

Aptos Farmers Market sets an anniversary celebration

SENTINEL STAFF REPORT

When four farmers sat down to figure out how they could keep their small plots of land from being taken over by corporations, they had no idea what their solution would become.

Thirty years later, Bob Harris, Manuel Netto, Nick Pasquel and Jerry Thomas' plan to start a farmers market in Aptos has become a community event complete with live music, chef tours and vendors selling everything from carrots to chocolate.

Saturday, June 3, from 8 a.m. to noon, the Monterey Bay Certified Farmers Market in Aptos will celebrate three decades of existence with speakers, balloons and birthday cake, according to market manager Catherine Barr.

The four founding farmers also will be honored.

The open-air market is on the top floors of the Cabrillo College parking garages at 6500 Soquel Drive, Aptos,

and is home to 60-plus vendors that sell a wide array of organic and sustainably grown fruits and vegetables along with artisan products like pasta and sauces, pastries, cheeses and chocolates.

It operates year-round with regular entertainment from the Farmers Market String Band and, on the second Saturday of each month, a shop-with-the-chef event that culminates in a cooking demonstration.

The market also has expanded to three other locations: Thursdays at Monterey Peninsula College, the Barnyard in Carmel on Tuesdays and the Northridge Mall in Salinas on Sundays.

Saturday's celebration will include speeches from Farm Bureau Director Jess Brown, Capitola Mayor Dennis Norton and chef Jamie Smith, who was one of the founders of Sestri restaurant and is a graduate of the French Culinary Institute in New York.

The market will be open for regu-



5.31.06
Nick Pasquel peddles flowers at the Aptos Farmers Market. Pasquel was one of the founding farmers who helped start the market 30

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lar business during the celebration.

"People come (to the market) not only to buy next week's food and flowers, but also to chat with old friends, listen to wonderful musicians playing bluegrass and learn cooking tips and trade secrets from area master chefs," said market manager Barr.

And the vendors have become almost like family, she said. There was even a wedding celebration at the market once.

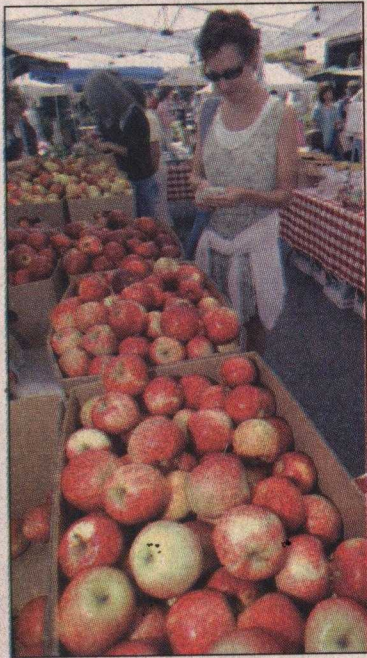
If You Go

WHAT: Aptos Farmers Market 30 anniversary celebration.

WHEN: Saturday. Market is open from 8 a.m. to noon, speakers and celebration begins at 9 a.m.

WHERE: Top levels of the Cabrillo College parking garage, 6500 Soquel Drive, Aptos.

COST: Free.



Bill Lovejoy/Sentinel file
Aptos Farmers Market celebrates 30 years with an event Saturday, complete with speakers, balloons and birthday cake.