

MARKET PERFORMANCE



There are many ways to encourage and measure the long-term success of your farmers market. **Raising funds and securing sponsorships** can help your market afford what it needs to be a healthy market. **Marketing and promotions** can help boost awareness and attendance of your market. And **collecting data and feedback** will help you make improvements and changes moving forward.

FUNDRAISING

IT TAKES MONEY TO MAKE MONEY

Fundraising and sponsorships increase awareness, build relationships, and engage staff, volunteers, board members, vendors, and market-goers. And a market's effort to gather data and report metrics makes a request for funds stronger. First impressions are important and so is a communication strategy that is sustainable. Be realistic. Practice your pitch.

10 WAYS TO RAISE FUNDS

I. SPONSORSHIP

Look at who is already going to or supporting the market. Reach out to businesses who support similar causes. Be sure to give the sponsor something in exchange (scaling up what you give them based on what they gave you). For example: logos on banners, materials, maps, and posters; recognition on social media and in newsletters; mentions when you talk about the market on the radio or news; a stall at the market; or handing out promotional items at the info booth.

Sponsorships can take many forms depending on the needs of the market and what resources a local business has to offer. Here are some examples of different sponsorship opportunities:

Market banner: Sell space on a large banner that will hang at every market. Offer different sizes of ad squares for different sponsorship levels, ranging from \$150 to \$1500. Estimated cost of one banner: \$450 (designed by the market manager or staff, then printed by a local print and design company). It costs more to hire a graphic designer, but you could save money by ordering printing online. The design and printing could be a sponsorship opportunity, too, by offering the designer or printer space on the banner that matches what the fees.



In-kind: Don't underestimate the impact of in-kind donations. In-kind donations are when individuals or businesses give their time or skills related in place of a direct monetary contribution. A printer in town may donate flyers, posters, a banner, or other promotional materials. Local media may provide in-kind advertising in the newspaper or on the tv or radio. Others might provide assistance by designing websites or logos, writing grants, or marketing.

Percent of sales: Partner with a grocery store, restaurant, or other business for a giving day or week. Many restaurants offer dining fundraisers. How it works: The restaurant schedules a day that your organization will benefit from sales. The restaurant will likely create a flier for you to promote and post on social media, encouraging patrons to dine at that establishment on the given day. For each diner that shows the flier on their phone or a printed copy, the restaurant will donate a percent of that patron's sales to you.

2. BRANDED MERCH

Put your market logo on merchandise for sale at the info booth. Many markets do this for cloth shopping bags, aprons, hats, t-shirts, or mugs.

3. CALENDAR

Create a calendar of images from the farmers market. This is a great option for year-round markets who can sell the calendar at the end or beginning of the calendar year. You can order inexpensive calendars in bulk online, but a local print or design shop may be willing to print the calendar at a discount as an in-kind donation.

4. RAFFLES/AUCTIONS

Raffle or auction off donated products. Have a board member who makes quilts or a vendor who bakes amazing pies? Local businesses may donate a spa gift card, wine tasting, hotel or restaurant package, or tickets to a concert, musical, or sporting event. Note: You may need a permit to do a raffle or auction.

5. LOCAL CLUBS & CHURCHES

Some markets have found success funding their SNAP programs by reaching out to local pastors to help raise funds from congregations. Community clubs (kiwanas, rotary, etc.) may do a donation at their meetings, too.

6. ONLINE FUNDRAISING PLATFORMS

Look into online platforms like Fundly (fundly.com). Give Lively (givelively.org) is free for non-profits.

7. FACEBOOK & MARKET WEBSITE

If you're a non-profit, you can apply to accept donations via your Facebook page. By providing proof of non-profit status and basic financial info, you can add a "Donate" button to your page, run fundraising campaigns, and even have other Facebook users (board members, vendors, or followers) ask for donations on your behalf.

If your market has a website, you can add donation functionality, a "Donate" button, and a donation/ sponsorship page to your website. This is a great place



to explain how funds will be used and recognize past and current sponsors with their logos.

8. SPECIAL EVENTS

Raise money by hosting a pre-season potluck, mid-season meal which a local chef prepares using farm fresh produce, or end-of-season benefit concert played by a local band.

9. VENDOR FEES

Most markets already charge fees, but if yours doesn't, consider starting. Even the smallest market offers vendors a place to sell their products. It's reasonable to charge a small fee to help support operating costs, improvements, and promotions of the market. Clearly communicate any new fee to all vendors early and in-person, and don't implement or raise rates mid-season.

10. GRANTS

Writing grants can be time-consuming, but there is a lot of potential funding to be had if you can find the right opportunity. Local businesses, area banks, and community foundations are great places to start. Consider partnering with other markets for larger state or federal grants. Know what you're getting into: before you start writing a grant, you'll want to study the expectations if awarded grantees.

6 C's to Consider When Planning Your Funding Strategy

1. CAPACITY

Consider your capacity as market manager. Coordinate your asks, activities, and stewardship accordingly. Some fundraising methods require more time and different skills than others.

2. COMMITTEE

Who can help you? Do you have a board member with grant writing experience? A volunteer who does graphic design? Can you assemble a small committee to help seek sponsors, write letters, and follow through? It's okay if you need a year to build that core team and create a strategy, then spend the next year putting a plan into action.

3. CREDIT

Give credit where credit is due. Follow through with what you promise sponsors in return for their support. Put their logos on marketing pieces. Give them a booth. Write thank you notes.

4. CORRESPONDENCE

Will your committee be making the funding request or will it come directly from you? In letters, will you use "we" or "I" when requesting donations? If you have board members with strong ties to potential sponsors, consider sending them a more personalized letter.

5. CONNECTIONS

Examine your existing relationships in the community. You probably already have supporters who are willing to invest their resources (cash, time, skills) in your market's success.

6. CLARITY

Be clear in everything you do. Provide boundaries, regular schedules, gentle reminders, and expectations for yourself, your team, your sponsors, and your vendors.



YOUR MARKET

FUNDRAISING IDEAS FROM NEBRASKA MARKETS

HOST A MEAL

"Last year was the first year we fundraised for the market. During the annual festival that Sutton does every year...**we served breakfast and lunch to benefit the farmers market. The profits from that went toward paying for banners and advertising for the farmers market. It was a huge success...**it helped cover some of the expenses from previous years and for last year."

- Rebecca Plettner, Sutton Farmers Market

HOLD SPECIAL EVENTS

"[We have had] **music, kids activities, people come from the nearby zoo, wine night...car shows, [and the] local marching band...** Vendors individually keep track of what they make. [The] Chamber of Commerce and bank [often] give funding for activities."

- Allison Gabel, Shelby Farmers Market

WORK WITH PARTNERS

"The vouchers used by low-income customers to increase access to local food...are through our community benefit outreach program, funded by [the hospital]. They very much support it, both from a health perspective for families to have access, but then also supporting vendors, knowing that's a source of income for them..."

In 2020, one of the United Way partnerships...provided some additional funds towards our Farmer's Market vouchers...**So, I approached [CHI] saying, 'Hey, would you guys be willing to support this? It would also go through the food pantry, but it can be used at farmers market.'** And they were willing to do that."

- Claudia Lanuza, Schuyler Farmers Market



PLAN A WEEKLY GIVEAWAY

"**Have a giveaway every week [with a] local businesses sponsor.** The market gives the business a booth space, and they do a giveaway...such as hot dogs, cookies, water, koozies, pens, ice cream sandwiches, etc. [that is] available for all shoppers."

- Chris Gress, Nebraska City Farmers Market

RELY ON VENDOR FEES

"[The] office manages the Facebook page to advertise, collect fees, give permits, and provide guidelines for vendors. **Vendors can pay a season rate of 50 dollars, or single market rate of 10 dollars. In some years, sponsors also help fund the market.**"

- Irene Mock, Wayne Farmers Market

SEEKING & SECURING SPONSORSHIPS

Sponsorships can help sustain and build your farmers market. Here are some insights and tips from market managers on securing sponsorships for your market:

LOOK TO THE COMMUNITY

"We reached out to the local bank and Chamber of Commerce for support. We also received sponsorships from local businesses who were willing to get involved by providing activities, demonstrations, and more at the market. For example, tire replacement demo by a towing company, local author providing reading of their book, a Farm to Fork event as a season closer also received support and showcased vendor products. Don't be afraid to reach out to your community and ask. In a small community you often know people who are willing to help. If you need extra funding, don't be afraid to pick up the phone and ask because you are hosting an awesome community event. Continue having the conversations as you move forward. Businesses will want to invest in the market."

