

2025 ANNUAL REPORT



Sowing Growth is a 501(c)(3) organization that operates the Williamston Farm & Artisan Market (EIFM) as part of its commitment to meet the community's need for healthy fresh food and "food for the soul".



PREPARED BY

**SOWING GROWTH
BOARD OF
DIRECTORS**



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www.WilliamstonFarmMarket.org

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Market Manager
Perry Youngs

*served for most of 2025

The Board of Directors of Sowing Growth is pleased to issue its 2025 Annual Report, which briefly recaps our eighth year operating our busy, productive and record-breaking Williamston Farm & Artisan Market, for seven years, the Eastern Ingham Farmers Market.

We proudly report to you that all of our strategic goals for 2025 were met or exceeded. For this achievement, we thank so many individuals and groups: the Market Manager Perry Youngs, the City of Williamston, Market-day business and family supporters, community service organization partners, other financial and in-kind donors, bottle and can donors, visitors, vendors and scores of volunteers. All were key to our successes.

After a record-breaking regular Market season, we also hosted three holiday season Markets in the newly renovated Williamston Area Senior Center. At the time of this writing, the Board and its committees are planning and preparing for the 2026 Market season with the *new Market Manager, Michelle Greko*.

Please take a moment to peruse our 2025 Annual Report and share pride in our accomplishments. If you are not already part of the Sowing Growth family, consider becoming a volunteer, vendor, supporter or sponsor as we look forward to our ninth year of operating the Market in downtown Williamston.

Thank you so much for **your** part in our accomplishments!

Carol, Tammy, Jane, Scott, John, and Christian

Who We Are

Sowing Growth is a nonprofit corporation with the specific purpose of operating the Williamston Farm & Artisan Market in Williamston, Michigan.

The Market:

- Provides access to fresh, local, healthy, and seasonal food to a broader community.
- Provides access to artisans' handcrafted products, creations, and works of art.
- Creates a fun, safe, and healthy community environment that supports and promotes educational opportunities about local food, local farms, sustainable/healthy growing practices, and artisan skills, techniques, and creative processes.



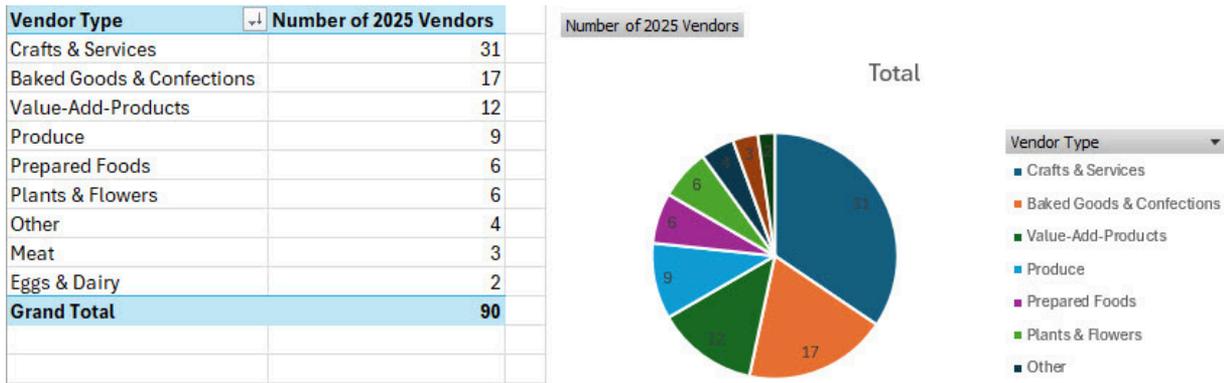
The Market is held in Williamston's McCormick Park
large parking lot on
Sundays 10:00 am to 2:00 pm, mid-May to mid-October.

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 534, Williamston, MI 48895
www.WilliamstonFarmMarket.org
Market e-mail: Info@SowingGrowth.org
Find us on Facebook too!

The Market

Vendors

2025 was our 8th year and we welcomed 73 vendors who were either farmers, producers of food items, artisans, or service providers. Seventeen of these vendors were new to the Market. We operated on 23 Sundays and the average number of vendors per Market day reached a new high of 33, up from 28 last season. Vendors sold fruits, vegetables, meat, cheese, eggs, plants, baked goods, prepared foods, services, jewelry, artisan wares for the home and yard, and much more.



The figures represent the percentage of each product type offered at the 2025 Market.

Food Assistance Programs

Sowing Growth and many of our vendors participate in state and federal food assistance programs with sales during the regular season totaling \$1,182, which is down from \$1,913 in 2024.

- The Sowing Growth’s Power of Produce Club (POP) for kids issued \$195 in Market produce tokens, up from \$136 last year. Its companion POP Plus Club for seniors issued \$740 in Market produce coupons, down from \$810 last season.
- Total customer use of state and federal food assistance programs was \$1,268. This reflects:
 - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) \$680 (\$807 in 2024).
 - Double Up Food Bucks (DUFb) \$588, (\$1,026 in 2024).



