



AN AFFILIATE OF HOSPITAL SISTERS HEALTH SYSTEM

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Contact: Erica Cusumano, Public Relations Rep.

217-544-6464, ext. 44307

**EAST SIDE FARMERS MARKET, COOKING CLASSES SET TO BEGIN**

SPRINGFIELD, IL – St. John's Hospital, the Sangamon County Department of Public Health (SCDPH) and Downtown Springfield, Inc. (DSI) will be opening the East Side Farmers' Market at 8:30 am on Monday, July 7. The East Side Farmers' Market will be located in the parking lot of the SCDPH parking lot (2833 South Grand Ave. East). Fresh produce will be sold on Mondays from 8:30 am to 12:30 pm from July 7 through September 29. WIC Coupons, Link, Debit and Credit cards will be accepted.

This collaborative effort is designed to offer East side residents and businesses access to fresh produce, as well as encourage greater participation in a program that provides a free \$15 voucher for WIC clients to buy produce at either the Old Capitol Farmers' Market or Illinois Products Farmers' Market in Springfield.

"Eating fresh fruits and vegetables is essential to good health. While farmers' markets are growing in popularity, there are still some who do not have easy access to existing locations. We want to encourage our WIC families and other east side residents to visit our local markets and incorporate fresh produce into their meals," said Terry Brusnighan, RD, WIC Coordinator, SCDPH.

WIC provides federal grants to states for supplemental foods, health care referrals, and nutrition education for low-income pregnant, breastfeeding, and non-breastfeeding postpartum women, and to infants and children up to age five who are found to be at nutritional risk.

"For the last five years, St. John's Hospital and the SCDPH have teamed up to increase the redemption rate of WIC coupons. While our programs have been successful, we know there is still the barrier of transportation prohibiting many from taking advantage of our local farmers' markets. In order for more people to benefit from the WIC coupons,

we need to bring the Farmers' Market a little closer to home," said Kim Luz, Director of Community Outreach, St. John's Hospital.

In addition to the new Farmers' Market location, cooking classes will be provided at the SCDPH on Mondays in July and August. Participants will learn to clean and prepare fresh fruits and vegetables sold at the East Side Farmers' Market. Participants will be able to sign up for up to four cooking classes. Interested parties can sign up for classes by contacting Mary Rogers, Events Facilitator, St. John's Hospital: 217-814-4308; [mary.rogers@hshs.org](mailto:mary.rogers@hshs.org).

For more information about the East Side Farmers' Market or the Cooking Classes, please contact Mary Rogers.

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#### ABOUT ST. JOHN'S HOSPITAL

St. John's Hospital in Springfield, Illinois is a regional medical center offering a comprehensive array of health care services to Central and Southern Illinois. Founded in 1875, St. John's is the flagship hospital of Hospital Sisters Health System and is home to the Prairie Heart Institute, St. John's Children's Hospital, St. John's Women's Services, St. John's Neurosciences Institute, St. John's Cancer Institute, Center for Living, Orthopedic Services and AthletiCare. St. John's now has one of the most advanced Surgery Centers in the nation and a renovated patient tower to offer all private rooms. St. John's is designated as a Level I Trauma Center on a yearly rotating basis, has its own College of Nursing and is a teaching hospital for the Southern Illinois University School of Medicine. For more information about St. John's Hospital, visit [www.st-johns.org](http://www.st-johns.org)

#### ABOUT HOSPITAL SISTERS HEALTH SYSTEM

Hospital Sisters Health System is a Roman Catholic health care mission founded to continue the healing ministry of Jesus Christ. Sponsored by the Hospital Sisters of St. Francis, HSHS provides state-of-the-art health care framed in traditional values taught by St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi. It is dedicated to serving all people, including the poor and the needy, at each of its 13 Local Systems in Illinois (Belleville, Breese, Decatur, Effingham, Highland, Litchfield, Springfield and Streator) and in Wisconsin (Chippewa Falls, Eau Claire, Sheboygan and two in Green Bay). For more information about HSHS, visit [www.hshs.org](http://www.hshs.org).