- Aliza Brunsing, West Point Farmers Market

"The city of Beatrice has, in a lot of ways, been a sponsor. They have, over the last several years, provided some direct financial support to provide this as a resource to the community. We fill out an application for that. It's kind of a grant request, and we do pursue that."

- Michael Sothan, Beatrice Farmers Market

DIVERSIFY

"Our sponsorships are quite diverse such as Waste Management, Family First Chiropractic, and local radio stations. We also have specialty days throughout the market season where we have sponsorships for giveaways such as Farmer's Appreciation Day, Harvest Festival and more. We have even had a coffee shop sponsor coffee for our vendors in the past. We really try to make both our customers and vendors feel appreciated and supported."

- Angelyn Wang, Village Pointe Farmers Market



THINK OUTSIDE OF THE BOX

"Sponsorships can be outside of the box; for example Friends of the Library sponsors our farmers market."

- Emily Thompson, Falls City Farmers Market

MARKET

DEVELOP YOUR BRAND

Your brand is often a customer's first impression of your market. It's the public-facing part of your overall marketing plan. How customers perceive your brand can increase awareness, attract new customers, and build trust and loyalty that leads to return customers. From an

eye-catching logo to consistent colors, there are several elements to consider. A brand can feel vague at first, but it will become more specific as you start identifying what you want customers to feel and perceive when they interact with your market.



THE IMPORTANCE OF A GOOD LOGO

With her background in graphic design and the hospitality industry, Sutton Farmers Market manager Rebecca Plettner knows how important branding is. A logo communicates a lot to customers, including consistency. "Even though it's a seasonal market, I'm treating it like a brick and mortar, reliable shop - where people can trust we will be there rain or shine, and a good logo helps me do that."

Elements of Your Brand

Personality: Think of your brand as the personality of your farmers market. What sets it apart from other markets? What are its values? Its mission? How do its products, programs, and events fit into the customer's life? What words and feelings do you want vendors, customers, and the community to associate with your market?

Voice: Consider how you talk about your market—online and in-person. How do you sound? How do you want to sound? Down-to-earth? Fun? Polished? By identifying how you want to come across, you can set guidelines for the tone and words you choose to use in social media posts, news interviews, and face-to-face interactions at the market.

Color: Colors are powerful. They inspire feelings and set moods. The colors you use in your branding will affect the overall look and feel of your market. If your market takes place in a park, green might feel right. If your town uses blue in its branding, it might make sense to incorporate a similar shade into your color scheme. Choose two to four colors—you can create additional variation by adjusting their hues. If you're feeling overwhelmed by your choices, look for examples online and at the local library. Ask local designers or community college instructors to help point you in the right direction.

Typeface: Choose 1-2 fonts to use on signage, social media, website, logo, and other materials. Stick with it. The little details matter! Is it easy to read? Does it reflect your personality? What emotions does it evoke?

Tagline: Can you sum up your market in just a few words? Brainstorm a list of ideas. Ask a few close friends, loyal customers, or vendors to weigh in. Narrow it down to the words and/or phrase that best expresses your brand (i.e., "Have fun, Eat Local" or "Local and Fresh, Our Community at It's Best"). Use your tagline in your logo, social media, website, newsletter, press releases, merchandise, posters, and more.

Consistency: Strive to be consistent in the voice, colors, fonts, logo, and tagline that you use so that people begin to recognize how your market looks and sounds. You're reinforcing your brand through all the words and visuals you use in marketing and at the market itself (info booth, signage, etc.). When something is "on brand," that means it's consistent with your market's personality. In everything you do, ask yourself: Is this on brand? Does this show our personality? It takes time to see the benefits of your marketing efforts. Be patient and it will pay off.



SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

WHERE TO POST

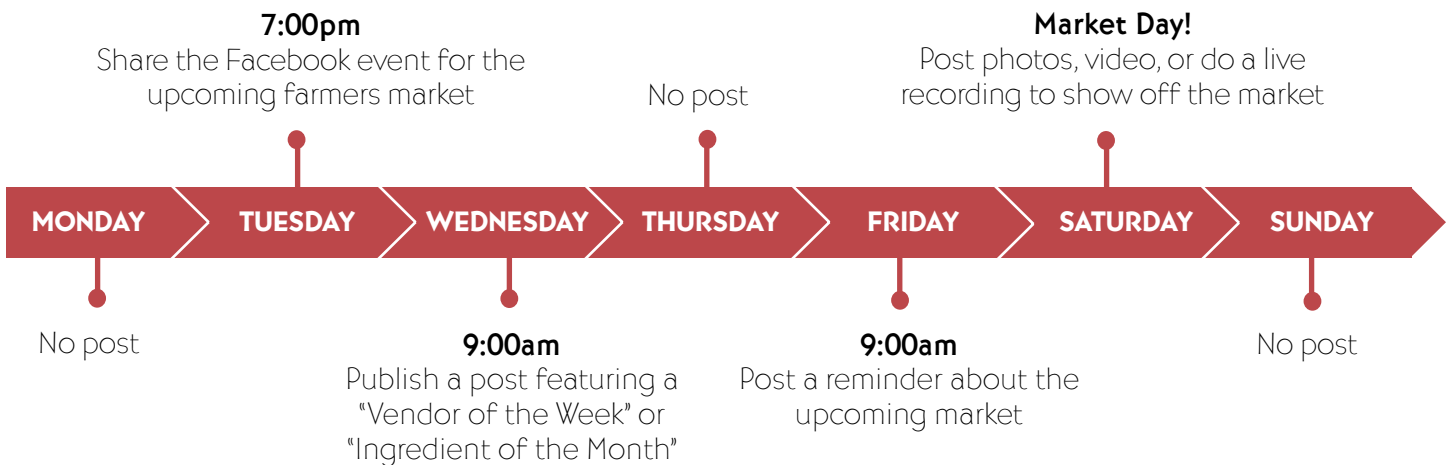
Social media is always changing, and a platform that is popular at the moment may not be next year. If you're just getting started, focus your efforts on Facebook. With its wide range of users (Baby Boomers, Gen X'ers, and Millennials), event functionality, and pages, it's a great way to get the word out about your market. After that, set up an Instagram account to reach more potential customers in their twenties and thirties. You can even link your accounts to automatically publish Instagram posts directly to Facebook. If you are particularly savvy with videos try tiktok.

Keep in mind that platforms are always changing which types of media receive the most views. Keep yourself updated with how these algorithms are changing.

TIMING OF POSTS

Your audience may be more active on social media on certain days and at different times. According to SproutSocial, global engagement is highest mid-day on weekdays, especially around noon when people are on lunch breaks. When it comes to posting, there's a fine line between too much and too little. One post a day is ideal, while two posts every day can be excessive. It's important to find what works for you and be consistent. If you're just getting started, aim for three posts per week.

For example:





Columbus Farmers Market
July 30 · 🌱

⋮

It's a big Market today! We have pickling cucumbers and gherkins!!! Plus new produce vendors. Tomatoes, onions, cabbage, beets, cucumbers, fresh herbs, broccoli, plus baked goods , rugs, towels, jewelry and much more! Located in Frankfurt Square on 14 st and 26 ave in downtown Columbus. Open till noon.






PHOTO & VIDEO RULE

Include pictures with your social media posts because they're more likely to catch the eye and get engagement than a regular plain text post. Pictures that include people often get more engagement so keep that in mind.

Short form videos like Facebook and Instagram stories or reels capture the attention of many users. Try your hand at live video - post a weekly Facebook Live tour of your market to showcase vendors and products.

COPY IS STILL KEY

Even though images and videos quickly grab people's attention, the accompanying text can make or break engagement with your content. Generally, shorter is better. Experiment until you find a winning combination.

ENCOURAGE ENGAGEMENT

Engagement is when someone likes, shares, comments on, or reacts to your post. Notice what your audience engages with and post more of that. When someone comments, like and/or reply to their comment. In all interactions, strive to be positive and helpful—social media is also a valuable customer service tool!