2025 ECONOMIC IMPACT – NEARLY \$185,000

Based on 46% of vendors reporting sales data, EIFM vendor sales reached an estimated \$95,134 (includes 3 Holiday Markets, which was up 1.4% from 2024. Research by other farmers markets across the country indicates that market customers typically spend additional money in the community on market days, known as the 1.5x community economic multiplier. In the case of the WFAM, this equates to an approximate total economic impact to the Williamston area of \$185,000 in 2025.

Sowing Growth Supports the Market

- Sowing Growth received funding for the Market from:
 - *4 Corporate sponsors
 - *4 Grants
 - *23 Sunday Market Supporters
- Creation Station - Art with Scott (local artist provides artist-quality paper and chalk giving hands-on art experiences for Market visitors of all ages)
- Market Customer Loyalty Club Card - monthly drawings for participants, winner receives a \$10 Market token
- Returnable Bottle and Can collection - at each Market and twice monthly in the off-season -our most popular fundraiser annually since 2020
- Power of Produce (POP) Clubs -four sessions during August & September Markets
 - In August, an average of 39 children each week, ages 3-8, attended lessons on in-season produce and received \$2 for each session to spend at produce vendors.
 - In September, there were 104 participants aged 60 and over who came to learn more about nutrition, receive food samples, and spend \$10 in Market tokens they received.
- Seedlings and Sprouts - at all Markets, offered art / craft activities for all children
- Nature Discovery's live exhibits -showed connection of natural environment & farm goods
- Pollination Station - area non-profit service organizations shared their good works
- Musicians - live entertainment just for fun





POP Club at the Market funded in part by MSUFCU

The Power of Produce - POP Club

During the four sessions in August 2025, an average of 39 children aged 3 to 8 participated in the POP Club. Each learning session granted children \$2 to spend at the booths of produce vendors. Throughout the program, the children discovered:

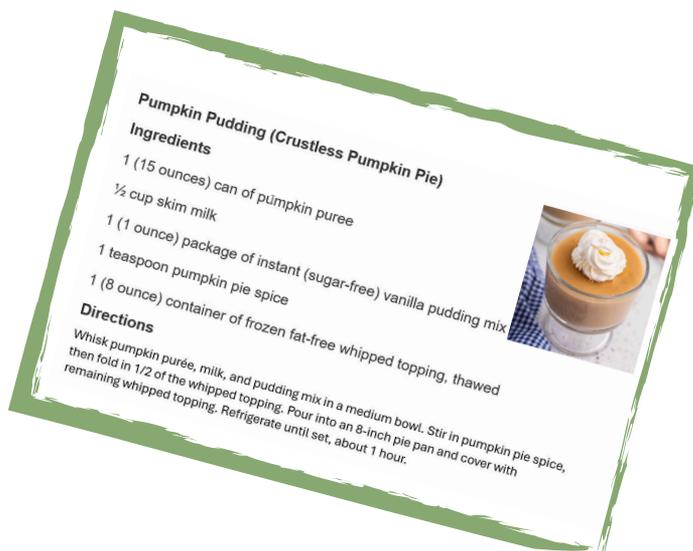
- What constitutes produce
- The processes involved in growing and harvesting food, as well as the timing for when fruits and vegetables are ready for market
- The diverse range of local produce available at the market
- Techniques for preparing and storing market produce



POP+ at the Market funded in part by Tri- County Office on Aging

Since 2023, “POP Plus” invites senior citizens 60 years and older visiting the Market in September to participate. In 2024, 81 seniors registered for this program. In 2025, 104 individuals participated.

In 4 sessions during September Markets, POP Plus participants learn about that week’s produce item, nutrition and safe food handling, receive \$10 in tokens to spend on fresh produce, a food sample containing Market produce and the sample recipe.



2025 Achievements



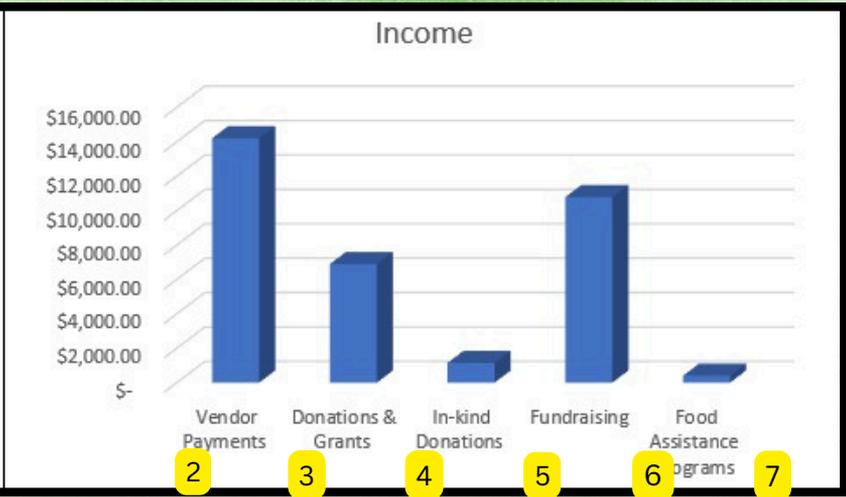
- Changed the Market name to **Williamston Farm & Artisan Market** in April and rolled out campaign using all media
- Increased the average daily Market vendor count to 33 vendors per Market Sunday.
- Increased the variety of vendors, including food trucks, those selling prepared foods, coffee and beverage products.
- Continued Market promotion using the Williamston community digital message board.
- Increased the number of Sunday Market Supporters, successfully covering theme costs for 19 of 23 Markets.
- Increased the number of regular season Market visitors to a new high of 16,217 including one Sunday with over 1000 visitors.
- Increased participation in the Senior Power of Produce (POP Plus) program for seniors.
- Increased EIFM gleaning donations to the Williamston Area Senior Center from 700 lbs. in 2023 to 1000 lbs. of food in 2024 (July to October)
- Strengthened partnership with various community non-profit service organizations so participation in the Pollination Station occurred on 20 of 23 Market Sundays.
- Sowing Growth's primary fundraiser, the returnable bottle and can collection, raised \$6,608 during 2025.

