

## Farmers Markets can be a Fun Shopping Experience

Every Saturday morning Austinites gather in two different places for one purpose: to buy fresh, locally grown produce and specially made treats. Shopping at the grocery store these days can be a joyless experience. Prices seem to change on a weekly basis. Customers seem humorless and determined as they shuffle around with their carts, sticking to the list in hand. Spending a Saturday morning at a farmers market can bring some pleasure back to the food shopping experience.

A farmers market certainly won't have everything on a regular grocery shopping list, but it can be a fun way to pick up a few healthy things to eat. Typical things found at a Texas farmers market year around are onions, herbs, pecans, baked goods and various seasonal fruits and vegetables. Of course, with this being Austin there is music to be found at the local farmers markets.

The Sunset Valley Farmers Market takes place every Saturday morning from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., rain or shine. The parking lot of the Tony Burger Center, located on the eastbound side of Highway 290, is bustling with booths and shoppers. The market features local growers of fresh fruits, vegetables, nuts, plants, flowers, herbs and even artisan cheese makers. Local ranchers also bring chicken, beef, lamb, goat, and pork. There is even bison and gulf harvested shrimp available sometimes.

With Spring around the corner, look for fresh asparagus, strawberries and blackberries. The Sunset Valley Farmers Market advertises itself as a weekly celebration. "It is fun for the whole family, too! Rain or shine, we're always celebrating our weekly, open-air market with fresh foods, live music, kids entertainment, specialty events, festivals, a cafe for breakfast or lunch, and a great community vibe," says their website.

Another popular local farmers market is the Austin Farmers Market, located on the corner of Fourth and Guadalupe in downtown. This is also an open-air Saturday market from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. This market started in 2002 as a project of Sustainable Food Center. It was a collaboration of many members of the community with help from a City of Austin feasibility study grant.

As it was described in a recent Austin-American Statesman column, the Austin Farmers Market "provides so much more than Fredericksburg peaches from the Davis Orchard and Mark and Matt Seiler's Maine Root Fresh Brewed Tap Root Beer from their organic brewery in East Austin, though these are obviously righteously good and good for you even without a fulfilling communal experience."

It is the community of farmers intersecting with the Austin community at large that may be the biggest attraction of this market. Young and old are attracted to the opportunity to purchase a few fresh item, taste some local goodies or try something new. Even just strolling through and taking in the goings-on is perfectly acceptable. A band plays while children romp and shoppers roam, creating a fun mixture of sights and sounds. It is a completely different atmosphere than the local grocery store, that's for sure.

## About the Author

Ki works in Austin, Texas. [Austin real estate](#) is easily searchable on Ki's website. He provides a search of the [Austin MLS](#) along with a blog covering [Austin Texas real estate](#) stats and market updates.

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