TAG, MENTION, & SHARE

If your vendors have Facebook, tag/mention their pages in your posts and share their posts on your page. Encourage vendors to share posts from the market,

too. Send direct messages to let them know when you have created new posts and ask them to share. Cross-promote events from your vendors or other community organizations by sharing them on your main page. This helps direct followers of your vendors and other community members to the farmers market page.

SHARE USER-GENERATED CONTENT

Pay attention to Facebook and Instagram users who tag your market in a post. Then, ask for permission to share that photo on your social media page.

TAP INTO LOCAL HASHTAGS

Identify any local hashtags used in your city/area that relate to community, events, etc. For example, the hashtags #ThinkHastings and #scottsbuff focus on the Hastings and Scottsbuff areas, while #ThisIsNebraska is statewide.



MARKETING DO'S AND DON'TS FROM MARKET MANAGERS

DO MAKE A MARKETING CALENDAR & CHECKLIST

Plan out your entire year (not just the market season) of what you want to promote and when you need to promote it. For example: You may want to promote a special event 4-5 weeks before it happens, while you want to promote consistent features of your market (like weekly musical guests, or even the market itself) at least once a week all season long.

At a glance, your marketing calendar should show what's going on and coming up. Using the calendar as a guide, stay on track with more specific to-do lists for tasks such as creating a Facebook event, posting on Instagram, or sending a press release.

Michael Sothan of the Beatrice Farmers' Market shares how they schedule their social media marketing efforts: **"We do regular Facebook posts, so there's two or three posts that the market is making every week when it's active. Plus, we do a Facebook Live at every single market that shows the vendors and what they have."**

DON'T UNDERESTIMATE "OLD FASHIONED" MARKETING

Even in an age of social media and digital advertising, word of mouth can still make a huge impact. Market manager Amy Hoagland of the Downtown Hastings Farmers' Market taps into her vendors when it comes to marketing, **"We use social media, but also word of mouth and flyers. I try to keep a lot of flyers on hand, we'll put them up around town. Our vendors will also put them up in their local area and places they frequent. The more vendors we have, the more word spreads. Each vendor draws their own circle of customers, friends and family to the market."**

The best advertising is often happy customers who have good experiences. They will likely share positive experiences with their own circles, spreading the word that this market is a good place to go. Allison Gabel, organizer of the Shelby Farmers Market, says, **"People have a great time each week and are looking for something free and fun for their family to do. We take pictures of the events and blast them all over social media to show off our 'small town' feel!"**



DO CONNECT WITH LOCAL MEDIA

To promote opening day, an event, or other exciting news, send out a press release. Reach out about free on-air interviews with local radio stations. Offer to contribute a weekly/monthly article with your local paper. If you're a 501(c)3, ask about non-profit discounts on advertising.

Cheryl Averill, an organizer at the Morrill Farmers Market, shared, **"Our connection with the local newspaper has been wonderful, and they are interested in stories about local food and farming. They will come out and talk with the vendors and always write a nice article in the paper."**

DO PUT YOUR MARKET ON EVERY CALENDAR

Local magazines, newspapers, TV/radio stations, businesses, banks, and Chambers of Commerce often have community calendars online or in print. Try writing a form email that asks to be added to their calendar and that includes an introduction, your contact information, and your market's current information including- name, location, hours, dates, website/social media, and brief description. Send it to as many local and regional calendars as you can!

"People need to know your market is there, so you have to get the news out about the hours and the place it will be," says Meredith Williams, organizer of the Beaver City Farmers Market.



DON'T PUT ALL YOUR MARKETING EGGS IN ONE AUDIENCE'S BASKET

Social media can be a great way to get in front of certain market-goers. But keep in mind, other customers may be more likely to read the newspaper, listen to the radio or see a flyer posted at local business or public space. "You need to be able to reach different age brackets and lifestyles. You'll capture some groups with social media, but not all." says Alexis Massie, of the Original Farmers Market of North Platte.

Many farmers markets post on social media a few days before the market. You can also make a post featuring any special guests like musicians, local businesses, or activities that will be at the market. Using Facebook events and changing your profile or cover photo is another way to reach people.

Stephanie Grafel, organizer of the Broken Bow Market on the Square has several different avenues to advertise the market, each with its specific audience. **"We get quite a bit of response from people listening to our ads on the local radio station. Mostly from people who are listening as they are getting ready for work, or taking the kids to school in the morning. We also run an ad in our local shopper - it's a locally published weekly shopping guide available at gas stations and other businesses in the area. We've used Facebook to reach large numbers of people, especially to showcase upcoming special events or new vendors."**

The image shows a Facebook cover photo for the Syracuse Farmers Market. At the top, it says "SYRACUSE, NE" and "FARMERS MARKET" in large, bold, orange letters. Below that, it says "SATURDAYS • 8 - 10:30 AM" and "OUTSIDE OF WESTERN NATIONAL BANK 1780 POPLAR STREET". To the right, it says "MAY THRU SEPTEMBER 2022". At the bottom, it says "Farm Fresh Fruits, Veggies & more". There is a green truck icon with a basket of produce on top. The Facebook profile name "Syracuse Farmers Market" and "726 likes • 758 followers" are visible. There are also icons for "Message", "Liked", and "Search".

The Syracuse Farmers' Market updates their Facebook cover photo with an easy to read, eye-catching graphic that clearly communicates important information like when and where the market is. They use branding components like a well-designed logo, and coordinated colors in this cover photo.

Anatomy of a Promotional Print Piece

Printed flyers and posters can be valuable marketing tools. The poster below is a great example of how to balance important details (name, date, location) with additional information (dogs allowed, produce/goods from within a 100-mi radius, sponsors) and fun, eye-catching graphics.

MAKE SURE...

...before distributing to double-check:

Is the market **name and date/time/location** prominently displayed?

Is all the info **correct**? Any typos?

Are all the fonts **clear and easy-to-read**?

Do the colors **show up well** when printed? (Medium/darker colors will show up better than pastel/neon colors.)

Does it reflect your market's **personality**?

Fun, eye-catching colors & graphics

Market name (BIG and bold)

SUNDAY FARMERS' MARKET

AT COLLEGE VIEW

SUNDAYS 10AM - 2PM

48TH & PRESCOTT ST. LINCOLN, NEBRASKA
APRIL 24TH - OCTOBER 30TH, 2022
sundayfarmersmarket.org  

Time

Date/Location

Social media

30+ VENDORS

WEEKLY LIVE MUSIC

YOGA - MASTER GARDENERS - CHEF DEMOS - KIDS ACTIVITIES

FRIENDLY DOGS WELCOME

Dogs allowed

Family-friendly

Sponsor/partner recognition

Logo

SNAP/DUFB accepted

PERFORMANCE

WHY & HOW TO COLLECT DATA

REASONS TO COLLECT DATA

ECONOMIC IMPACT

Demonstrate to local government, economic development groups, and other partners the market's economic contribution.

POTENTIAL SPONSORS

Provide potential sponsors with evidence of how many customers will see their logo on your signage if they fund the market.

VENDOR RECRUITMENT

Show potential new vendors the number of customers they will see and the desire for their specific product.

PROPOSED CHANGES

Support any proposed changes to the market (e.g., change of location, change of hours, addition of programming or events.)

TREND AWARENESS

Be aware of trends in market sales, attendance, or customer demographics that can help improve the market over time.

HOW WILL DATA HELP YOU?

The time and effort it takes to collect data is an investment in the future of your farmers market.

If you are looking to add new vendors, change your hours, start new programming, bring in a new customer base, woo sponsors, or just learn more about how your farmers market is doing, data can help. While there are endless approaches to measuring your performance, here are a few tried-and-true methods for you to start implementing at your farmers market.

DATA IMPROVES...

Organized and consistently maintained records have several benefits:

Decision-making: Analyzing data helps market managers spot significant changes/areas that need attention. With relevant data, managers and boards can track key indicators over time and use that knowledge to make decisions.

Market Promotion: Having specific metrics in marketing messages makes them much more likely to be shared. Metrics also help reinforce the benefits of shopping at farmers markets.

Media Relations: Reporters typically want to know more about the market than its opening date, location, and hours. Press releases that include relevant data (such as annual attendance) are much more likely to be picked up by publications

Advocacy: Sharing the market's community impact with public officials, partners, market neighbors, and other stakeholders helps increase understanding and support for the market.

Funding: Financial supporters want to understand the impact their investments have on the communities they serve. They often require outcome measurements.

