

Farmers' market season arrives in Lake Tahoe

By Kathryn Reed

Fresh produce is about to arrive on the South Shore – and it doesn't involve a grocery store.

The farmers' market season begins Friday at Kahle Community Park in Stateline. This is the first market to open in the area. It will be one of three on the South Shore.

Markets throughout the region are gearing up to bring seasonal vegetables and fruit to consumers from California and Nevada. Most of the markets are still working on locking in all of their vendors. While produce is the focus of the events, most also have another component – whether it's prepared food, arts and crafts, entertainment or alcohol.

"I treat this one like a boutique farmers market," Steve Rozier said of the Kahle market. "When I look at this market, I think of our community."



Farmers' market season is about to begin in Lake Tahoe. Photo/LTN file

He owns this market, while this year he will also run the Lampe Park market in Gardnerville that is owned by Douglas

County Parks.

(The Kahle market is Fridays through October from 4-7pm starting May 3. Lampe starts June 12 and is then every Wednesday from 8am-4pm.)

Kahle had a market years ago, but for about a decade was non-existent. Rozier, who is assisted by his wife, resurrected this market last year.

Rozier told *Lake Tahoe News* he starts with farmers from California and then brings in Nevada growers when their crops are ripe – which usually starts in June.

“We focus on farmers and markets. We will bring entertainment over time,” Rozier said.

Cheese created from a dairy farmer in Nevada will be for sale. Olive oil, craftsmen from Carson Valley and Carson City will sell their wares, a woman from Gardnerville will return to sell her cupcakes. Eggs and flowers are also going to be for sale.

The second South Shore market to open this year is the oldest one. This will be the 19th season for the El Dorado County Certified Farmers Market Association to operate every Tuesday from 8am-1pm at the American Legion parking lot in South Lake Tahoe. The market runs from June 4-Oct. 8.

Jim and Lois Coalwell, who own a farm on the West Slope of El Dorado County, are the longtime operators of this market.

“Everyone is hopeful this will be a good, strong spring,” Lois Coalwell told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Expect to see cherries from Day 1 at this market. Stone fruit from growers in Stockton and Fresno will come early.

Potatoes and tomatoes are in the ground in El Dorado County soil, but won't be seen at the market right away.

Despite a still sluggish economy last year, Coalwell said the farmers did fairly well.

Besides fresh produce, this market also has prepared food vendors, but a minimal number of crafts people.

The produce changes each week, as it does at each market, as the crops come in. It's a true testament to buying, and therefore eating, what the land produces locally. Imperfections in the product are normal when it comes to what it looks like. This is nature and normal.

What is sold at any market is usually picked at zero-dark thirty that morning to be able to be sold as fresh as possible.

The other South Shore market is on Ski Run Boulevard between Larch and Birch avenues. It will be each Friday beginning June 21. It starts at 3pm, and goes to dusk – about 8pm in the heart of summer.

“It's more of a street fair atmosphere than strictly a farmers' market,” said Alex Mellon, who runs the market. This will be the fourth year for the Ski Run market.

He expects about one-third of the vendors to be agriculture, one-third crafts and one-third prepared foods.

Dogs won't be allowed this year except on the sides of the market – but not where the vendors are. And alcohol cannot be consumed in the market area.

This market wants to distinguish itself by being more kid friendly.

Many of the markets have Facebook pages as a way to reach clients.

Here is a list of some of the markets in the region:

Tuesday:

- Truckee: Truckee River Regional Park

10500 Brockway Road off Highway 267

8am-1pm, June 4-Oct 8

- Kings Beach: Kings Beach SRA

Highway 28 at Bear Street

9am-1pm, June 25-Aug. 27

Thursday:

- Tahoe City: Commons Beach

Commons Beach Road and North Lake Boulevard

8am-1pm, May 23-Sept. 26

- Tahoe City: Tahoe Lake Elementary School

375 Grove St.

June 27-Aug 22

- Truckee Thursday Nights: Donner Pass near the train station

5-8pm, June 13-Aug. 22

Saturday:

- Carson City: Downtown

Third Street and Curry Parking Lot

8:30am-1pm, opens June 9

Sunday:

- Homewood Farmers Market

Homewood Mountain Resort on Highway 89

8am-1pm. Opens June 20.