



Farmers' Markets New Zealand Chairperson's Report 2008

Over the last three years the community of Farmers' Market has grown from 21 to 42 Farmers' Markets and so has the FMNZ committee, from three to seven executive members and I now welcome our new representatives from the Parnell Farmers' Market, Catherine Parker and Phillippa Pitcher, as well as Jonathan Walker from the Hamilton Farmers' Market. A big thank you to Helen Dorresteyn from Clevedon for contributing over the last 18 months. The current FMNZ Executive Committee details can be found [here](#). I would like to personally thank them all for their contributions as we are all busy with our own Farmers' Markets and hectic schedules.

While the growth and interest in Farmers' Markets in NZ has grown over the last two years, so has the need to ensure that we are being Authentic to the true meaning of the words Farmers' Market, that of being a food market that sell's product from a defined region by somebody involved in the production of it. The food available from your markets should emulate your region and the people that live in it. Locals consumers are looking for and supporting local producers and are becoming more and more discerning in what they do or don't buy. The supermarket is the place to go and buy produce from China and Australia and the far flung places of the world, so we need to ensure that we keep the Farmers' Market message pure and simple.

To ensure that we are working towards the bigger picture, the FMNZ executive looked at funding from Government to support our [buy local](#) message. This has been approved and will be matched dollar for dollar as we work through six milestones over the next 18 months to promote farmers' markets, not only to consumers, but also to NZ food producers. A number of issues were identified in our 2006 Strategic plan and this has been incorporated into the funding project to ensure that we keep meeting the needs of our market members and consumers.

FMNZ will be working with all member farmers' markets on this exciting project that will see seven Farmers' Market regions formed so that markets are able to network with each other and provide the very best locations for NZ food producers to sell from. As more markets have started in NZ the very real issue of too many markets and not enough producers has arisen and this needs to be addressed with quality of the market organisation and not a thinning out of the principles of Authentic Farmers' Markets

The highlights of the last 12 months have been the visits to the markets around NZ and meeting the organising groups and managers, who rain or shine, are making Farmers' Markets the success that they are. From [Invercargill to Keri Keri](#), every week there are bustling and hustling Farmers' Markets, where consumers can purchase the very best of local produce. Snow, rain, westerlies, northerlies, and blistering heat, all test the determination of each market but one thing is certain, they are all providing real local experiences for their consumers, as they support them through both good and bad times

With the success of the 2nd FMNZ conference, we are now planning a Market Manger Forum to be held in the Auckland region in June/July next year. This will be run in conjunction with the conference held every second year as we continue to build on the family of Farmers' Market people. [Katrina Gordon Shows](#) have been actively promoting small producers in there trade shows around NZ and we look forward to the upcoming announcement of the [Cuisine Artisan Awards 2009](#), open to all food producers of NZ. NZ Media has been quick to embrace the Farmers' Market stories and we will be keeping the momentum going as we head into a more unstable economic period where people are tightening their purse strings. Again, Farmers' Markets need to ensure that they are selling [Authentic experiences](#), as people want and need to be reassured about where there food products have come from and how they have been produced

I look forward to working with all Farmers' Markets over then next 12 months as the FMNZ executive delivers the results from the "Buy local" funding proposal and I implore all to smell, taste, eat, live, laugh and embrace your local food producers and their produce.

Chris Fortune

Chairperson FMNZ

members@farmersmarkets.org.nz

www.farmersmarkets.org.nz

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