The Basics of Measuring Market Performance

GETTING STARTED

Ready to start measuring performance? Whether you are new to data collection or a seasoned data collector, attendance counts and surveys are the two best sources for performance measurements for market managers.

If you've never collected data at your market before, you may want to start slowly and not try to adopt all these new measurements at once. Trying to do too much at one time can lead to spreading yourself too thin and getting discouraged when the data isn't collected properly.

STICK WITH ONE METHOD

An important place to start is deciding how you want to collect data over a long period of time. To be able to look at trends over time, you need to collect data in the same way. This is most important when it comes to attendance counts.

YOU SHOULDN'T (AND DON'T) HAVE TO DO IT ALONE

Develop a committee of interested individuals to help. Vendors should also be at the table. You may reach out to nearby Boy Scout or Girl Scout troops, student volunteers from a local college or high school, 4-H groups, Master Gardeners, and other like-minded groups that may be sources of volunteers for conducting an attendance count or surveying customers. For help developing customer surveys or other evaluation methods, contact Buy Fresh Buy Local Nebraska.

TRY TO RECORD SOMETHING ABOUT EVERY MARKET

Certain measurement practices, like dot surveys and attendance counts, require planning and help from outside partners. Luckily, these don't need to be done at every market (try to do these at four markets each year, more on that later in this section.) However, try to collect some data at every market. Try to answer at least these questions in a Daily Market Report: How many vendors came? What's the weather like? Is there a special event or program? Include an additional note section for other important pieces of information, like "First tomatoes of the season at the market" or "Farmer Jane says it was her best market ever."

Ideas for getting started with data collection at your farmers market:

- A summary of each market
- Number of social media posts you did each season
- Variety of products at different times throughout the season
- Customer and vendor counts
- Create a survey - paper, on a tablet, provide an incentive for folks to fill out the survey, have it at your main table



ATTENDANCE

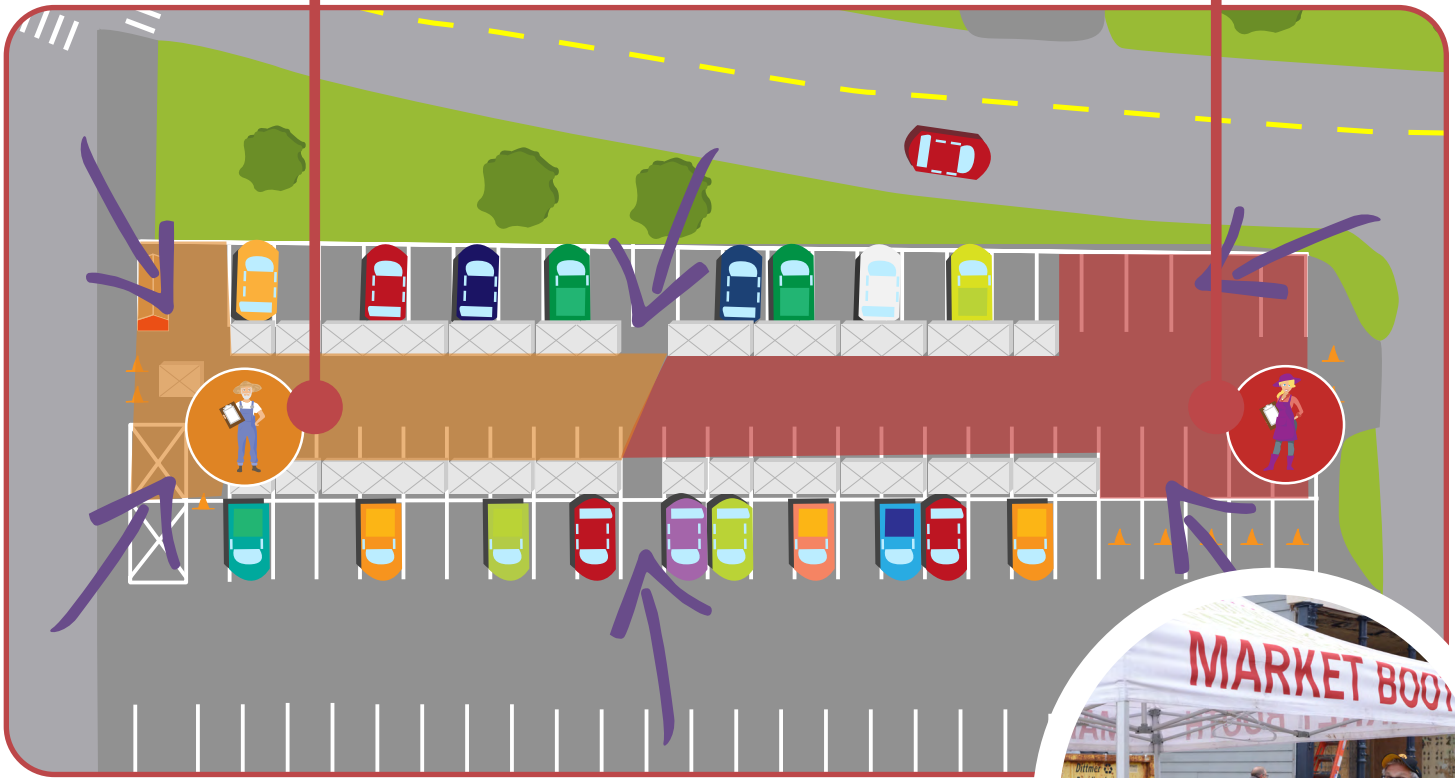
HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE AT YOUR MARKET?

Farmers market research conducted by the Farmers Market Coalition, University of Wisconsin-Madison, and Oregon State University over the past decades has advanced our understanding on how to get accurate attendance counts at farmers markets.

What they found was that the most commonly used, accurate method of measuring market attendance is a 20-minute sample count every hour of the market at a consistent time interval. This is the gold-standard, but other methods exist and should be considered depending on the specific needs and layout of your market.



This market is divided into two “zones of responsibility.”
The arrows indicate suggested entry points for customers.



COUNT METHODS

Sample Count: You will need tally counters (the object), market counters (the individual), and a count coordinator.

Market counters can be trained the day of the event, before the market starts. They need to know 1) their specific “zone of responsibility,” 2) that they are only to count adults, 3) that they will only count from :20 to :40 of each hour of the market, and 4) how they will relay that information to the count coordinator. The zones of responsibility will be different for every market (see next page). From :20 to :40 of every hour of the market, the market volunteer/staff counter will stand in a designated zone of responsibility and count every new adult customer that enters that market in that area. At :40, the “count coordinator” should walk around to each counter and collect that hour’s data to keep track over the course of the market. Each counter then has 40 minutes to drink coffee, eat donuts, chat with vendors, and enjoy the market until :20 rolls around again.

At the end of the market, add up all of the 20-minute interval counts and multiply them by three to get the full market attendance count.

Full Count: Every unique adult customer is counted as they enter the market for the entirety of the market. As you can imagine, this is time-consuming and would be best for markets with specific entry points.

Walk through: Market staff walk through the market at set intervals—every half hour, every twenty minutes—and count every adult at the market. This method requires an idea of how long the average customer stays at the market. For instance, if you know the average customer stays for 20 minutes, then count every adult customer during one 20-minute interval every hour. Then multiply that number by three to get the full attendance for the full hour. If it’s 10 minutes, multiply the total by six. If it’s 30 minutes, multiply by two. Because of the difficulty in estimating the length of stay of the average visitor, this is considered to be the least accurate method of measuring attendance.



SURVEYS

WHAT DO PEOPLE THINK OF YOUR MARKET?

Your job is to create a survey that quickly and easily gathers information from a valuable population—customers, vendors, partners.

