

With May now underway, it's time to think of changing our diets to our summer mode—with a weekly trip to the area farmers markets. The Ashe market got a jump on the area, opening last Saturday in West Jefferson, but tomorrow, the Watauga market opens at the Horn in the West parking lot. Missing from this year's Watauga market will be long-time participant Charles A. Church of Valle Crucis who passed away last Sunday, and there will be no more Ripshin Mountain goat cheese from Happy Valley's Lisa Plaster, who is retiring from the commercial cheese business. She was featured in an article this week in the Hickory Daily Record. Other markets will open in Newland, with others staggering their openings as warmer weather arrives—Blowing Rock and Valle Crucis.