



## Come and explore the first ever Big Lake Winter Farmers Market!

### This Month's Market

This is the first market of the winter season! Some of the vendors from the summer market will be returning for the winter, and there will also be new faces. This is the pilot year of the Big Lake Winter Farmers Market, and we hope to see many residents taking advantage of this great opportunity! The market will offer lots of opportunities to shop for holiday gifts! This will be a particularly festive market with lights illuminating the Founders Room and cheery holiday music playing in the background. Stop by to check it out!

List of vendors for the December market:

- Cat Tail Farm
- Grace's Goodies
- Jewelry by Linda Lee
- Smude's Sunflower Oil
- Popcorn Patty
- Kenya Letourneau
- Moxie Doxie Designs
- Iron Shoe Farm
- Furbabies Crochet
- The Weasel Stash

### Vendor Spotlight

Each month the Big Lake Farmers Market Newsletter will spotlight a vendor. In this section you can find out a little more about the people you are buying from and the products that they offer.

This month's vendor is Stephanie Ellingson of Cat Tail Farm! Located just a little over 10 miles away, in Buffalo, Stephanie creates and sells jams, jellies, and canned goods as well as some crafts and baked goods. She has been working in kitchens since childhood, when she would help her mom feed a family of ten.

Stephanie started selling her products at her sister's winery and has since expanded to include farmers markets. She's been attending markets for around 10 years and keeps coming back because she enjoys talking and visiting

with her customers!



## Recipe of the Month (Shop Local, Eat Local)

### Caramelized Onion, Sausage, and Apple Stuffed Acorn Squash

Recipe from Pinterest

Time Estimate: 45 minutes

Servings: 4

#### Ingredients

- 2 acorn squash, 1 lb sausage, 1 large onion, 3 tbsp oil, 2 cloves of garlic, 1 apple, 2 cups fresh spinach, 1 tbsp fresh rosemary, 2 tsp fresh thyme, salt and black pepper

#### Directions

Preheat oven to 400 degrees and line baking sheet with parchment paper. Place the acorn squash (halved and seeded) face down on baking sheet and cook for 20-30 minutes or until slightly tender. Caramelize chopped onions by adding oil to a skillet, sprinkling with salt, cover, and stirring every once in a while. Set onions aside. Add remaining oil to skillet and add minced garlic, cook until fragrant, add sausage (casing removed) and cook until browned, be sure to stir the sausage so that it resembles ground beef. Add the chopped apple and herbs and stir until apples soften, Add spinach and cover until spinach wilts. Place onion back in skillet to mix and add salt and pepper to taste. Fill cooked squash with the sausage mixture, and place back in the oven (with sausage mixture facing up) for 10-15 minutes. Enjoy!



## Community Connections:

### Why Shop Local?

#### 1. Support your neighbors

Buying local means you are supporting the people and businesses that populate your city. The vendor you bought your beautiful new jewelry from may only live a few blocks away!

#### 2. Strengthen the community

When you buy from your neighbors, casual encounters become the norm and form the basis of new relationships.

#### 3. Support schools, police, and fire departments

Money that is spent within a community stays within a community.

#### 4. Create or maintain jobs

By buying local, you are supporting small businesses that often hire community members. And you are helping them grow and maintain their employment rate.

#### 5. Good customer service

At a farmers market, vendors are often very willing to discuss their products, the process used to make them, and how you can use the product in your own life. They are attentive and give personalized recommendations.

#### 6. Help the environment

Local vendors often produce food on a smaller scale, which

means a much smaller environmental impact. The food also travels a much smaller distance, reducing CO2 emissions. Local vendors also use land more efficiently since they do not require a big box store or factory to produce their goods. Products made by hand are often more durable and lead to less waste.

7. Shape the character of Big Lake

By choosing to shop local, you are supporting the independent businesses which give a city its unique place in greater Minnesota.



## Winter Market Coordinator Introduction

Hello Big Lake!

My name is Katie Stelzner, I am the Big Lake Winter Farmers Market Coordinator. I recently started serving with the City as a Minnesota GreenCorps member. I am working on a variety of different projects for the city, all related to environmental issues and sustainability, but the Winter Farmers Market makes me particularly excited. For the past three years, I worked at a food co-op in St. Joseph, Minnesota where I become very passionate about the local food movement, especially here in central Minnesota. I have assisted with the winter farmers market in St. Joseph in the past, and have been attending the Maple Grove farmers market my whole life. I believe farmers markets are a great way to bring communities together, and I'm excited to see what we can do in Big Lake! Stop by and say hello, I'll be at the city table!

Thank you to our community partners!



