



*Sowing
growth*

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Eastern Ingham Farmers Market

EASTERN INGHAM FARMERS MARKET IS REFERRED TO AS
EIFM OR MARKET THROUGHOUT THIS REPORT

2023 SOWING GROWTH BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Board of Directors:

Jane Reagan, President

(517) 525-4177

JaneEllenReagan@gmail.com

Sharon LaPointe, Past President

(517) 927-9316

LaPointe.Sharon1@gmail.com

Ryan Edberg, Vice

President/President Elect

(810) 240-4137

Ryan_Edberg@hotmail.com

Michelle Martin, Treasurer

(517) 242-8074

MPenzer@att.net

Symantha Outwater, Secretary

(517) 468-3215

Symantha.Outwater@gmail.com

Scott VanAllsburg

(517) 449-5528

olioliscott@gmail.com

Jackie Ellis

JHarris0701@gmail.com

Carol Grainger

(517) 449-7832

Grainger.carol.cl@gmail.com

Frank Vicente (partial year)

Carrie Pahl (partial year)



WHO WE ARE

Sowing Growth is a 501(c)(3) organization that operates the Eastern Ingham Farmers Market (EIFM) as part of its commitment to meet the community's needs for healthy fresh food and "food for the soul".

From Sowing Growth Board

The Board of Directors of Sowing Growth is pleased to issue its 2023 Annual Report which briefly recaps our busy, productive, and record-breaking sixth year of operating the Eastern Ingham Farmers Market. The Board proudly reports to you that most of our strategic goals for 2023 were met or exceeded. For this achievement, we thank the City of Williamston, scores of individuals donating their time, business sponsors, donors, visitors, and vendors. All were key to our success.

This past year, we celebrated Tom Cary's fifth year as Market Manager, and upon his decision to move on, the Board has selected Krysta James as our successor Market Manager. We are already hard at work preparing for the 2024 Market season.

Please take a moment to peruse our 2023 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 begin our seventh year of operating the Market that serves the greater Williamston area.

Thank you so much for your part in our accomplishments!

Jane, Sharon, Ryan, Michelle, Symantha, Scott, Jackie, and Carol

THE MARKET

The Eastern Ingham Farmers Market is a Sowing Growth program that:

- 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 market 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 adjacent to
McCORMICK PARK, WILLIAMSTON, MICHIGAN
On Sundays 10:00 am to 2:00 pm MID-MAY TO MID-OCTOBER
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 534, Williamston, MI 48895

www.EasternInghamFarmersMarket.org

Market e-mail: TBD

Find us on [Face Book](#)

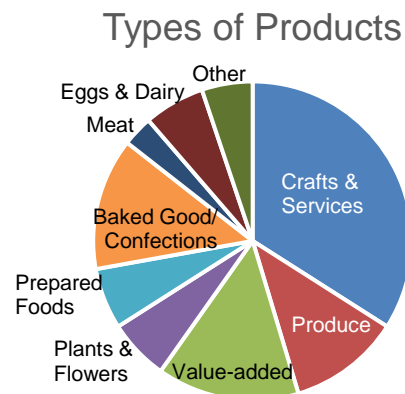


WHAT'S IN THE MARKET

Vendors at the Market

In 2023, we welcomed 41 new and 41 returning vendors for a total of 82 farmers, producers of food items, artisans, and community organizations. They sold fruits, vegetables, meat, cheese, honey, maple syrup, flowers, bread, baked goods, sauces, preserves, knife and tool sharpening, and much more. Food trucks and vendors bringing ready-to-eat treats and meals, along with coffee was available at nearly every Market this season. We continued to grow the number of vendors, averaging 26 vendors per week for the season, our highest average yet. We added a knife sharpener for the first time in more than 5 years and worked to have ready-to-eat food and coffee at every Market this season.

