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Farmers' Market honored for 25 years in Orinda, adds crafts

By Sora O'Doherty



Orinda Farmers' Market celebrates 25 years.
Photo Sora O'Doherty

The Orinda City Council on Aug. 16 presented a proclamation celebrating 25 years of the Farmers' Market in the city. Staci De Shasier, Contra Costa County Certified Farmers Markets Executive Director attended the Zoom meeting to accept the honor. "We're proud of the work we do in Orinda," she said, referring to the deep history of the market which first opened in Orinda in July of 1997. The Orinda farmers' market went year-round in 2020, De Shasier said, not knowing at the time that they would be operating during the COVID-19 pandemic. She praised the hard work from vendors and volunteers that has kept the market going.

Council Member Amy Worth expressed appreciation to Laura Abrams, Chuck Carpenter, Leslie Stiles and Joyce Hawkins for working so hard to bring the farmers' market to Orinda. Drummond Buckley recalled working very closely with then-council-member Abrams.

Mayor Dennis Fay remarked that farmers' markets have a very long history both here and in Europe. He noted that in Europe the farmers' markets tend to be permanent and said, "I am really happy that we have a farmers' market too. This is an institution that has existed in the Western World for a very long time."

Worth added that she is so appreciative of all the vendors who come every Saturday. "I know our residents come every week and love our farmers' market. Especially for the young people in our community to meet the farmers." Even during COVID, she said, "the market kept providing for us," including with boxes of fresh fruit and vegetables that could be collected at a drive-up location near the market entrance.

De Shasier thanked the council, and expressed "how deeply appreciative we are, the market could not exist without the support of the city." She also announced that once again, the market will be celebrating Halloween harvest on Oct. 29, with a free pumpkin patch and other activities for kids. She also took the opportunity to share the news that the Orinda farmers' market will this year be extended to include a Winter market, with artisan crafters from November through March.

The city's proclamation recognized the Orinda Farmer's Market, established 25 years ago, which is operated by Contra Costa Certified Farmers' Markets, Inc.; a membership-based non-for-profit organization. Their mission is to support the development of local sustainable farming by cultivating vibrant farmer's markets. The Orinda Farmers' Market serves as a community gathering place where freshly picked produce is made accessible with family-friendly events and educational outreach to enhance and promote the quality of a healthy lifestyle and conscientious food choices.

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