Here are some guidelines for conducting surveys:

- Focus on what you need to know, not what you simply want to know
- Develop simple questions that are easy to answer
- Avoid subjective questions
- Multiple choice questions are best
- Stress how important their response and information is to improving the market
- Provide some kind of incentive or reward
- Consider survey sample size and frequency



TYPES OF SURVEYS

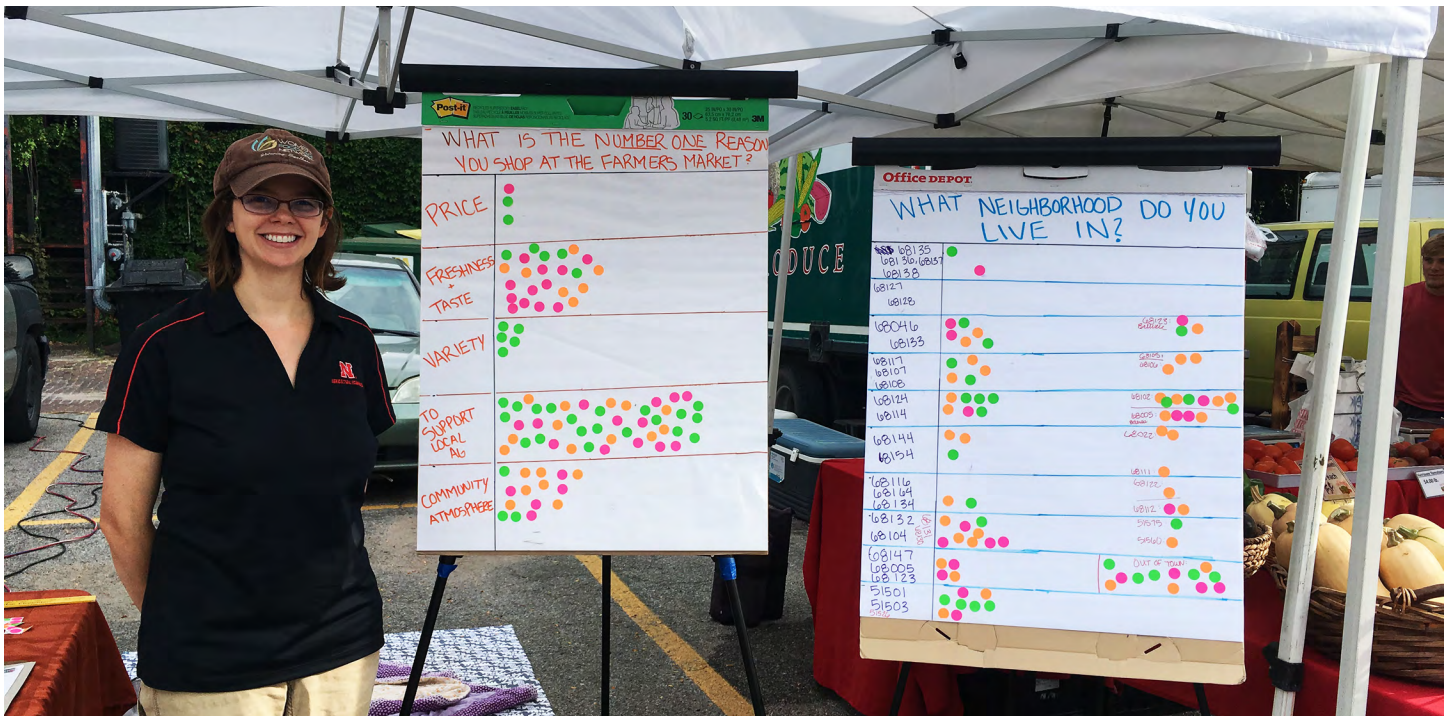
Dot Survey: A dot survey entails one question written on a poster that has several potential answers written out below the question. Customers are then given one colored circular sticker to place next to their answer. Up to four questions on four different posters can maximize the amount of information gathered.

For more information on dot surveys, check out the excellent "Tools for Rapid Market Assessments" article published by Oregon State University Extension Service.

Verbal Survey: If gregarious market volunteers or staff are available, a verbal survey is an easy way to get a high response rate from customers. Choose fewer than five, easy-to-answer questions and instruct a team of individuals to walk through the market asking questions to a random selection of customers. Don't forget to take thorough records.

Online Survey: There are many free, online survey tools (like Google Forms and Survey Monkey) that are slick ways to gather feedback on the market. This tool may be best for a select group, such as vendors, a market board/committee, or a select group of dedicated customers as response rate will likely be low if sent out to the general public. An added incentive (such as being entered to win \$50 market gift certificate) may increase the response rate, but keep in mind that this will not be a representative group of all those who shop at the market.

Paper Survey: While expensive, paper surveys can be highly effective and earn a high response rate. You can either hand out surveys at the market or mail them out with a pre-stamped return envelope. To make this work, you'll need to have mailing addresses for a targeted group of respondents.



SURVEY TIPS BACKED BY SCIENCE

The following tips are informed by the outstanding research by internationally-recognized survey researcher, Dr. Don Dillman. All surveys should focus on convincing the respondent that the benefits of answering the survey outweigh the costs to them in answering.

Benefits: A chance to win a raffle or other incentive, a sense of improving their community or the market they care about. Strategies to increase benefits and build trust:

- Stress how the survey results will help the market
- Ask interesting questions that are easy to understand and easy to answer
- Make it clear that there are limited opportunities to respond to the survey
- Share that others have already responded
- Use incentives to engage respondents (e.g., a raffle to win a market coupon or a basket of products from the market)
- Make sure respondents know how they can learn more about the survey and prove the survey is authentic
- Clearly state that all information will be kept confidential and protected
- Focus on making all communications and survey elements look professional. Ask for help if needed
- If your market hasn't built up community trust, try getting sponsorship from a trusted, legitimate organization (e.g., the town government, local chamber or economic development group, area college, etc.)

Costs: Time it takes to respond to the survey, energy to think about responses, having to share personal information or opinions. Strategies to decrease costs:

- Make the survey short with simple questions
- Limit (or avoid asking for) personal or sensitive information
- Make sure the survey method matches the target population (e.g., younger populations likely prefer online surveys, older populations likely prefer paper)

How Much to Do?

IF NOTHING ELSE:

- Fill out a daily market report that answers:

How many vendors came?

What was the weather like?

Were there any special events?

- Send out an end-of-the-year survey

WHEN YOU'RE READY FOR MORE, ALSO:

- Conduct one dot survey
- Conduct one attendance count

THE GOLD STANDARD:

- Conduct two dot surveys per season
- Conduct four attendance counts per season
- Use Farmers Market Metrics to analyze and record your data



BEYOND THE GOLD STANDARD:

If a manager is considering any big changes to the market or seeking to reinvigorate its status, a more thorough assessment (such as the Rapid Market Assessment) can be helpful. Local extension offices, Chambers, Main Street organizations, economic development groups, or tourism offices may be interested in helping markets conduct these more rigorous assessments.

Focus groups and targeted interviews can be also very helpful in conducting a more detailed assessment. These are more time-intensive than a survey and will require some skill to do well, but can be highly informative.



FARMERS MARKET METRICS

Once you've collected data, it can be challenging to know what to do with it. Two valuable tools that can help your market take that next step are Farmers Market Metrics and Farm 2 Facts.

The Farmers Market Coalition's Farmers Market Metrics offers an online data management system that includes guides on practices, provides a platform to input all market data, and includes built-in graphics. Farm 2 Facts is a farmers-market data collection toolkit produced by the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Farm 2 Facts provides practices in data collection, interpretation, and reporting data, which will hone your decision making, stakeholder relationships, and funding applications. Review both tools to see what fits best with your needs.

FOR SUCCESS

YOU ARE NOT ALONE

It's hard work to run a farmers market. It can feel isolating, especially if you're in a small rural town. But remember, you're part of a bigger network. In 2022 there are currently 90+ farmers markets of all sizes across the state of Nebraska. You don't have to start from scratch or go at it alone. You can gain inspiration from markets of any size and even managers with decades of experience are still learning and making changes.

FIND SUPPORT WITHIN YOUR COMMUNITY

Rebecca Plettner-Sutton
Sutton Farmers Market

Being a market manager can be isolating and difficult given that it is often a volunteer position. Rebecca Plettner of the Sutton Farmers Market suggests surrounding yourself

with a committee or team of individuals and work to keep them engaged: **"Try to get a committee...get the town involved, invite businesses' in for sponsorships and partnerships."**

Delegate tasks to volunteers, vendors, local businesses, and don't be afraid to reach out for support. Regular meetings can be an important aspect of getting your farmers market started. Consider what meeting times and locations are most accessible for your organizing committee. Even a small group of 3 or 5 dedicated volunteers is enough to get your market off the ground. Be inclusive of ideas and input from all committee members.

"Consistency with your market is also key, stay consistent! If only two vendors show up, that is something, maintain the vendors you have and build from there."



