

# Reading farm stand returns to the depot

Thu Jul 16, 2009

Reading -

Whether there is sunshine overhead or threatening skies, the operators of the Reading Farmers Market at the Reading depot are terming its operation a rousing success.



Of course, the notion of location, location, location has not hurt the farm stand, with hundreds of Reading-area commuters streaming by as the farmers were setting up their wares on a recent Tuesday afternoon.

The operation is an outgrowth of Boston Hill Farm, which also runs farm stands in Lawrence, Andover and Malden. All of the produce at the Reading Farmers Market is delivered via a medium-sized panel truck on Tuesdays from Boston Hill Farm's location in North Andover.

The available produce includes tomatoes, corn, potatoes, peaches, strawberries, blueberries, radishes, cantaloupe, cabbage, beans, broccoli, carrots, cucumbers, eggplant and peppers. Small and large pies are also sold.

Reading resident Katya Farrell stopped by Tuesday afternoon. She said it is important to support local business interests.

"I look forward to this every year," she said. "Sometimes I order chicken pie and they have it waiting for me when I arrive."

Sherri Dolan of Boston Hill Farm spoke about the operation, while ringing up a steady stream of customers at the same time. She said the location of the farm stand is ideal.

"We get a lot of business with commuters," she said. "We get a lot of repeat people. I think it's good for people to get fresh local produce."

Dolan's associate, Ashley Lambers, is spending her third summer working for Boston Hill Farm, her first at the farm stand in Reading.

"There's a variety of people who come here," she said. "They see the produce and sometimes they come out to (Boston Hill Farm)."

Lambers said customers often ask about the source of the produce and want to know how fresh it is. They also want to know whether the pies are homemade.

They are.

With corn and tomatoes the most popular items, there are also some items that also draw curious looks. The Asian basil, according to Lambers, is slowly catching on.

“Plus, the fruits are good,” said Lambers, who said customers will visit the farm stand, rain or shine.

Finding it

July Turenne has only just discovered the farm stand. She was driving by and noticed the fruit and vegetables being sold adjacent to the train station.

She had to stop.

“We just fell into it,” said Turenne. “I think this is great. We like fresh fruit. It’s another way to see people and get out and meet the town’s residents.”

Boston Hill Farm also sells chicken and turkey pies, jelly, jams and relishes, gourmet pasta and sauces, chips and salsas, specialty cookies, nuts and candy and cold drinks. The telephone number is 978-681-8556 and their Web site is [www.bostonhillfarm.com](http://www.bostonhillfarm.com). The Reading farm stand is open from 1 to 7 p.m. on Tuesdays throughout the summer.