CONTACT

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Market Manager

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OPEN-YEAR ROUND
RAIN OR SHINE
Downtown Hickory
Under The Sails Union Square

Regular Season Hours
Wednesdays 10:00 am - 1:00 pm
Saturdays 8:00 am - 1:00 pm

#hkyfarmersmkt

2025 Impact Report

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Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food – Hippocrates

Downtown Hickory
Union Square
Under the Sails

Dear Community Members, Supporters, and Partners,

At the heart of our organization is a simple but powerful mission: to provide our community with access to locally grown and produced healthy foods while strengthening the wellbeing, education, and vitality of our local food economy. Everything we do is centered on supporting the residents, farmers, and artisans who make our community vibrant and resilient.

This year, we continued our commitment to expanding access to fresh, locally grown foods for everyone. Through a variety of programs designed specifically to serve vulnerable populations, we work to ensure that healthy food is not only available, but also affordable and accessible to those who need it most. By supporting these initiatives, we help foster healthier families and a stronger, more equitable community.

Our Union Square location is a welcoming and convenient place where residents can find a wide variety of high-quality, farm-fresh products at fair prices. Beyond simply offering food, we strive to create meaningful connections by bringing customers face-to-face with the farmers and producers who grow and make the products they purchase. These direct relationships strengthen trust, transparency, and appreciation for the work that sustains our local food system.

Education also plays an important role in our mission. Through classes and informational programs on nutrition and cooking, we help community members build the knowledge and confidence needed to make healthy choices and fully enjoy the fresh foods available to them.

At the same time, we remain deeply committed to supporting the resilience of our local food system. By providing farmers and vendors with a consistent customer base in a well-organized, attractive, efficient, and cost-effective marketplace, we help ensure that local agriculture and small food businesses can thrive for years to come.

This annual report highlights the progress we have made together and the impact of your continued support. We are grateful to everyone who helps make this work possible. Together, we are building a healthier community and a stronger local food economy.

Thank you for being a part of it.

Sincerely,

Board of Directors
Hickory Farmers Market Association, Inc.

MAILING ADDRESS

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Hickory, North Carolina 28603

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WEBSITE

www.hickoryfarmersmarket.com

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OUR MISSION

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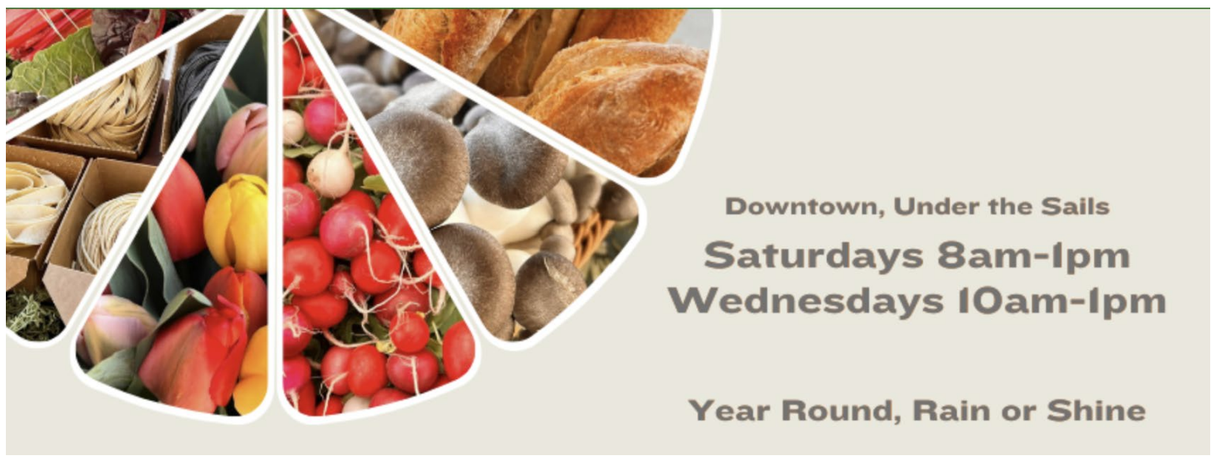
We provide community access to locally grown and produced healthy foods. Our focus is on contributing to the wellbeing, education and vitality of the community and local food economy for our residents, farmers and artisans.



