 29
10th and Otis streets NE
10th Street: 4 to 7 p.m.
Tuesdays, May 9 to Oct. 24

Mount Pleasant Farmers Market
17th and Lamont streets NW
(Lamont Plaza)
9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Saturdays, May 6 to Nov. 18

New Morning Farmers Market
36th Street and Alton Place NW
(Sheridan School parking lot)
8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Saturdays,
June 3 to mid-March; 4 to 8 p.m.
Tuesdays, June 6 to Sept. 26

Penn Quarter FreshFarm Market
Eighth and D streets NW
3 to 7 p.m.
Thursdays, through Nov. 16

USDA Farmers Market
400 Seventh St. SW (Department of Transportation plaza level)
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Tuesdays, May 16 to Nov. 21

USDA Farmers Market, Department of Agriculture
12th Street and Independence Avenue SW
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Fridays, June 2 to Oct. 27

Ward 8 Farmers Market
Martin Luther King Jr. and Alabama avenues SE
9 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Saturdays, June 3 to Nov. 18

All Souls Farmers Market
2300 Cathedral Ave. NW
(in parking lot behind All Souls Memorial Episcopal Church, entrance on Woodley Place)
8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Saturdays, May 6 to Dec. 16

Rose Park Farmers Market
26th and O streets NW
4 to 7 p.m.
Wednesdays, through Oct. 25

Northern Virginia Farmers Markets

Arlington Farmers Market
North Courthouse Road and North 14th Street (adjacent to the Arlington County Courthouse parking lot)
8 a.m. to noon through December
9 a.m. to noon January to mid-April

Clarendon Alliance Markets
2531 Wilson Boulevard
(Clarendon Metro Station)
2 to 7 p.m.
Wednesdays, year round

Clarendon Courthouse Farmers Market
8 a.m. to noon, through November
(Courthouse parking lot)

Rosslyn Farmers and Artists' Market
1911 N. Fort Myer Drive, Suite LL10
11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Thursdays, May 15 to Oct. 23

Alexandria Farmers Market
301 King St.
City Hall (Old Town)
5:30 to 10:30 a.m.
Saturdays, year-round

Del Ray Farmers Market
East Oxford and Mount Vernon avenues
8 a.m. to noon
Saturdays, through Dec. 2

Fairfax Farmers Markets
fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farm-mkt.htm

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The Natural Resources Defense Council is my favorite site for sourcing what's in season. It's free to become a member; visit nrdc.org to find out what's in season in your area, and click on eating local.

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