

# FEATURES

## Carrboro's market offers open-air bargain goodies

By **LANE MITCHELL**  
Special to the *STH*

As the Saturday morning sun rises over the twin lean-tos off Roberson Street in Carrboro, vans and stations wagons stuffed with fresh produce, bedding plants, vegetable seedlings and handmade craft items unfold into an abundant farmer's market.

And every Saturday morning year round, people travel for miles to the Carrboro Market for a chance to buy and sell freshly-picked lettuce or hand-pampered flora.

"The people in Chapel Hill really love the farmer's market," said Pat Sterling, a homemaker and private businesswoman from Hillsborough who peddles homemade breads as well as raspberry and cranberry vinegars at the market. "They'd rather buy things from us than at the store."

Sterling is one of about 30 local producers who sell regularly at the market, merely a calf's row south of Carr Mill Mall south of Main Street. Here, fruits and vegetables

are fresh, usually picked the same morning, and the air smacks of dill, marjoram, rosemary and peppermint.

And it is here that David Denson, a private farmer from Siler City, can sell 500 pounds of his vine-ripened tomatoes by 9 a.m.

"I like selling here," Denson said as customers line up four or five deep behind a spring-scale attached to the back of a Volkswagen van. I make contact with the people who are going to eat the tomatoes, and they really appreciate it."

From mid-April to late June, Denson and his partner, Jim LeTendre, grow and harvest the quarter-pound red jewels out of Denson's 10,000-square-foot greenhouse solely to sell at the market. They use only the finest seeds, Denson says — Caruso and Perfecto seeds from Europe that sell for \$300 an ounce.

The pride Denson puts into his tomatoes is not uncommon at the Carrboro Market, according to

Louise Fredericksen, who has been selling her bedding plants and seedlings at the market for eight years.

"You really have to do the work," she said. "And you really have to grow and produce what you sell."

The Agricultural Extension Service, which organized a circuit of farmer's markets statewide under the Agricultural Marketing Projects in 1978, assures that everything sold here is hand-produced by the seller.

Like all markets on the circuit, Carrboro's is run by the farmers who establish a board of directors to assure that the sellers are strictly local and that they truly do produce everything they sell.

"When people buy and resell, they really don't care about the quality of the produce," Fredericksen said. "But when people sell what they grow, it really helps the quality of what we all sell."

Sara Lewallen, whose specialty is the goat cheese she makes after milking five doe goats she keeps at

her Chatham County farm, says that quality comes in all ranges from fair to very good.

"But it's not always the . . . (farmer's) fault," she said. "There's a big variety of stuff here, and if you know what you're looking for and who to ask, you can generally find a good quality bargain."

And good quality bargains are plenty at the market: hydroponic lettuce for 70 cents a head, a dozen newly laid eggs for a dollar, a pint of blackberry jam for \$3.50, a golden loaf of challah bread for \$3. There are strawberries galore, brownies, pickles and honey, as well as a variety of inedible items such as cedar chests, spice cabinets, cutting boards and pottery.

"The market is usually pretty steady, but lately it has grown," said Fredericksen, who has hauled bedding flowers and vegetable shoots from Hill Top Farms in Chatham County to Carrboro every Saturday for eight years.

Fredericksen's stand is nestled between two other flower and vegetable stands. So snug the three are, that you would think the competition might get a little heated.

But Fredericksen is reassuring. "It's just like any other business," she says, clipboard in hand, ready to tally up the next sale. "You have to deal with the competition. Farming is such a hard job to begin with, everyone seems to pull for everyone else."

Carrboro's market is a rare breed in the commercial world. Here sellers aren't reluctant to swap secrets with fellow sellers, and the relationship between the peddler and the browser becomes unabashedly social.

And the jokes are a dime a dozen. "Are the cucumbers really burpless?" a brazen customer asked a dauntless seller.

"The sign says that you'll burp less, but it doesn't say that you won't burp at all," was the seller's reply.

