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Pearl Market Receives Grant to Expand

The U.S. Department of Agricultural has awarded Capital Crossroads Special Improvement District a \$61,000 grant to operate the Pearl Market during the winter. The grant, part of the Department's Farmers Market Promotion Program, will allow Capital Crossroads to produce the Pearl Market on Tuesdays and Fridays from November 1 through February 28.

The grant will also allow the Pearl Market to accept the Electronic Benefits Transfer for Ohio Direction Card users. The Ohio Direction Card is a program of the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) which allows eligible people to receive food subsidies.

Twenty-six vendors are expected to participate in the winter market. In addition to fresh produce, vendors will offer a variety of hand-crafted items, baked goods, artwork, and other goods. The Market will take place on the first floor of 20 East Broad Street, immediately next to Pearl Alley.

"We said we would expand the Market when vendors and customers showed interest," said Cleve Ricksecker, Executive Director of Capital Crossroads. "The timing of the Agricultural Department grant could not be better. Downtown is starved for retail services, and this winter market should do very well."

The Market has operated in Pearl Alley since 1992. It has increased in size and presence in the past several years and has become a growing attraction in downtown. The Market features fresh, locally grown produce, baked goods, arts and crafts, lunch fare, and daily live entertainment. For more information on the Pearl Market, please visit <http://www.downtowncolumbus.com/pearlmarket/>

Capital Crossroads Special Improvement District encompasses a 38-square-block area of downtown between the Convention Center and I-70 and is voluntarily funded by more than 500 property owners with the primary purpose of making downtown the cleanest, safest and most attractive commercial area in central Ohio. www.downtowncolumbus.com