



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **CITIZENS BANK, EASTERN MARKET, MICHIGAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION GROW JOBS, LOCAL FOOD BUSINESSES**

*Citizens Bank's Growing Communities program in partnership with MEDC support will provide grants to local vendors, farmers; More than \$550,000 has been invested by Citizens Bank and MEDC in Detroit through the program since 2012*

Detroit, MI – July 15, 2015 – Citizens Bank, Eastern Market Corporation, and Michigan Economic Development Corporation today announced the latest round of of micro grants through Eastern Market to support food-based small businesses in metropolitan Detroit. The pool of grant funds consists of \$60,000 from Citizens Bank and \$150,000 from MEDC.

Funding from Citizens Bank is coming through its Growing Communities program, an urban economic development initiative that focuses on job creation and reinvigorating neighborhoods by leveraging Michigan's agricultural industry. This contribution signifies Citizens Bank's ongoing efforts and commitment to expand local food production and processing to create jobs, revitalize neighborhoods and increase the supply of healthy food to local areas.

Funding from MEDC is part of its economic gardening strategy to connect businesses, state and local government, and community partners to create a nurturing environment for entrepreneurs and small businesses.

"We're excited to be partnered with Citizens Bank for a new round of the Growing Communities grant program and the strong support provided by MEDC," said Randall Fogelman, vice president, business development, Eastern Market Corporation. "This effort has helped so many small Detroit-based businesses that often don't have access to capital, grow and prosper."

Grants awarded through the Citizens Bank Growing Communities program and MEDC funding will assist in providing a variety of small food-based businesses the opportunity to buy equipment, acquire land and hire staff.

"Our *Growing Communities* initiative reflects Citizens' belief that the strength of our company is directly tied to the strength of communities we serve, said Rick Hampson, President, Citizens Bank, Michigan. "We have seen a great return on our investment in Michigan's growing local food industry. This money will help contribute to a more successful economy by helping to create more local jobs and supporting local small businesses."

Growing Communities is part of Citizens Helping Citizens Strengthen Communities, Citizens Bank's program that contributes to the economic vitality of the communities it serves. Citizens Bank was previously known as Charter One.

“MEDC is proud to join Citizens Bank and Eastern Market to help foster entrepreneurship and small business growth in metro Detroit,” MEDC CEO Steve Arwood said. “This is the kind of high-impact public-private partnership that can serve as a model in communities across the state.”

Last year, 32 food businesses, most of which sell products at Eastern Market, were awarded funds from the Growing Communities grant program. Local jam producers Slow Jams and Beau Bien, for example, were both able to use Growing Communities funds to purchase piston-fillers (automatic jar-filling machines) for their growing jam businesses.

“We were grateful for the opportunity to apply for funding through the Growing Communities program,” shared Shannon Byrne, owner of Slow Jams. “Purchase of the piston-filler allowed our business to greatly increase productivity.”

Grant applications can be found at [EasternMarket.com/business-resources/apply-for-a-grant](http://EasternMarket.com/business-resources/apply-for-a-grant). The application deadline is August 21, 2015 and grants will be awarded by October 2015.

### **About Eastern Market Corporation**

Eastern Market Corporation (EMC) is the nonprofit that manages Eastern Market on behalf of the City of Detroit. Our vision is to create the most inclusive, resilient, and robust regional food hub in the United States and to ensure that Eastern Market is a community that nourishes Detroit — from food to art and commerce to culture.

For more information, call (313) 833-9300, visit our website at [EasternMarket.com](http://EasternMarket.com) and follow us on Twitter and Instagram: [@EasternMarket](https://twitter.com/EasternMarket) using [#EasternMkt](https://twitter.com/EasternMarket), and Facebook: [EasternMarketDetroit](https://www.facebook.com/EasternMarketDetroit).

### **About Citizens Financial Group, Inc.**

Citizens Financial Group, Inc. is one of the nation’s oldest and largest financial institutions, with \$136.5 billion in assets as of March 31, 2015. Headquartered in Providence, Rhode Island, Citizens offers a broad range of retail and commercial banking products and services to individuals, small businesses, middle-market companies, large corporations and institutions. In Consumer Banking, Citizens helps its retail customers “bank better” with mobile and online banking, a 24/7 customer contact center and the convenience of approximately 3,200 ATMs and approximately 1,200 Citizens Bank branches in 11 states in the New England, Mid-Atlantic and Midwest regions. Citizens also provides mortgage lending, auto lending, student lending and commercial banking services in select markets nationwide. In Commercial Banking, Citizens offers corporate, institutional and not-for-profit clients a full range of wholesale banking products and services including lending and deposits, capital markets, treasury services, foreign exchange and interest hedging, leasing and asset finance, specialty finance and trade finance. Citizens operates through its subsidiaries Citizens Bank, N.A., and Citizens Bank of Pennsylvania. Additional information about Citizens and its full line of products and services can be found at [www.citizensbank.com](http://www.citizensbank.com).

### **About MEDC**

The Michigan Economic Development Corporation serves as the state’s marketing arm and lead advocate for business growth, jobs and opportunity with a focus on helping grow Michigan’s economy. For more on the MEDC and its initiatives, visit [www.michiganbusiness.org](http://www.michiganbusiness.org). For Michigan travel news, updates and information, visit [www.michigan.org](http://www.michigan.org). Michigan residents interested in seeking employment with any of Michigan’s growing companies should check [www.mitalent.org](http://www.mitalent.org), where more than 96,000 jobs are currently available in a variety of industries.

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