



1001 SE Water Avenue, Suite 455
Portland, Oregon 97214
Voice: 503.241.0032 Fax: 503.241.2262
www.portlandfarmersmarket.org

July 30, 2008

Reserves Steering Committee
Metro
600 NE Grand Avenue
Portland, OR 97232-2736

RECEIVED
AUG 01 2008
NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION

Subject: Farmers Markets and Urban and Rural Reserves

Members of the Reserves Steering Committee:

The Portland Farmers Market (PFM) operates four farmers markets in the city of Portland: the Saturday market on the Park Blocks near Portland State University; the Wednesday market, also on the Park Blocks (Shemansky Park); a Thursday market at SE Salmon and 20th Avenue; and a Thursday market at the EcoTrust Building in NW Portland. About 175 farm vendors sell products at our markets in an average week.¹ Approximately 50 percent of the farm vendors grow their products on farms in Multnomah, Washington or Clackamas Counties. According to Portland's Office of Sustainable Development, there are 135 farms in the three counties that market directly to shoppers at the 26 farmers markets in the region. The PFM is, therefore, vitally interested in the coming designation by the three counties and Metro of "urban" and "rural" reserves.

The PFM markets have been very successful. The number of markets, the number of farm vendors, the volume of shoppers, the volume of sales, the lengths of each market's season have all grown significantly in the years since the establishment of PFM. Some 460,000 thousand people shopped at our four markets in 2007, averaging about 39,000 shoppers each week.

A recently completed² economic study of all the farmers markets in Portland (there are eight in addition to the four operated by PFM, for a total of 14 markets) analyzes the economic impact of the markets, the potential demand for markets and the overall prospects for expansion. Among the conclusions of the analysis are the following:

- The total direct and indirect economic impact of Portland's 14 markets is estimated at \$17.1 million, generating 154 jobs and a payroll of \$3.167 million.
- There is considerable demand in the region for new and expanded farmers markets.
- There is capacity in the region to supply the markets (two-thirds of farmers interviewed said they intend to expand their operations).
- Money spent on produce from these farms stays in our region.³

¹ Some vendors sell at more than one of the PFM markets.

² Prepared for the Portland Office of Sustainable Development and PFM, soon to be published.

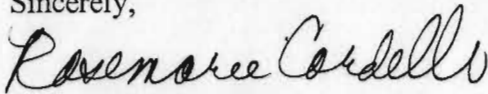
³ In contrast, local food sector observers estimate that less than five percent of fresh produce sold in typical grocery stores is locally grown.

We understand that a map of direct-market farms in the three-county area, prepared by the Portland-Multnomah Food Policy Council, the Portland Office of Sustainable Development and the Oregon Department of Agriculture has been presented to the Reserves Steering Committee. That map shows the general locations of the 135 farms that sell at the 26 farmers markets in the region. These farms play a unique role in our region. They supply fresh, healthy, local food to people of the region. They educate people about food and nutrition, and the critical role of agriculture in the lives of urban dwellers. They keep money spent on food circulating within our communities. And they make farmers markets – which themselves add vitality to the neighborhood centers of our region – possible in the first place.

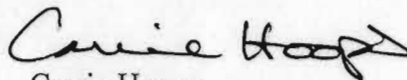
The convergence of world-wide forces – global climate change; increasing costs from oil supply uncertainty; and security of the nation's food – gives us further reason to protect direct-market farms. The new study of Portland's farmers markets leaves little doubt that more people in the region will look to farms in the region to supply a significant portion of their food in the future.

For all these reasons, the farms that supply the 26 farmers markets in the region deserve your thoughtful attention as you make your recommendation on designation of reserves.

Sincerely,



Rosemarie Cordello
President, Board of Directors



Carrie Hoops
Interim, Executive Director

cc. Katy Coba, Director, Oregon Department of Agriculture
Jim Johnson, Oregon Department of Agriculture