

January 24, 2008

Dear Metro NY Editor:

I am writing to clarify some misrepresentations that were written in Patrick Arden's *Union Square rehab to slim down farmers' market*. We at Greenmarket deeply appreciate and rely upon community support and concern for the market; it is crucial to our farmers and to our continued operations. However when rumors are presented as facts we all suffer and constructive dialogue is more difficult to achieve.

To begin, Greenmarket and its parent organization, the Council on the Environment, have been working with Parks on this project very early on in the process, and we received the drawings and maps of the reconstruction when they were first released. In fact, representatives from Parks have presented project details to our staff and Farmer and Community Advisory Committee on numerous occasions in the past and have pledged to continue to do so. This cooperation enabled us to develop with Parks a staging plan that will least impact our operations and best accommodate the market and our producers. It also established an open communication process with Parks that will be crucial during the construction process.

With regard to the quote attributed to me, of course any construction in New York City creates significant inconveniences. However, by working closely with the Parks Department, we intend to limit disruptions to the greatest extent possible. Though I clearly pointed this out to the article's author, he chose to not to include that we have been working with Parks to find creative ways to accommodate all producers and endure market operation. Furthermore, the context of that quote referred to activities during, not post, construction. In fact, when complete, this project will greatly benefit our producers, the public and the market.

During the construction the Union Square Greenmarket will be fully operational as we move from the northern to the southern plaza. At this time, our farmers will depend more than ever upon the community and the Parks Department to support them. When completed Greenmarket will relocate to its original, new and improved location with access to electricity, running water, expanded bathrooms, all adjacent to a user friendly playground that should result in more families using the park. And we have been assured that post construction we will not lose any space for our producers to sell.

I can be reached at 212-676-0661 and encourage anyone with questions to call me.

Sincerely,

Michael Hurwitz, Greenmarket Director