



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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COUNCILMEMBERS GREUEL, HUIZAR LEAD LOS ANGELES TOWARD SMOKE-FREE FARMERS' MARKETS

City Council unanimously requests preparation of smoking ban

LOS ANGELES - Councilmembers Wendy Greuel and Jose Huizar led the Los Angeles City Council today to take a critical first step toward the prohibition of smoking in farmers' markets citywide. By a vote of 14 – 0, the City Council directed the City Attorney to prepare an ordinance for the Council's future approval that would ban smoking in City permitted farmers' markets.

"Farmers markets are a great way for people to come together, they help create a sense of community, and provide residents the opportunity to purchase healthy food and fresh produce," said Councilman Huizar. "By banning smoking in all farmers markets in the City of Los Angeles, we are ensuring that those who are there to enjoy a healthy atmosphere --and the workers who make that possible--can be free from the effects of second hand smoke."

"The City of Los Angeles continues to be a leader in the effort to protect residents from the dangers of secondhand smoke," said Councilwoman Wendy Greuel. "This common-sense ordinance is about keeping our kids safe, our families healthy and our public spaces smoke-free."

Secondhand smoke is responsible for an estimated 38,000 deaths among non-smokers each year. Secondhand smoke exposure causes an estimated 300,000 children in the United States to suffer lower respiratory tract infections, including bronchitis and pneumonia; exacerbates child asthma; and increase the risk of acute middle-ear infections in children. The Environmental Protection Agency has classified secondhand smoke as a group A carcinogen, the most dangerous class of carcinogens.

Representatives from local farmers' markets, the American Heart Association, the American Lung Association and the County Department of Public Health all testified on behalf of the measure. Councilmembers Greuel and Huizar co-presented the motion to ban smoking in City farmers' markets on June 6th and the motion passed unanimously through the Arts, Parks and Health Committee in July. There are approximately 40 certified farmers' markets in the City of Los Angeles.

The City of Los Angeles has been in the forefront of protecting people from the dangers of secondhand smoke by enacting and enforcing smoking regulations. In 2002, the City banned smoking within 25 feet of playground equipment, sports fields, picnic areas and bleachers. In 2004, the City prohibited smoking on Los Angeles beaches. Last month, the City Council unanimously approved an ordinance to ban smoking in all City parks.

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