Maryland Boasts 66 Farmers' Markets

ANNAPOLIS, Md. — Maryland consumers will have more opportunities than ever this season to share in the fresh flavor bounty of the state's fruits and vegetables, as a record 66 community farmers' markets will be operating throughout Maryland during

This is three more markets than operated in 1997, according to Dr. Henry A. Virts, Maryland secretary of agriculture.

New markets will be opening in the counties of Anne Arundel (Crofton), Carroll County (Sykesville), Harford (Bel Air, Sunday market), Prince George's (Mount Ranier and Riverdale), Queen Anne's (Queenstown) and Talbot (St. Michaels). That's seven new markets.

Two markets in the Columbia section of Howard County combined at one location and a market in Federalsburg, Caroline County, will not operate. Two markets in Montgomery County (Damascus. and Germantown) are dropping

The new market at Oueenstown is notable in that it brings a farmers' market to Queen Anne's County for the first time in recent years. Only two (Cecil and Somerset) of Maryland's 23 counties are not yet home to a farmers' market.

Helping this year's new markets develop, as well as helping the majority of the 63 continuing markets, has been the goal of the Maryland Department of Agriculture's farmers' market program, which began in 1990 and has played an active role in about 40 of the state's markets.

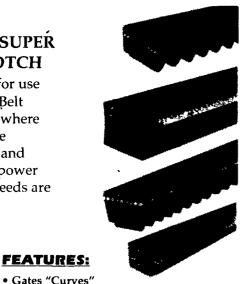
Most Maryland farmers' markets operate on the "producer's only" rule, meaning that vendors are permitted to sell only what they produce on their farms or in their homes.

For a complete, updated list of the state's farmers' markets giving the locations, days and hours of operation and other information, interested persons can visit the department's web page at: http://www.mda.state. md.us/market/fmd.htm

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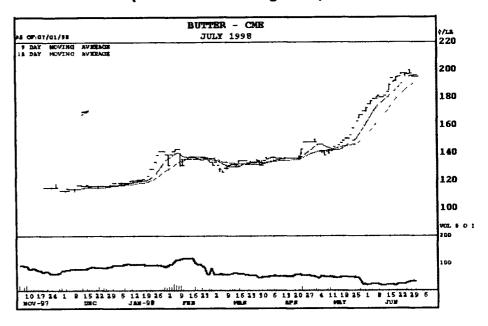
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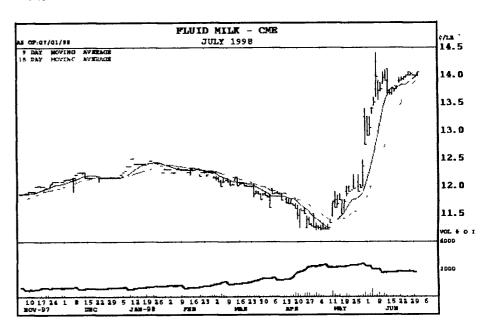


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