

Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project
729 Haywood Rd., #3
Asheville, NC 28806
(828) 236-1282
www.asapconnections.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACTS: Rose McLarney (828) 236-1282 rose@asapconnections.org or Peter Marks (828) 236-1282, peter@asapconnections.org.

Asheville City Market Grand Opening

ASHEVILLE, NC (June 13, 2008) – The Asheville City Market, a farmer-led market supported by the Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project (ASAP), brings local food and local farmers to South Charlotte Street in downtown Asheville on Saturday mornings. On Saturday, June 28 at 8:00a.m., Asheville Mayor Terry Bellamy will cut a ribbon to celebrate the grand opening of western North Carolina’s largest producer-only market. The ribbon cutting will also usher in the prime summer season of fresh produce and launch *A Taste of the Market*, a new series of special market days when vendors will offer abundant samples.

Taste free samples of grilled trout, farm-made ice cream, breads, cheese, pastries, strawberries, peas, cookies, tomatoes, jams, farm-raised meats, and more. These products, as well as salad greens, cooking greens, leeks, green onions, radishes, asparagus, herbs, and ramps, can be purchased at the market in season. You’ll also find eggs, honey, and shrimp from the family of North Carolina fishermen. Homemade offerings include cider, pickles, salsas, and dried peppers. Modern and traditional mountain crafts, hand-sewn quilts, natural soaps, herbal body care products, and plants for your vegetable garden and landscape are sold too.

“When you buy something here, you know the person handing it to you grew it or made it,” says market manager Michael McCreary.. “This market is a producer-only market--all vendors are people who made, grew, or raised the products they are selling.” About 45 of the market’s 70 members sell each Saturday and more members are being added all the time.

The market owes its prime location to City officials and staff, who worked with ASAP to make the space available. The Charlotte Street site provides ample parking and room to grow.

The convenient location and professional promotion and organization, in addition to the appeal of fresh local food, live music, and a street fair atmosphere, seem to be working. McCreary says, “So far the market is drawing new customers, including many who have never patronized farmer’s markets before.”

“Farmer’s markets are important because the farmer or artisan gets to keep more profits, and what’s more, they allow consumers to make a direct connection,” says Charlie Jackson, Executive Director of ASAP. ”At a farmer’s market, you can see first hand that your purchasing decisions do have an impact.”

The Asheville City Market is located at the Public Works Building, 161 South Charlotte Street. It is open from 8:00a.m. until 1:00p.m every Saturday from mid-April to December. For more information visit www.asapconnections.org/special/citymarket/.

ABOUT THE APPALACHIAN SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE PROJECT

ASAP is strengthening the economy and preserving mountain heritage by creating and expanding a food system that is locally owned and controlled in Western North Carolina and the Southern Appalachians. The loss of Appalachian family farms threatens rural heritage, weakens the regional economy, and prevents development of a sustainable local food system.

###