- Crafts and Services
- Produce
- Value-added Products
- Plants and Flowers
- Prepared Foods
- Baked Good/Confections
- Meat
- Eggs
- Other



Sowing Growth continues to support activities within the Market:

- Musicians (entertainment just for fun)
- Artistic Expression (local artisan provide firsthand art experiences)
- Market Customer Loyalty Club Card
- Bottle and Can Fundraiser thanks to donations at every Market (Can Van)
- POP Club (for children ages 3-8)
- Seedlings and Sprouts (craft activities for all children)
- POP Plus (nutrition awareness program for adults aged 60 and above)
- Pollination Station (area organizations share information on public interest topics)



2023 FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Vendors at the Market accept a variety of food assistance programs to allow customers of all income levels to enjoy access to fresh nutritious foods. Altogether, Sowing Growth, state, and federal food assistance programs totaled \$1,913 in 2023.

- The Sowing Growth's Power of Produce Club (POP) issued \$96 in Market produce tokens and its companion POP Plus (Senior Program) issued \$554 in Market produce coupons.
- Total customer use of state and federal food assistance programs was at \$1,263, down 5.5% from 2022. This reflects:
 - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) - \$671(\$806 in 2022).
 - WIC Project Fresh - \$110 (\$155 in 2022).
 - Double Up Food Bucks (DUFb) - \$452 (\$836 in 2022); and
 - Senior Project Fresh - \$30 (\$170 in 2022).



2023 ECONOMIC IMPACT \$140,000+

Based on 58% of vendors reporting sales data, EIFM vendor sales reached an estimated \$105,595 (includes Holiday Market), up 3.8% over 2022. 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 EIFM, this equates to an approximate total economic impact to the Williamston area of \$158,392.50.



Successes

2023 Achievements

- Created specific programs to draw in more foot traffic working towards the 2026 goals for the regular Market season.
- Achieved the following 2023 objectives:
 - Initiated a program for seniors, POP Plus.
 - Received grant from WW Granger for POP Club for food demo equipment.
 - Provided more prepared foods and added a coffee vendor.
 - Upped our social media presence from 2022 by increasing Facebook followers from 3,700 to 4,100; newsletter subscribers from 661 to 760; and Instagram followers from 296 to 347.
 - Market information displayed on the Community Message Board.
 - Collaborated with the Williamston Area Senior Center to initiate a gleaner's project to collect and distribute unsold produce and commercially prepared food from EIFM vendors totaling over 700 lbs. of food (July to October).
 - Increased vendors to 82 seasonal and daily vendors.
 - Increased the number of visitors in the Market's regular season from 11,700 to 12,146.
 - Created a new means of financial support for weekly Market themes via the Sunday Market Supporter.
 - This year individuals, families, and businesses donated \$100 for one or more Sunday Markets, successfully covering theme costs for 10 of 23 Markets.
 - Increased grant activity to fund the POP programs.
 - Received \$250 for horticulture books from the Williamston Red Cedar Garden Club used for the POP Club.
 - Received a \$2,200 grant from McLaren Healthcare to support the POP Plus.
- Partially Achieved: Production of two short videos.
- Partially Achieved: Bottle and can collection at 87% of goal.

