

Fresh at Five summer markets back on Tuesdays

By Sherry Lucas

With frost a distant memory and temps climbing faster than pole beans, it's time again for the buffet of garden bounty that is Fresh at Five in Olde Towne Clinton.

The farmers' market starts its summer run, 5-7 p.m. Tuesdays, on June 7, with a weekly presence through August 16.

"We're always ready for them to come around," says Main Street Clinton Director Tara Lytal.

At least a dozen vendors had pre-registered by press time, with an average of eighteen expected throughout the market's summer run, dependent on what farmers are able to produce. Market peaks typically hit around the end of June and a

couple of weeks in July.

The Fresh at Five market concentrates on consumables, with fresh produce a given, but also baked goods, jams and jellies. There should be a festive element, too. Lytal is putting the call out for buskers, so "hopefully, we will have some local entertainment" at the event, she says.

This year marks a return of the City Cookoff on the first night of Fresh at Five, with an expanded reach and, organizers hope, a fun and friendly competition among City of Clinton departments. What began years back as a competition between the police and fire departments now wraps in other City departments in a test of culinary prowess.

Five competing departments



— police, fire, public works, parks and recreation and City Hall administration — will go grill to grill at the market, ready to rib each other and talk tasters into voting. Greater participa-

tion makes the event more competitive and fun.

A win is determined by people's choice, and tallied via an old-fashioned straw poll.

"They put the straw in a bucket for whatever team they think is the best, and we'll award a trophy," Lytal says.

Teams will be cooking pulled pork and some kind of slaw.

"Because it's the farmer's market, we've got to have a vegetable represented," Lytal says.

The cookoff has another bonus besides colleagues in spirited competition and tasty bites for the public: "It's great to show that our City employees have great camaraderie, and let the public see everybody in a casual, relaxed atmosphere. It's fun."

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