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Morris Healthy Eating Initiative team member Audrey Lesmeister '11 invites you to visit the farmers market

Summary: Fruits, vegetables, potted plants, baked goods, eggs, and even music available on Tuesdays and Thursdays during the summer.

(June 29, 2010)-[Morris Healthy Eating Initiative](#) (MHE) is here to help you make healthy food choices by increasing the variety of fruits, vegetables, and other healthy foods on campus and in the community, and by overcoming barriers to accessing to healthier foods. One of the MHE projects is helping to grow the Morris Area Farmers Market, which is the focus of senior Audrey Lesmeister's MHE position. Lesmeister assists the new Morris Area Farmers Market coordinator in planning and implementing new vendor policies, location, hours, marketing strategy, and vendor education, and increasing campus and community Farmers Market participation.

"The 2010 farmers market season kicked off on June 17, a tempestuous Thursday afternoon!" shares Lesmeister. "Despite the varied weather extremes from sunny to windy to sandstorm, then hot and muggy, the market had a great turnout! A total of nine vendors were present to sell their produce or take orders for grass fed beef. You could buy frozen beef, pork, chicken, and eggs on this first market day. A variety of vegetables were sold as well: lettuce, kohlrabi, broccoli, rhubarb, cucumbers, new potatoes, and peppers. Farmers market shoppers could also buy fresh bread, cookies, bars, fresh strawberries, jellies, and relishes. There was something for everyone, even the gardener! Customers bought potted plants and herbs, flowering baskets, potted strawberry and rhubarb plants, apple and plum trees."

The Morris Area Farmers Market will be open through October on Tuesdays from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m. and on Thursdays from 3 p.m. until 6 p.m. Signs and banners are strategically placed along Morris's main street to make area residents and travelers aware that fresh and local foods are available at the farmers market located at 801 Atlantic Avenue, across from DeToy's Restaurant. Weather permitting, local musicians will play on Thursdays to further enhance the community atmosphere. MHE will have a booth available every market day for shoppers to ask healthy eating questions, from nutrition to cooking to gardening.

An MHE student leadership team member since May 2010, Lesmeister shares that MHE is a "bright summer adventure." She says, "Come to the Morris Area Farmers Market, and taste the freshness of the season, direct from local farmers!"

Lesmeister, a Morris native, is studying management with a financial emphasis with a political science minor. Along with her MHE responsibilities, she represents Pope County Fresh in Glenwood.

MHE is one of eight projects throughout the state selected to work with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota to improve University of Minnesota, Morris and community food choices through environment and policy change. MHE works in partnership with campus and community partners to increase access to and consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables, especially those that are locally grown and in season.

Photo: Mary Jo Forbord, MHE coordinator, Kathryn Dullinger, Sartell, MHE team member, Sandy Olson-Loy, vice chancellor for student affairs, Audrey Lesmeister, MHE team member, and Brynn Stember, Bemidji, MHE team member

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