Goals for 2026

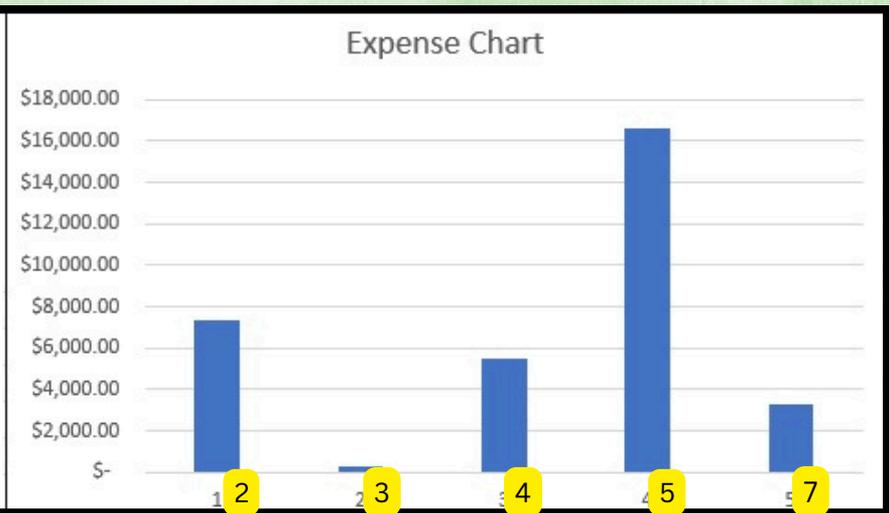
- Provide a smooth transition of the new Market Manager for the 2026 season.
- Update the 5-year strategic plans for the Market, Sowing Growth and the Board.
- Expand grant and other funding sources, including at least one fundraising event.
- Continue collaboration with the Williamston Area Senior Center to glean and distribute 1200 lbs. of unsold food and produce donated by vendors after Markets.
- Improve volunteer recruitment and retention to broaden the pool of volunteers.
- Explore the viability of offering winter Markets January-April at an indoor venue.
- Increase the number of visitors to the Market who participate in the state and federal food assistance programs.
- Conduct survey(s) to assess the community's awareness and utilization of the Market.
- Improve timing and targeting of communications and social media postings.

Financial Snapshot

Category	Totals
Vendor Payments	\$ 14,204.50
Donations & Grants	\$ 6,891.20
In-kind Donations	\$ 1,150.00
Fundraising	\$ 10,783.10
Food Assistance Programs	\$ 400.00
	\$ 33,428.80



Category	Totals
Adv., Mktg, Fundraising	\$ 7,294.75
Bank/Credit Card	\$ 251.07
Market Manager	\$ 5,499.96
Operations	\$ 16,560.74
Programs	\$ 3,245.04
Total	\$ 32,851.57



Thank you

This was a very special year that included our rebranding efforts, which we could not have accomplished without the help of Wendy Shaft, Limner Press (her art), Jim & Wendy Carr, owners of The Good Bake Bagel, (oversaw the whole project and helped fund the Market logo and name change), and the City of Williamston DDA

Other Financial Support came from:

The Rotary of Williamston, MI - funded the sound system
Oakbark Wellness
Tri-County Office on Aging
Little Leap Learning Center
MSU Federal Credit Union

The Sowing Growth Board of Directors is grateful for the many individuals and groups who contributed to our successes and are the heart and soul of our Market, including Sunday Market Supporters, local businesses and families, community service organization partners, bottle and can donors, visitors, vendors, and volunteers.

Sowing Growth

From the first seeds that were planted in 2011, we are committed to:

- Providing access to fresh, local, healthy and seasonal food to a broader community
- Providing access to artisans' handcrafted products, creations, and works of art
- Creating a fun, safe and healthy Market community environment that promotes education about local food, local farms, and sustainable, healthy growing practices, as well as artisan skills, techniques, and creative processes

