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## Farm-to-table community dinner is back for 2017

By Sherry Lucas

Main Street Clinton's Home Grown event is back for a second year, inviting the community to the table as it kicks off the farmers market season on the town's brick streets.

The community gathering, as home-grown as its name, debuted last year in Olde Towne Clinton to great ac-

claim, with a delicious introduction to and celebration of the producers who bring their fresh produce and products to Fresh at Five every Tuesday throughout the summer.



Photo by Susalyn Bennett

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This year's Home Grown is 6:30-8:30 p.m. on June 3. The farm-to-table menu features as many locally-produced foods as possible, and the tie-in with the Manship Mobile Kitchen puts award-winning chef Alex Eaton right there on site. Meme's Brick Street Bakery owner Theresa Smith will provide the sweet finish of dessert. Seating is limited. For tickets, \$55 each, call 601-924-5472 or visit [www.mainstreetclintonms.com/homegrown](http://www.mainstreetclintonms.com/homegrown) by May 30.

BlueCross BlueShield of Mississippi again sponsors Home Grown and also sponsors Fresh at Five, which will follow up with its first market of the season from 5-7 p.m. on June 6.

"It's just a perfect fit for them," Main Street Clinton executive director Tara Lytal said. Fresh at Five markets continue each Tuesday through August.

Organizers say that tasty food, lovely live music, twinkling lights and friendly neighbors made Home Grown's 2016 debut a success that begged to be repeated. The fundraiser made about \$4,000 for the Main Street Clinton program and brought townfolk together in an exciting new way.

"We envisioned doing one long table down Jefferson. Last year, it rained on us, so we had to put it under a tent, but it was still wonderful and charming,"

Lytal said. "I tell you, I probably got more compliments on that event than anything we've ever done. Just being on the brick streets immediately, inherently has its own charm. So, closing the street, putting up the great big tent, having white lights under the tent, the tables decorated beautifully, the good food, just the experience — it was truly a magical evening. I hope we can repeat it!"

"I think the community's ready for something like that," said Home Grown committee member Marsha Barham said, noting the event's appeal for couples, date nights and more. "The whole ambiance, it's such a great evening. ... It's just a fun place to be." Also, as a pre-

cursor to Clinton's farmers market season, "we want to make sure to entice people to come Tuesday nights" and support the market that's grown steadily since its 2012 start.

Home Grown hits so many tasty notes of what ties a community together and keeps it healthy. Friends and neighbors mingle in the heart of downtown and dine on a sumptuous supper that highlights locally grown foods and the folks who make that their livelihood.



Photo by Susalyn Bennett

Manship general manager Steven O'Neill sees it often.

"I think it's great, because, if you can have the vendors there, the farmers there ... it's just great for people to be able to meet the folks, face to face, that they're eating their product. ... It creates that personal bond where they're not buying from the big box store. They know that it came from farmer Joe down the street."

"It helps solidify those relationships and makes them more likely, hopefully, to head over to the farmers market and buy it when it's available."

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