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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: July 27, 2009

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**NEW PROGRAMS AT THE DOWNTOWN YPSILANTI FARMERS' MARKET PUT CASH IN
HAND FOR LOW-INCOME SHOPPERS**

YPSILANTI, Mich., July 27, 2009 — The Downtown Ypsilanti Farmers' Market features three programs this summer designed to put more locally-grown produce in the shopping bags of low-income residents by providing additional income to spend at the market. The market, located in the Key Bank parking lot on the corner of Michigan Avenue and Hamilton Street, is open from 2:00 – 7:00 p.m. on Tuesdays. Washtenaw County Public Health, Growing Hope, Michigan State University Extension and Washtenaw County Women, Infants and Children (WIC) are collaborating to offer the following programs.

- In July each time food stamp recipients use their Bridge Card at the market they receive up to \$5.00 back in “Bonus Bucks” -- in August the amount of match increases to \$10.00. The Bonus Bucks are funded by a \$2500 grant from the Michigan Department of Community Health and administered by Washtenaw County Public Health.
- The Prescription for Health program, funded through the Washtenaw County Health Department and the Michigan Department of Community Health, provides \$5 in tokens to patients at 5 local medical clinics. The Neighborhood Health Clinic, Hope Clinic, Corner Health Center, Packard Health, and UM Ypsilanti Health Center are participating in the program. Ypsilanti-area food

pantries are participating in another version of Prescription for Health which offers \$10 in tokens to pantry users.

- Project FRESH is a free program that provides low-income older adults and Women, Infant and Children (WIC) recipients with coupons to buy fresh, Michigan-grown produce. Participants receive \$20 worth of coupons that can be used at the farmers' market. For information about WIC Project FRESH, contact the County WIC office at (734) 544-6800. Michigan State University Extension administers Senior Project FRESH. Call (734) 222-3956 for more information. Four Senior Appreciation Days are being held at the market throughout the summer to complement Senior Project Fresh.

“These programs are a ‘win’ for everyone involved,” says Jenna Bacolor, Health Promotion/Disease Prevention Program Supervisor at Washtenaw County Public Health. “Participants have increased access to fresh fruits and vegetables, local farmers have more customers, and downtown Ypsilanti benefits from a thriving downtown market.”

For more information about the Downtown Ypsilanti Farmers' Market, please contact Growing Hope at (734) 786-8401 or info@growinghope.net.

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