The Hickory Farmers Market Association Inc. was incorporated on March 11, 2004. and was developed by the Hickory Downtown Development Association (HDDA). We are a private, non-profit 501 (c)(6) organization with a thirteen-member volunteer Board of Directors.

Support access, affordability and consumption of local grown foods through various programs specifically designed to serve vulnerable populations.

Enable a healthy community by providing a wide variety of high quality, local and farm-fresh products at fair prices in a convenient location.

Provide informative classes and information on nutrition and cooking.

Provide an environment where customers can speak directly to the growers and producers of their products.

Support local food systems resilience by providing a consistent customer source in a well organized, attractive, efficient and cost-effective setting for local farmers and vendors.

OUR WORK HELPS CLOSE THE GAP

Residents experience a significant gap in life expectancy based on neighborhood census, with the lowest life expectancy at 64.6 years in Long View compared to the highest at 82.6 years in Northwest Hickory..

Catawba County Community Health Assessment.

PREVALENCE OF FOOD INSECURITY
12% of Catawba County residences and 13% of their children experience food insecurity.

DIET RELATED DEATHS
There were 4,146 deaths from diet-related health conditions like heart disease, stroke, cancer, and diabetes from 2016 to 2021, 43.5% of total deaths.

LIMITED ACCESS BASED ON GEOGRAPHY
10% of households face food limited access due to geographic locations. In 2019, 1 in 10 people in our community had limited access to food based on their income and where they live.

IMPACT ON CHILDREN
Around half of the county's children are classified as "economically disadvantaged".

COST AS A BARRIER
The cost of healthy food is an obstacle.

Our Impact

The Hickory Farmers Market makes a meaningful impact on the community by serving as a vibrant hub that connects residents, farmers, artisans, and local businesses. Each market season draws significant traffic to downtown Hickory, helping energize the area and support nearby shops, restaurants, and businesses. By providing a dependable marketplace, the market supports local farmers and producers, giving them a place to sell their goods directly to customers while strengthening the local food economy.

30,653

Total visitors downtown during the main season

948

Average Saturday visitors during main season.

17.9%

Increase of attendance downtown year over year.

50+

Vendors and growing

$15,142

Given towards Food Insecurity Programs *

* We provided access to healthy foods through our vendors and a variety of special programs which included SNAP, Double Bucks and Food assistance totaling $15,142. Not included in this amount is further support enabled through the vendors for the programs of WIC, Senior Vouchers and the Donation Station.

06

SNAP & Double Bucks Programs

The market has operated a program to fund Double Bucks, which doubles the purchasing power of SNAP participants. This is part of our charitable purpose and designed to increase access, affordability and consumption of fresh produce.

What is SNAP?

SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) is a U.S. Federal Government funded program administered by the USDA that provides food benefits to low-income families to supplement their grocery budget. This gives them the ability to afford nutritious food essential to health and well-being.

What Are Double Bucks?

Double Up Food Bucks match SNAP EBT dollars so participants can get twice the fruits and vegetables. This program is administered by the Hickory Farmers Market

What Foods Can Be Bought?

- Fruits and vegetables
- Dairy products
- Snack foods
- Seeds
- Meat, poultry, and fish
- Breads and cereals
- Beverages
- Plants

DONATION STATION

Organized by the NC Cooperative Extension, the program allows market shoppers, farmers, and community members to donate fresh produce or money to help residents experiencing food insecurity.

The donated food is then distributed to families in need while supporting local farmers and reducing food waste.

SENIOR VOUCHERS

As part of WIC, this program helps older adults buy fresh, locally grown food. In Catawba County, eligible seniors receive a set number of vouchers to purchase fresh fruits, vegetables, herbs, and sometimes honey from approved, participating farmers as payment.

WOMEN, INFANTS, & CHILDREN (WIC) PROGRAM

HFM connects to eligible WIC participants (pregnant or postpartum women and families with young children) to use vouchers to purchase fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables directly from farmers. The partnership helps WIC families access healthier foods increasing access to fresh produce within the community.