## UCF member says 'witnessing' a joy

By **NANCY HARRINGTON**  
Staff Writer

One of the primary goals for the United Christian Fellowship is to lead people to Christ and to help them establish themselves in their faith, according to fellowship member Jerome Hughes, who lead witnessing teams in Chapel Hill and Carrboro.

UCF is a dynamic church committed to sharing the gospel with such simplicity, sincerity and authority that the uncompromised word of God resounds throughout this campus, the community and the world, Hughes said.

Hughes, a senior English major at UNC, and a Morehead Scholar, said his greatest motivation for witnessing, telling others about the power of God, is his love for God.

"He loved me enough to lay down his life for me and I'm more than willing to lay down my life for other people," he said.

"We (the UCF Church) have a promise from God that if we go and teach people about the things that Christ has commanded us, that people will be saved," he said, quoting, Matthew 28:19-20.

The UCF, a non-denominational ministry under the pastorate of Rev. Michael E. Evans, is conducting home cell group, "bible studies," in the Chapel Hill and Carrboro area and invite people in the community to attend. These sites are located at the homes of people who belong to the UCF or at homes of people who are interested in participating.

Hughes said the witnessing teams have been successful because most people are willing to listen. He believes that early morning prayer makes it easier for people to receive them.

"We've got a group of people

who really love the Lord and truly desire to be all that Christ said we are," Hughes said.

The most common response the witnessing team receives from people is that they are not ready to be "saved," Hughes said. However, he always reminds them that "today is the day of salvation."

"It's not preparing yourself, it's being willing to change," he said. "It's just up to . . . them to be

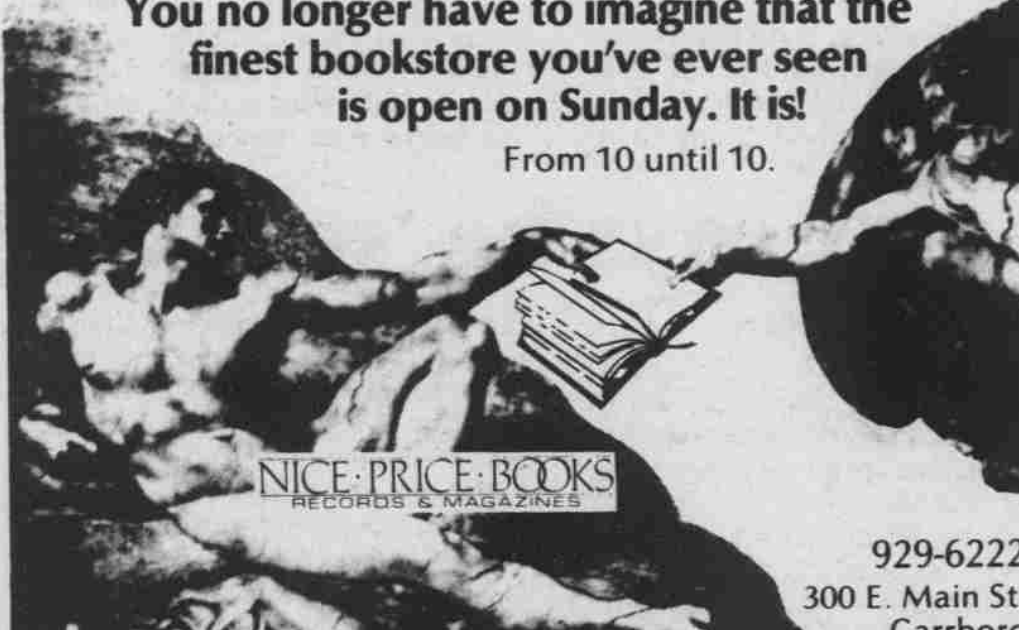
willing to change."

Hughes said that because of his beliefs, a lot of people don't feel comfortable around him and often try to avoid him.

"I'd rather make people feel uncomfortable for a season, allow them to recognize their condition and then give their lives to Christ, than for them to be seduced into believing that everything's all right," he said.

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