

Sunset

Top 10 farmers' markets

Get the freshest fruits, veggies, and more from these markets across the West

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Check out one of Washington's biggest farmers markets for sweet, fresh produce and handmade crafts.

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1. BELLINGHAM FARMERS MARKET, Bellingham, WA

The scene: What began as a small, grassroots effort has blossomed into one of Washington's biggest, most beloved markets. Crafts are almost as popular here as the raspberries and blueberries, which arrive by the sweet, juicy carton from farms just 60 miles away in Skagit and Whatcom Counties.

The find: The last Saturday of every month is Kids Vending Day, when the 25 tables are manned by the 18-and-under set. Even 5-year-olds set up booths hawking everything

from tomatoes grown in their backyards to just-laid eggs to whoopie pies they made by hand. *Sat. through Dec 17; bellinghamfarmers.org*

2. KAPIOLANI COMMUNITY COLLEGE FARMERS' MARKET, Honolulu, HI

The scene: As if Hawaii weren't utopian enough, a stroll through the KCC market, at the base of the Diamond Head crater, makes you want to move to Oahu immediately. Arrive early, like 7:30 a.m. early, before the mobs.

The find: Impossible to choose just one, with so many when-in-Hawaii products: Kukui's Portuguese sausage; just-caught, grilled-to-order Kona abalone; and swaths of subtropical fruit, including fresh, silky litchi, juicy pineapple guavas, and super-sweet sugar pineapples. *Sat year-round; hfbf.org*

3. POINT REYES FARMERS MARKET, Point Reyes Station, CA

The scene: Outside Toby's Feed Barn, it's all about straw hats, local gossip, and live bluegrass. This low-key, all-organic market has only a handful of booths, but in a teeny, never-too-touristy town, it's a prime example of how quality trumps quantity.

The find: Look for a simple white banner in back that says G.B.D. That stands for Golden, Brown, Delicious: Osteria Stellina organic bread oozing with Cowgirl Creamery cheese, a fried egg, and a fat, juicy tomato slice if you so choose. Grab a hay bale and enjoy. *Sat through Nov 5; pointreyesweekend.com*

4. HILLSDALE FARMERS' MARKET, Portland, OR

The scene: Born in 2002 and smaller--with fewer crowds and more parking--than the jam-packed Portland Saturday Market, Hillsdale is still a kid in market years. And just as happy-go-lucky, which is why we love it.

The find: In addition to the larger orchards that sell at every market in town, Hillsdale features smaller producers like Ayers Creek Farm, whose growers come bearing extra-sweet cane berries. Pop just one blackberry for proof that all that Northwest rain is good for something. *Sun through Nov 20, then 2 Sun/month through Apr 15; hillsdalefarmersmarket.com*

5. SANTA FE FARMERS MARKET, Santa Fe, NM

The scene: In the revamped Railyard District, this indoor-outdoor market has become a bona fide tourist attraction within walking distance of the even-more-touristy historic main Plaza. Yet locals love it for its utter authenticity.

The find: Chiles, nearly 60 varieties from New Mexico--Big Jim, Chimayo--with occasional cooking demos. *Sat year-round; santafefarmersmarket.com*