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Throughout the year, we host a variety of programs, special events, and educational activities that promote healthy living, local agriculture, and food access. These efforts create opportunities for community members to gather, learn, and engage with one another, fostering a strong sense of connection and pride in our local community.

Programs Through Community Partnerships

We align with organizations to host community Health Fairs to bring essential health services, education, and resources directly to the community. These events provide valuable resources like:

Health Access & Screenings:
Blood pressure checks, glucose testing, quick vision tests, and dental screenings. Early detection of chronic conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, cancer, women's health, nutrition and mental health.

Community Engagement:
To promote dialogue about health concerns in a non-intimidating environment. Help connect people with local resources like clinics, support groups, and wellness programs.

Family-Friendly & Inclusive:
Kids, seniors, and families to promote intergenerational health awareness.

Programs Through Media Communications

We educate consumers regarding healthy food choices through newsletters, emails, cooking demonstrations and recipes.

Our Programs Sponsors:

NC COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
catawba county center

CATAWBA VALLEY HEALTH SYSTEM

Festivals and Dinner Series help strengthen the market by celebrating local farmers, growers, and artisans while bringing the community together around fresh, seasonal food. Chef demonstrations, tastings, and cooking presentations showcase the region's food culture and inspire visitors to try new ingredients and recipes using locally sourced products.

These events also attract new and returning visitors to downtown, benefiting nearby businesses and creating a lively atmosphere. At the same time, they promote healthy lifestyles by sharing cooking tips, recipes, and nutrition information that encourage families to include more fresh, local foods in their daily meals.

Watch for Future Seasonal Events, Festivals, and Dinner Series

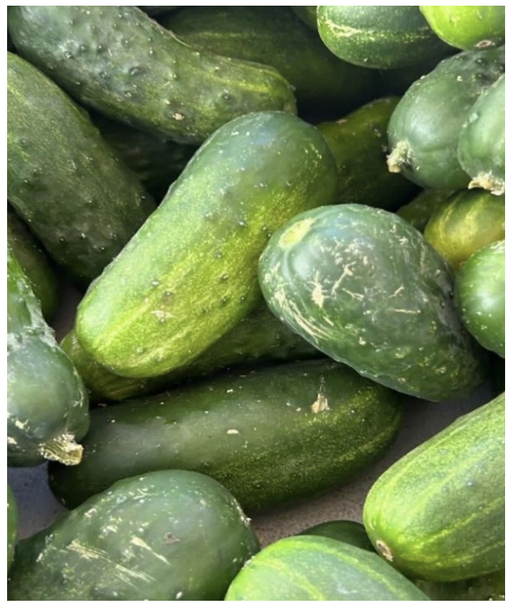
09

WE CELEBRATE OUR VENDORS

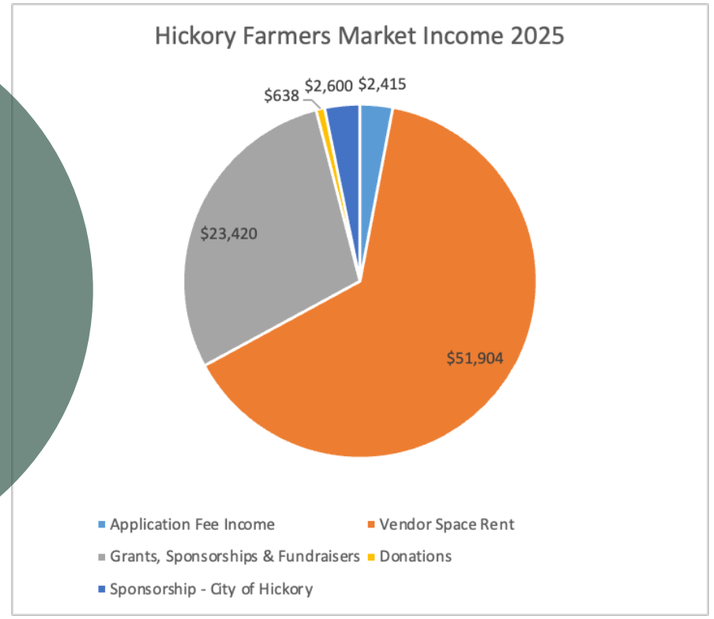
View the most up-to-date list of vendors and products at www.hickoryfarmersmarket.com.

