

LET'S GO TO A GARDEN PARTY!

By Joqita Burka

It's almost a primal urge. The weather changes from blistering heat to soothingly cool.

Or, conversely, after months of bitter chill the sun suddenly begins to warm your face. And it hits you—the urge to dig in the earth. It's planting time. Spring or fall it happens. We feel the need to pull on our old jeans, drag out the gardening equipment and plant something. Fortunately, many people in our state share that urge and can either supply the plants you need or let you enjoy the fruits of their considerable labor without lifting a shovel.

One of the most entertaining ways to enjoy the benefits of all those who sow—and reap—beautiful plants and abundant flowers is at one of our state's many festivals. There's music, food, usually a Miss Something-or-other, and loads of plants and flowers. Festivals are so much fun that just about every town has one. Here are just a few that will inspire, entertain and thrill you even if you don't know a spade from trowel.

In the spring, the Farmers' Markets come alive with plants, flowers, garden décor and equipment, plus arts and crafts. Some of the more delicious concessions include homemade breads, candies, jams and jellies. It is the perfect way to shake off the winter doldrums.

Timed for the ideal fall planting season—roughly six weeks before the first hard frost—the autumn festivals are a sure place for fall vegetable plants, loads of mums, snapdragons, pansies and ornamental cabbages. Local farmers bring in the honey, apples and sweet potatoes grown nearby. And the children spend long, thoughtful moments choosing just the perfect pumpkin.

FESTIVALS AT THE STATE FARMERS' MARKET

COLUMBIA STATE FARMERS' MARKET

1001 Bluff Rd.
Columbia, SC 29201
803-737-4664

MIDLANDS PLANT & FLOWER FESTIVAL

April 17-20, 2008

GREENVILLE STATE FARMERS' MARKET

1354 Rutherford Rd.
Greenville, SC 29609
864-244-4023

PIEDMONT PLANT & FLOWER FESTIVAL

May 1-4, 2008

AUTUMNFEST AT THE MARKET

Sept. 26-28, 2008

PEE DEE STATE FARMERS' MARKET

2513 W. Lucas St.
Florence, SC 29501
843-665-5154

SOUTHERN PLANT & FLOWER FESTIVAL

April 10-13, 2008

PEE DEE FALL PLANT & FLOWER FESTIVAL

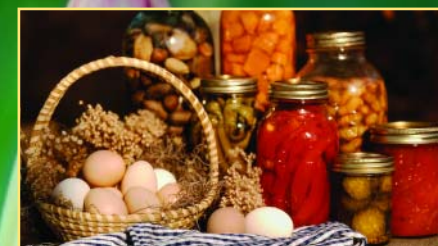
Oct. 3-5, 2008

SOUTH CAROLINA FESTIVAL OF FLOWERS

June 20-22, 2008
Greenwood, SC 29648
scfestivalofflowers.com
864-223-8411

It's everything you'd want in a festival—art, theater, music, sports and, most certainly, flowers. Around every corner during the month of June, Greenwood creates a celebration. During this, its 41st year, the festival will feature master gardener Paul James of the HGTV® program "Gardening by the Yard," a new topiary display created by most of the city's citizens, sports activities such as fishing, biking and

a triathlon, a horse show, plus arts and craft exhibits. While activities continue all month long, one special weekend, June 20-22, 2008, hosts many of the festival highlights. The Park Seed Company throws open its gardens with thousands of flowers and plants for display and purchase. Many private gardens reveal their beauty during garden tours. And the city comes alive with music, dancing and fun.



Find out more in Places...

Turn to pages 162-169 in the "green pages" for more on Festivals & Seasonal Events.

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