

# the**food**shop

## J. Kings farmers' market

700 Furrows Rd.  
Holtsville, 631-289-8401

On June 25, J. Kings, Long Island's largest food service distributor (by far), cleared the cars out of the northernmost corner of its parking lot and brought in fresh, local produce. Since then, the market has been open from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. every Wednesday through Saturday, attracting grateful chefs and home cooks.

### THE GOODS

The selection changes as the season gets under way. Last week, there was lettuce from Deer Run Farm in Brookhaven; greens, carrots and beets from Satur Farms in Cutchogue; string beans, fava beans and sugar snaps from Latham Farm in Orient, and the season's first corn from Rottkamp's Fox Hollow Farm in Calverton. Two weeks ago, "we

had corn from Georgia," said Kings' produce maven Joel Panagakos, "but now we've got the Long Island corn." The market sells fruits and vegetables from New Jersey farms as well, and fills in seasonal gaps with produce from California and the South.

### THE MARKET FOR THE MARKET

"We're a local distributor serving local restaurants," said John King, the company's founder and president. The farmers' market is an extension of a program started a few years ago to deliver local produce to local chefs. On the one hand, he said, "chefs are too busy to head out east and visit all the farms," but on the other hand, "it's hard for them to look at a computer screen and shop for produce that way." King's solution: Bring all the produce together in a central location (J. Kings is right off the Long Island Expressway at Exit 62) that's convenient for chefs.



NEWSDAY PHOTO / DANIEL GOODRICH

**Mary Beth Dark and daughter Alyssa select summer squash at J. Kings farmers' market.**

### THE GRAVY

The true beneficiaries of the market, however, are local non-chefs. Pauline Pfister of Holbrook has been coming once a week since the day it opened. "It's all the stuff from out east, but I don't have to drive there. It's local, it's convenient, a lot of it is organic. And it tastes good."

— ERICA MARCUS