TAKE TIME TO BUILD MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS

Helen Gartner and Alexis Massie
Plattsmouth and Original North Platte Farmers Markets

Farmers markets build community, but it does not happen overnight. Market managers are an essential component to developing an atmosphere that brings customers back, time after time.

Helen Gartner of Plattsmouth Farmers Market suggests focusing on relationships with vendors first. She explains, "There did not used to be much camaraderie [at our farmers market]. Vendors were individuals [and] did not consider themselves a group. [Be] mindful to change that... **Walk around. Talk with each vendor, even just small talk. [Make] the environment happier and more approachable.**"

When vendors are having a good time, likely everyone else will too. Over time, the community will come to support one another and enjoy time together.

According to Massie. "Longevity of the market is key! Our customer base is SOLID after building the market for years. The only reason we don't see a customer at the market is if they have passed or moved, our customers are that great."



MORE IDEAS FOR A SUCCESSFUL MARKET



JUSTISE RHOADES
Aurora Farmers Market

"[It] helps to do it downtown; **Downtown opens their stores at the same time, [so it] is the community as a whole.**"



LARRY KRAMER
Bennett Farmers Market

"**We hold it in a park** and a lot of families come through with their kids... [Since] it's held in the evening... **we try to have a food vendor there to make a supper thing out of it.**"



EMILY THOMPSON
Fall City Farmers Market

"We increased our income 75%, **[by] increas[ing the number of] vendors over the past year,** and [now] more people know about the market."

Appendix A: Sample Vendor Rules

Omaha Farmers Market SATURDAY MARKET in THE OLD MARKET 2022 Rules & Regulations

Dates & Location

- Saturdays 8:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., May 7th – October 15th
 - Absolutely no public sales before 8:00 a.m. or after 12:30 p.m. No food pick-up or pre-orders before opening bell.
 - There will be a bell signaling the opening of the Market and two bells signaling its end. The first closing bell means that the market is over, and no public sales are allowed. The second closing bell means that you are allowed to bring your vehicle on-site and off-site. You CANNOT bring your vehicle on-site or off-site until the second closing bell has rung. **Do NOT pack up your booth until the end of the market.**
- The Market takes place in the Old Market Parking Lot between 10th & 11th Streets, on Jackson Street and on 11th Street.

Vendor Types

- Season Vendors** are vendors that pay a stall fee for the full season. They are assigned a particular stall that they are permitted to set-up in each Saturday of the Market. Season vendors are generally granted “first right of refusal” to reserve their stall from season to season. New season spaces are available on a limited basis each season. Please read the available FAQs (available at omahafarmersmarket.org) and then contact Kristen at kbeck@vgagroup.com if you have additional questions.
- Weekly Vendors** are scheduled for stall spaces depending on space availability, product mix and market management discretion. Weekly vendors should expect to be in a different stall each week they are scheduled. Requesting a date on the vendor application form does NOT guarantee a stall space for that day. You will receive an email a week or two in advance of the market IF there is a space available for you. Your schedule flexibility is appreciated as we continue to fill last minute cancellations up until Friday evenings.

Space / Stall Details

- Vendor spaces vary, some are sized to accommodate a vehicle, most are strictly 10 x 10 spaces, and some are odd shapes and sizes. Please work with the office to determine which type of space will work for you. Market Management will let you know IF a vehicle is permitted when contacting weekly vendors. If you are told it is not a vehicle space do not try to squeeze one in.
 - Please be courteous to your neighbors and remember when you encroach on aisles you are taking space from your customers and other vendors! **Vendors are responsible for working out “close quarters” concerns with their neighbors.**
 - Vendor spaces vary, most are NOT able to accommodate a vehicle. The stalls that ARE vehicle spaces may only fit a moderately sized vehicle (box trucks or oversized vans/trucks will NOT fit).
 - OFM Management asks that vendors park vehicles and drop trailers at least 2 blocks away from the Market in order to leave prime parking spots available for customers.
 - Subletting or sharing spaces is not allowed. If a season vendor is absent from the Market, OFM management has the right to fill the space with another vendor. **PLEASE let us know if you are going to be absent** - - this policy allows us to keep our vendor fees low and it helps us to keep the Market full and energized.
 - Vendors must notify Kristen Beck (OFM Project Manager) of any absence by the Wednesday (12:00pm) before the Market that will be missed.
 - Vendors are provided an empty stall space. You are responsible for bringing your own items for set-up including, but not limited to tables, chairs, tents and necessary weights, signage, cash boxes, etc. The Market does NOT have storage available.
 - Tents MUST be properly weighted (especially in inclement weather, this is for the safety of all market attendees).
 - Trash, including produce debris and food items **must** be swept up and disposed of after each market. Vendors are responsible for cleaning their own area before leaving. Brooms are available through the information booth. If you have a large amount of trash, haul it directly to the dumpster. **Do not fill Market trashcans with produce, boxes, or large items.** Market staff will pull all trashcans 15 minutes before close of the market.
 - If your booth space is not cleaned at the end of each market, management reserves the right to fine vendors a \$20 clean-up cost each market incident.
 - Vendors are highly encouraged to have a sign with the business name and location (city or town).**
- Growers/producers should list all prices at their booth. Signs should be prominently displayed each week.**

Payments, Billing and Fees

- Please see the Vendor Application for a complete breakdown of stall, health department and electrical fees.
- Season vendors are billed in a three-payment installment plan. Installments are generally due in February, May and July.
- Season vendors are required to pay the *entire* season fee and associated health department and electrical fees, no exceptions and no discounts if you are absent.

All season payments MUST be in on time! Season payments not received by the scheduled invoice dates may result in the vendor losing their space until payment is made without reimbursement for markets missed.

- Returned checks: First occurrence the vendor will be charged an additional \$15 fee and must pay the entire amount in cash at the VGA office. Second occurrence, the fee will increase to \$25 and the vendor must pay in cash for the rest of the season.
- Lost checks: Vendors will be responsible for the \$32 fee to put a stop on a lost token/vendor check. OFM will reissue a new check with the \$32 fee deduction. Checks must be cashed within 90 days.
- Cash Payments: Cash payments may only be made in the exact amounts due on invoice (or payment in full). Cash payments need to be turned in at the Market Office (scheduling time to meet for payment is required with Market Manager).

General Policies

- It is the vendors' responsibility to be familiar with the local, state, and federal regulations and permits that govern the products in which they sell. The notes and guidelines included in this document are included as a courtesy, but do not take precedence over governmental policy.
- Vendors must grow/make their products within a 150-mile radius of the market to be eligible to apply.**
- Vendors must apply in one of three categories. More information on these categories is provided in the attached "Category Descriptions & Permitted Product Info" sheet. Only one category of product is allowed per stall space. Categories are:
 - Farm & Nursery Products and Processed Farm Products
 - Value Added Food
 - Craft Items
- The Omaha Farmers Market is a "green market", and priority will be given to the Farm & Nursery Products and Processed Farm Products and Value-Added Food categories. Product mix is also a deciding factor for space assignment.
- Vendors must complete the application process through the office before being allowed at the Market.**
- Weekly vendors are not allowed to show up on "stand-by", hoping for a spot. Doing so will result in a violation.
- The Market is held rain or shine and refunds are not given unless the Market is cancelled prior to opening and at the determination of OFM management. In this case, refunds will only be considered for Weekly Vendors.
- The OFM Onsite Manager arrives at 6:15 a.m. each Saturday. Vendors are allowed to drive onsite between 6:15 a.m. and 7:15 a.m. Vendors arriving after 7:15 a.m. will have to handcart items. **All vendors MUST be onsite by 7:30 a.m., this includes vendors with direct street access. Vendors that are not onsite by 7:30 a.m. may have their space reallocated to another vendor.** No vehicles are allowed to enter or exit the site between 7:15 a.m. and 12:40 p.m. If there is an emergency, please work with the Onsite Manager. Not following the listed arrival times may result in disciplinary action (see rule violation section).
- OFM Management asks that vendors park vehicles and drop trailers at least 2 blocks away from the Market to leave prime parking spots available for customers.
- Vendors are not allowed to leave before 12:40 p.m. even if they sell out of product. This includes leaving your booth set up until the end of market. Leaving early may result in disciplinary action (see rule violation section).
- Vendors entering/exiting the market with a vehicle must drive cautiously. Vendors driving unsafe may lose privileges of bringing a vehicle into the market & will need to park outside of the barricades and hand cart items in/out for the remainder of the season.
- No items offered for sale may be commercially made. All products must be the original work or produce of the vendor.
 - **This includes - no sales of commercially made promotional items.**

Saturday Market – Old Market

Rules and Regulations

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General Policies Cont.

