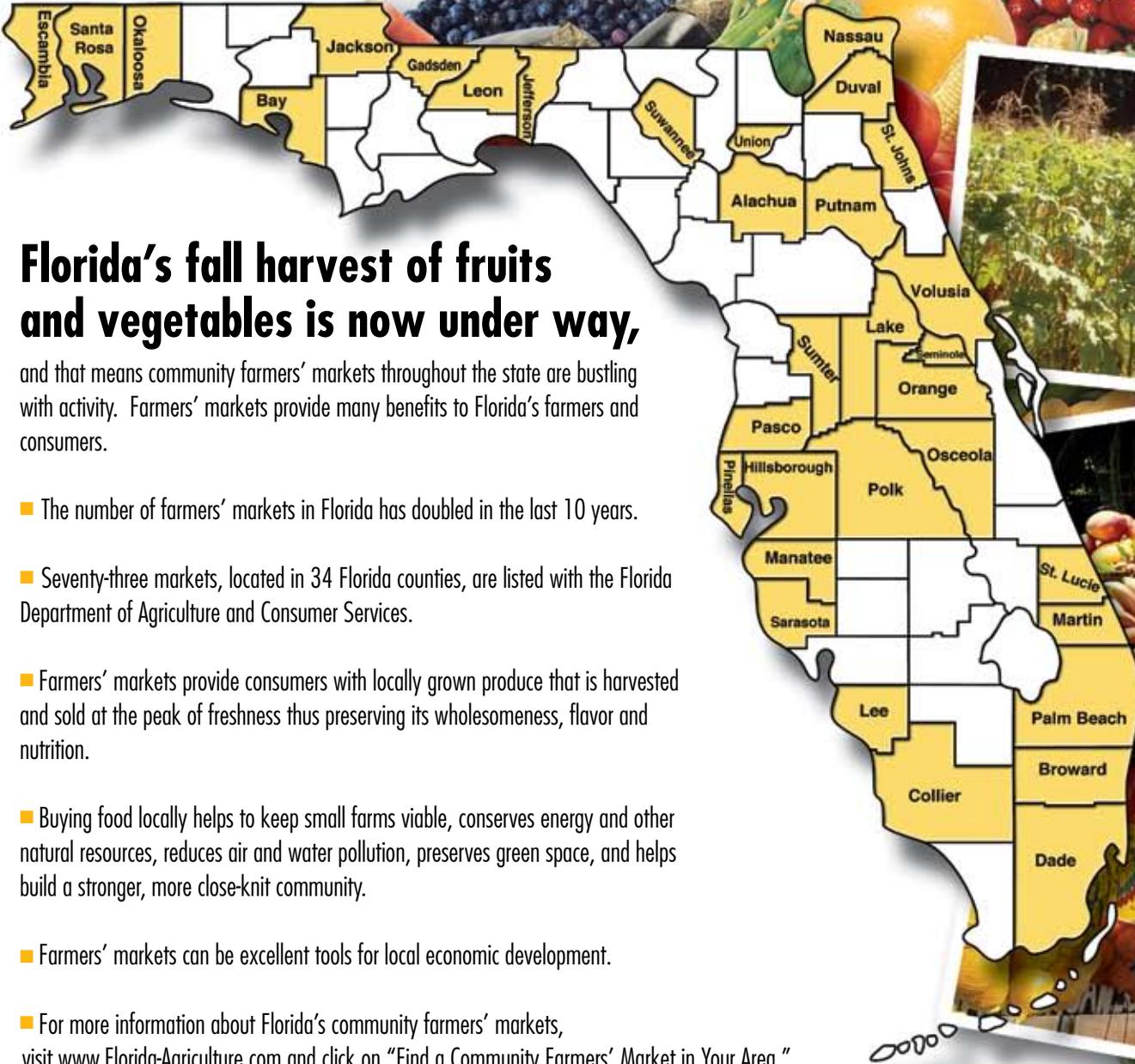




Fresh from Florida

Ag-UPDATE



Florida's fall harvest of fruits and vegetables is now under way,

and that means community farmers' markets throughout the state are bustling with activity. Farmers' markets provide many benefits to Florida's farmers and consumers.

- The number of farmers' markets in Florida has doubled in the last 10 years.
- Seventy-three markets, located in 34 Florida counties, are listed with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.
- Farmers' markets provide consumers with locally grown produce that is harvested and sold at the peak of freshness thus preserving its wholesomeness, flavor and nutrition.
- Buying food locally helps to keep small farms viable, conserves energy and other natural resources, reduces air and water pollution, preserves green space, and helps build a stronger, more close-knit community.
- Farmers' markets can be excellent tools for local economic development.
- For more information about Florida's community farmers' markets, visit www.Florida-Agriculture.com and click on "Find a Community Farmers' Market in Your Area."

www.Florida-Agriculture.com

Community farmers' markets benefit Florida's farmers by providing direct commercial outlets for their products. They also benefit consumers by providing easy access to a wide variety of fresh, wholesome, locally grown commodities that enhance their diet. Meeting and interacting with the farmer who grows the food also helps consumers develop a special bond of trust in the integrity of our growers. If you're a grower, I encourage you to get involved in your local community farmers' market. And if you're a consumer, I hope that you will go meet your local farmers and enjoy their "Fresh from Florida" products at the peak of freshness. For information about how to organize a farmers' market, contact the Bureau of State Farmers' Markets, Room 209 Mayo Building, 407 South Calhoun Street, Tallahassee, FL 32308-0800, telephone 850-487-4322, email penn@doacs.state.fl.us

Sincerely,

Charles H. Bronson

Charles H. Bronson, Commissioner of Agriculture