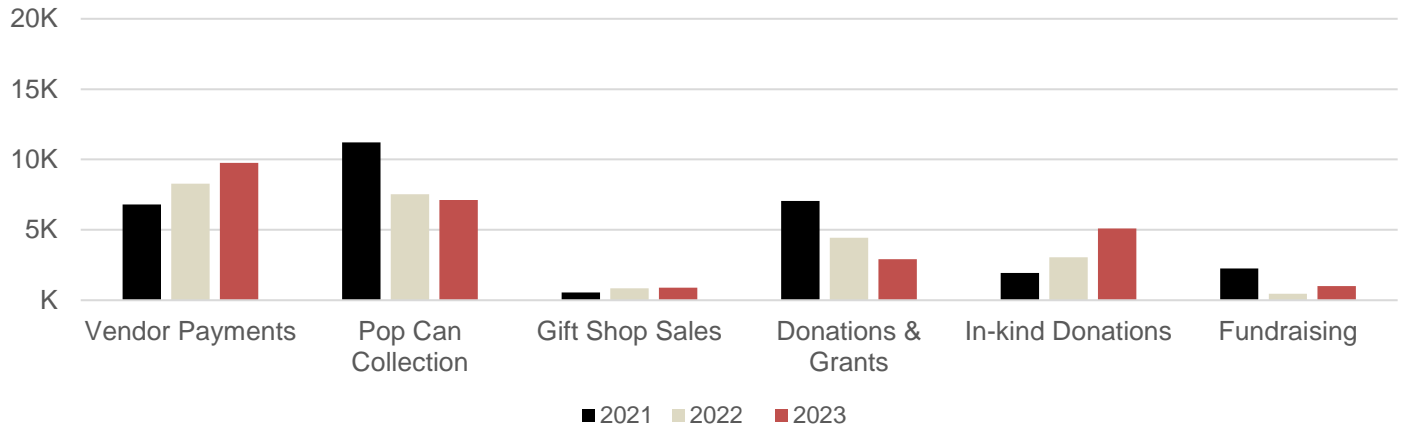
2024 Goals

- Collaborate with the Williamston Area Senior Center to glean and distribute 1000 lbs. of unsold food and produce donated by vendors after each Market.
- Explore the viability of offering off-season Markets at an indoor venue.
- Increase the number of visitors to the Market who participate in the state and federal food assistance programs.
- Determine why individuals do not come to the Market regularly and develop strategies to promote participation.

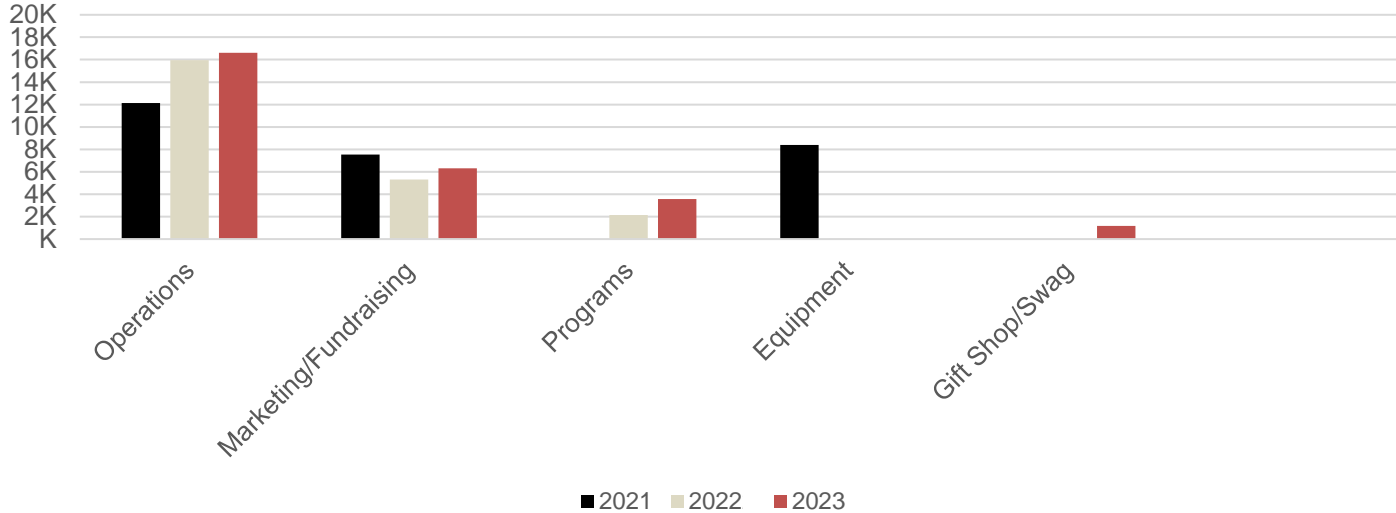
FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

Income	2021	2022	2023
Vendor Payments	6,815.00	8,275.00	9,771.20
Pop Can Collection	11,216.91	7,529.65	7,132.05
Gift Shop Sales	556.76	845.00	885.00
Donations & Grants	7,047.20	4,446.50	2,914.00
In-kind donations	1,943.84	3,060.78	5,110.29
Fundraising	2,264.84	451.00	1010.00

Year over year income



Year over year costs



Expenses	2021	2022	2023
Operations	12,138.04	15,962.60	16,622.39
Marketing/Fundraising	7,546.99	5,306.40	6,306.24
Programs	0	2,139.79	3,571.64
Equipment	8,385.87	10.99	0
Gift Shop/Swag	0	0	1,183.33