- Definition of “Vendor” – Vendor shall be defined as the producer of goods sold and shall include spouse, siblings, children, parents, and employees of the applicant who assist in the cultivation of the same property or assist in the production of items available for sale.
 - OFM Management reserves the right to conduct on-site inspections of farms, kitchens or other workshops or spaces.
 - Electricity is available on a limited basis in a specific section of the Market and must be arranged in advance by contacting the office. If vendors are approved to use electricity it is their responsibility to provide a 100-foot heavy-duty extension cord and heavy-duty mats to cover the cord.
 - OFM does not permit any vendor to use a generator at the market unless it is discussed and approved by management.
 - Vendors must vacate the market lot no later than 1:30 p.m. each Saturday.
 - No smoking in or near vendor stalls or inside the market.
 - No radios, music, or singing loud enough to be heard by neighboring vendors is allowed in vendor stalls.
 - Trash, including produce debris and food items **must** be swept up and disposed of **in the dumpster** (not the market trashcans) after each market. Vendors are responsible for cleaning their own area before leaving. Brooms are available through the information booth. Only NON-FOOD cardboard may be recycled. Please break down all boxes. We want to be good neighbors to the downtown businesses.
 - Non-produce vendors are responsible for collecting, reporting, and paying sales tax. Omaha’s current tax rate is 7%.
 - Vendors selling woody plant material or perennials must be licensed with the Nebraska Department of Agriculture, Plant Industry. If you are not, please call the Nebraska Department of Agriculture (402) 471-2351.
 - No rude or aggressive behavior toward Market staff, other vendors or customers by Vendors will be tolerated. Doing so will result in a violation. Physical threats may result in immediate expulsion from the Market with no refund of stall fees.
- By submitting an Omaha Farmers Market application all vendors acknowledge that they have read and understand, the terms presented in the Permitted Products (Categories) and Vendor Rules & Regulations. In addition, Vendors are expected to follow policies from Market Management in person and in written correspondence.***

Insurance Requirements

- Each vendor is required to submit a certificate of insurance naming the Omaha Public Market, Inc. as an additional Insured. The certificate needs to be submitted prior to the start of the market opening. If you do not submit a certificate, you will lose your deposit and will not be able to participate in the markets.
- The general liability policy must have a minimum coverage of \$1,000,000 individual/\$2,000,000 aggregate
- If you are a farmer and have a farm insurance policy, then contact your insurance agent about adding a rider to your policy to cover the markets.

Additional Insurance Information

- Per our Omaha Public Market’s insurance agent, there are policies available for vendors who earn \$0-\$25,000 per year. The minimum premium cost is \$275 per year.
- You may reach out to your personal insurance agent to obtain this insurance policy or below is the information on the Omaha Public Market’s insurance agent who does specialize in farmer’s markets insurance.

Larry Spilker
Campbell Risk Management
(800) 730-7475 ext. 203
www.campbellriskmanagement.com

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Food Displays and Packaging

- All food items must be free from harmful pesticide residues and free from insects and spoilage. All produce must be washed.
- All food items, including produce, must be stored and displayed at least 6 inches above the ground.
- Pre-packaged produce must be in NEW food-grade plastic bags or plastic food wrap. Produce sold by piece or per quantity may be sold in NEW paper or plastic bags.
- Only legal scales with state permit stickers are allowed at the Market. Vendors without legal scales must sell by the piece or per quantity. If you wish to sell produce by weight, but do not have a legal scale, consider weighing and packaging items at home, but sell 'by the bag' or 'by the package.'

Douglas County Health Department

Only products in compliance with the regulations of the Douglas County Health Department may be sold at the Market. **Vendors are responsible for securing all necessary permits and approvals.** *The Health Department will notify the Market when they approve you to sell at the Market. The DCHD will conduct onsite inspections throughout the season.*

Season vendors pay fees directly to the Health Department. **Weekly** vendors requiring a temporary event permit for selling prepared, time/temperature control food will pay fees directly to the Health Department (this permit is good for 2 weeks).

- **SEASON** Vendors - The fees that you pay directly through the Douglas County Health Department *may* cover you for other Douglas County Farmers Markets held during different hours or on different days but the fees **do NOT cover you for other markets that take place on overlapping days and times** nor do they cover you for other Douglas County public events. Please contact the Health Department for additional policy information and to secure your necessary permits.
- **WEEKLY** Vendors selling whole, uncut fresh produce, bread, cookies, fruit pies, jams, jellies, honey, apple butter, and syrups made with sugar fall under the Omaha Farmers Market umbrella permit. These vendors do not need a separate temporary permit from the Douglas County Health Department. This does not cover you for any other events or markets.

Fresh produce, meat, poultry, eggs, game animals, and commercial bakery items, and pre-packaged foods must have a Douglas County Farmers Market Retail permit. Nebraska Department of Agriculture permits are not an acceptable alternative unless expressly stated by Douglas County. ("Ready to eat" food/beverages need temporary event permits).

Vendors selling meat products must display proof of USDA inspection and a current manufacturer's license/permit, on-site, each week during the Market.

Perishable produce and other food items must be maintained at appropriate temperatures with heating and cooling devices. Eggs must be kept in a cooler at 41 degrees.

Vendors selling **approved** products prepared in a non-regulated, non-inspected kitchen must clearly display a sign at their stand indicating such. The sign must be clearly visible and clearly worded. A sample of acceptable wording is: "Food items were prepared in a kitchen that is not subject to regulation or inspection by the Foods Division of the Nebraska Department of Agriculture." ***Only certain items (primarily baked goods) are eligible for this option, please contact the Health Department for clarification and details. DO NOT assume that your product is covered by this exemption just because you bake it. Cheesecakes, for example, are not eligible for this exception.***

Vendors selling items produced in a regulated kitchen must display their license at every Market. **All** food items (except produce and **eligible** baked goods) must be prepared in a licensed kitchen. This includes, but is not limited to salsa, jellies, sandwiches, enchiladas, etc.

Sampling must meet Douglas County Health Department code. Please contact the Health Department for details.

The guidelines and application for a retail farmer's market permit can be found at www.douglascountyhealth.com.

SNAP, Double Up Food Bucks & Credit Token Programs

- Both Season and Weekly vendors are **REQUIRED** to accept SNAP, Double Up Food Bucks (DUFB) and Credit tokens/vouchers from customers, even if you have your own credit card machine. Vendors are reimbursed FULL face value of tokens; there are no fees for vendors to participate. There is a separate packet about SNAP, DUFB and Credit tokens available for printing and review at www.omahafarmersmarket.org.
- SNAP Tokens are GREEN and come in \$1 increments. They may only be redeemed for eligible FOOD items. Do NOT give customers change on SNAP purchases and DO NOT use them in trade with other vendors.
- SNAP Tokens **CANNOT** be given as change for other token or cash transactions.
- DUFB Vouchers (Double Up Food Bucks) are ONLY to be redeemed for FRUITS, VEGETABLES and HERBS.
- Vendors will be responsible for cashing their own DUFB vouchers. Vendors can deposit the vouchers through their bank like a check or cash.
- CREDIT Tokens are BLUE and come in \$5 increments. They are basically “Farmers Market Gift Cards” and you give change as though the customer paid in cash. They are redeemable on any item at the Market including both food items and craft items.
- Season Vendor Token Reimbursement – Season Vendors will be allowed to turn in their tokens every three weeks. There will be an email reminder before each “token turn in weekend.” Season vendors are required to turn in all tokens in the labeled and re-usable zipper pouch they receive at the beginning of the season. The pouch will be returned the following Saturday before the Market opens.
- All vendors are responsible for turning in their tokens to the information booth. If tokens are not turned in on the designated “token turn in weekend,” vendors must wait until the next designated “token turn in” to submit their tokens. Please remember that it is your responsibility to turn in your tokens. Reimbursement checks will be delivered as soon as possible.
- Season Vendor Token Reimbursement – Season Vendors will be allowed to turn in their tokens every three weeks. There will be an email reminder before each “token turn in weekend.” Season vendors are required to turn in all tokens in the labeled and re-usable zipper pouch they receive at the beginning of the season. The pouch will be returned the following Saturday before the Market opens. All vendors are responsible for turning in their tokens to the information booth. If tokens are not turned in on the designated “token turn in weekend,” vendors must wait until the next designated “token turn in” to submit their tokens. Please remember that it is your responsibility to turn in your tokens. Reimbursement checks will be delivered as soon as possible.
- Weekly Vendor Token Reimbursement – Weekly Vendors may turn in tokens at the end of each Market. Onsite managers have Ziploc baggies, counting slips and markers available at the Info Booth. Please make sure you label the outside of your bag with a permanent marker AND include a counting slip in your bag. Bags will be held in the office and reimbursed at the same time as the Season Vendors. Reimbursement checks will be sent in the mail or delivered on-site if you are participating the following weekend.
- DO NOT turn in your DUFB vouchers with your tokens- OFM management cannot reimburse you.

