
DORCHESTER

Codman Square farmer's market open for the season

Posted by Patrick Rosso

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By Patrick D. Rosso, Town Correspondent

With residents and visitors eagerly eyeing the bounty of vegetables before them, politicians and organizers officially opened the Codman Square Farmer's Market Thursday afternoon.

The market, on the corner of Talbot Avenue and Washington Street in Dorchester, has been open every summer since 2008 and offers residents a healthy alternative to the fast-food restaurants in the neighborhood.

"It's extremely important to bring healthy, organic, fresh food into the city," said Annika Nielsen, the market manager. "There's really no way to get that kind of food in the immediate area."

Along with providing healthy foods and a community gathering space, the market also offers quality food at an affordable price, accepting EBT and WIC benefits, senior coupons, and is part of the city's Bounty Bucks program, allowing shoppers to double the value of their benefits.

"This is a great example of a solid community effort," said Edith Murnane, director of Food Initiatives for the City of Boston. "Farmer's markets have the triple win: they help bring farm fresh products to the neighborhood, create a community, and are an economic stimulus."

The market provides many residents with a healthy alternative to the processed foods found at many of the local food stores, but the market has also been a catalyst for the B.O.L.D. Teens group, which helps run the market.

"We're the teen voice in the neighborhood," said Natalie Herbet, 16, a member of the B.O.L.D. Teens, which is part of the Codman Square Neighborhood Council. "We want to let the neighborhood know what the teens are doing and we want what's good for the youth, which is healthy food."

Although the market provides a number of benefits, what differentiates it from other farmer's market is its fruits and veggies prescription program.

The program, run out of the Codman Square Health Center and paid for by the Wholesome Wave Foundation, helps families with obese members manage their diets and provides them with free fruits and vegetables from the market along with support from center staff.

"I often think a huge part of the problem is the adults don't know how to shop and cook so processed foods become the fall back," said Anne McDonald, a registered dietician with the center. "The market

is a step in the right direction.”

Mayor Thomas M. Menino paid a visit to Codman Square Thursday to check out the vegetables and congratulated the teens and organizers on their work, even trying to get some tips on growing tomatoes.

“We need to make sure people in all of our neighborhoods have the best food choices available,” Menino told the crowd. “This is what makes strong neighborhoods, makes Boston stronger and brings people together.”

The Codman Square farmer's market is open every Thursday until Oct. 25 from 1:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

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