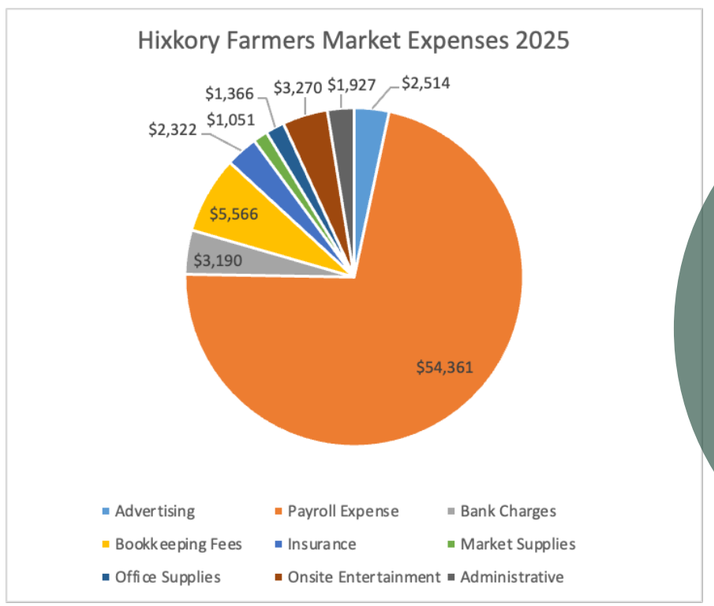
Most of our Farmers and Artisans are 100% producers of what they sell in their booths.

There are a handful of our original vendors who have been grandfathered in as "partial resellers" and are allowed to purchase up to 25% of what they sell from another farm.



The majority of our revenue comes from the vendors and farmers payments to rent market space.
To keep their cost low, we are increasing our focus on fund-raising to cover our non-profit costs. We need you to support our events and with sponsorships!





Almost 75% of our costs are payroll for our fantastic paid staff members. The remaining costs are kept as low as possible to ensure we make good use of our limited revenue and keep the focus on our team that serves our customers, community and vendors.

SPONSORSHIP LEVELS

BLOOM - $1,000
TWO OPPORTUNITIES

Our sponsors receive two complimentary seats to one of our Moon Dinner Series. You will receive a one-time placement on banner, social media, highlight in the newsletter, and a one-time use of our Sponsor Booth to promote your business.

SPROUT - $500

You will receive a one-time placement on banner, post on social media, highlight in the newsletter, and a one-time use of our Sponsor Booth to promote your business.

GROW - $250

You will receive a one-time post on social media, highlight in the newsletter, and a one-time use of our Sponsor Booth to promote your business.

SUNFLOWER - $100
You will receive a one-time highlight in the newsletter

SEEDLING- $50
Thank you for your donation!

WITH THANKS!

We extend our sincere gratitude to the sponsors who support the Hickory Farmers Market and help make our work possible. Your partnership plays a vital role in sustaining a thriving market that benefits our farmers, vendors, and the entire community. Because of your generosity, we are able to continue creating a welcoming space where local growers and artisans can connect directly with customers while providing access to fresh, locally produced foods. We are deeply grateful for your investment in the Hickory Farmers Market and for helping us build a stronger, healthier, and more connected community.

As of April 2026, the Hickory Farmers Market received its 501(c)(3) nonprofit status with the IRS, officially recognizing us as a charitable organization. This important designation allows contributions to the Market to be tax-deductible as permitted by law and makes it easier for individuals, businesses, foundations, and community partners to invest in our mission.

David E. Looper & Company
GENERAL CONTRACTORS

CATAWBA VALLEY HEALTH SYSTEM

HICKORY North Carolina
Life. Well Crafted.

CRANFORD Hospitality

DASH HOME + KITCHEN

T·F·B Coffeehouse

the hum