Information Booth & Other Amenities

- The information booth is located at the entrance of the parking garage. The on-site manager and assistant managers are available to help vendors and customers with things including lost and found, vendor locations, token sales, souvenir sales and other Market related questions.
- Market vendors have an opportunity to donate produce and baked goods to Omaha’s less fortunate through the donation cart located near the information booth. Market management has an arrangement with Open Door Mission and Produce from the Heart to pick up donations.
- Public restrooms are available at Upstream Restaurant. Many other shops and restaurants have restrooms available on a limited basis for their own customers.

Rule Violation Policy

- Violation of any of the Rules and Regulations or policies laid out in this or future notices will be handled as follows:
 - 1) First violation results in a verbal warning, which may be issued by any member of the OFM Management team including the Onsite Manager.
 - a. If the onsite manager provides a write up at the market for failing to follow rules, the OFM Project Manager will be notified immediately.
 - 2) Second violation results in a written warning issued by the Event Manager or Executive Director of the Market.
 - 3) Third violation results in expulsion from the Market without refund for that day.
 - 4) Fourth violation results in expulsion without refund for the remainder of the Market season.
- Violations resulting in a police report or protection order being filed against a vendor may result in said vendors immediate and permanent expulsion from the Market without refund of vendor fees.
- Market Management reserves the right to evaluate each rule violation and respond with appropriate fines/warnings.

Resources

- Douglas County Health Department, Inspectors: Adam Carlson (402) 444-6886 or Dan Ludwig (402) 444-3347.
- State of Nebraska Department of Revenue (402) 595-2065.
- Nebraska Department of Agriculture, Food Safety & Consumer Protection, Weights & Measures (402) 471-3422.
- Nebraska Department of Agriculture, Plant Industry (402) 471-2351.
- OFM strongly encourages qualifying produce and food vendors to accept WIC Program and Farmer’s Market Senior Nutrition Program coupons for qualifying purchases. For more information on becoming a participating vendor in these programs please contact (402) 471-2781 (WIC) or (402) 471-4876 (Senior Nutrition) or Casey Foster at (402) 471-6857 or casey.foster@nebraska.gov.

Omaha Farmers Market Contact Information

- Vic Gutman & Associates Office (402) 345-5401
- Kristen Beck, Event Manager, extension #115, or via email kbeck@vgagroup.com
- www.omahafarmersmarket.org
- Facebook, search “Omaha Farmers Market” to become a fan or www.facebook.com/omahafarmersmarket
- Instagram, search “Omaha Farmers Market” to follow
- Omaha Farmers Market
c/o Vic Gutman & Associates
P.O. Box 31134
Omaha, NE 68131

Appendix B: Sample Vendor Agreement



Beatrice Farmers' Market 2021 — Main Street Beatrice Vendor Information, Rules, and Regulations



The Market is Run By Main Street Beatrice, Inc.

Office Location: 205 North 4th Street Mailing Address: PO Box 125 Beatrice, NE 68310 Market Location: 318 N 6th Street
Office Phone: 402-223-3244 - info@mainstreetbeatrice.org - www.mainstreetbeatrice.org

2021 Dates

Every Thursday evening starting May 20th through October 14th from 4:00-6:30 p.m.

LOCATION

Centenary United Methodist Church, 318 N 6th Street (6th & High Streets)

SET-UP

Set up time is 3:00-4:00 p.m. Vendors must check in for location prior to set up, season spots saved until 3:40 p.m.

EQUIPMENT

Vendors are responsible for their own tables, chairs, shade devices, change, bags, coolers, ice, etc. We are not responsible for lost or damaged equipment.

PRICES (more details on reverse side)

Non-Commercial stalls

\$85 for the season or \$12 each week.

Double Stall - Non-Commercial stalls

\$115 for the season or \$15 each week.

Commercial stalls

\$180 for the season or \$25 per week.

VENDOR STALLS

You will receive stall assignment upon arrival at the Market. Vendors accepted weekly on a first come, first served basis where space is available. Exception for full-season paid vendors who can reserve a vendor stall (reserved until 20 minutes prior to start time).

MANAGEMENT

This Farmers' Market is managed by Main Street Beatrice, Inc. Stall assignments, determination of suitability of items offered for sale, and collection of stall rental fees are the sole responsibility of the Farmers' Market Manager and Main Street Beatrice. You will not receive a confirmation of acceptance into this Farmers' Market but will be notified in the event no stall spaces are expected to be available for the dates you requested.

GENERAL INFORMATION

No guarantees of exclusivity of products is made or implied. Products shall be grown, sold, or made by the seller, exceptions may be allowed only with permission of the Market Manager and should be discussed in advance. The Main Street Beatrice Farmers Market will not discriminate against any applicant for stall space because of race, color, religion, disability, sex, national origin, age, or marital status.

PRODUCE/BAKED AND ALL OTHER GOODS

No item offered for sale will be commercially made, created or produced without value added by the vendor. Produce offered for sale must be free from all harmful pesticide residues, and any applications must have been made according to manufacturer's directions. All food items must be free from insects and spoilage and must be washed according to State standards. Minimally processed should be a goal.

Cut produce is not allowed at the Beatrice Market.

Perishable produce and food items must be maintained at appropriate temperatures with heating and cooling devices. Eggs must be kept in a cooler at 45 degrees. It is the vendor's responsibility to have an egg license. Licenses are available free of charge by calling 402-761-2216. An empty egg carton may be kept on view so customers know you have eggs for sale. Mark through brand names or grades on used egg cartons. Disallowed bakery products include high risk products such as custards and cream pies. All meat must come from a USDA approved source. Jams and jellies are allowed only if they have been water-processed. No pickles, relish, salsa, cut flowers, or dried herbs are allowed without a proper state approved license.

Only products in compliance with the regulations of the State of Nebraska Department of Ag. may be sold at the Market. You may reach the State of Nebraska's Department of Agriculture in Lincoln at 402-471-2341, you should and agree to read their guidelines prior market.

Non-Food items such as crafts are welcomed so long as they are personally crafted and sales tax is collected.

PACKAGING

Prepackaged products must be in new food-grade plastic bags or plastic food wrap. Food items sold by piece or per quantity may be sold in new paper or plastic bags. Bread bags, trash bags, garbage or leaf bags, or pre-used produce bags from the grocery store may not be used for produce or other food stuffs.

Wish to Contact Nebraska Food Safety or Weights and Measures for more details? Call 402-471-3422.

PROCEDURES

Vehicles are not allowed to operate in the Market area during its hours of operation of 4:00-6:30p.m.. In case of emergency, notify the Market manager so pedestrian traffic can be cleared and your vehicle escorted safely from the Market area.

Goods cannot be sold prior to 4:00pm. A signal will open the Market. The Market will be open "rain or shine" with the exception of a storm warning during Market operation hours. It is left to the vendor's discretion to set up in case of inclement weather.

TOBACCO/ALCOHOL

Tobacco/alcohol are not allowed on Church property, sidewalk areas can be used for tobacco product use.

CLEAN UP

Each vendor will be responsible for keeping their area clean and free of trash and clutter during and after the market. Pack out your own trash and help pick up.

FEES

Refunds and fee transfers to subsequent weeks will not be allowed under any exceptions. Unless otherwise stated by the market manager and/or the committee.

SALES TAX

NON-PRODUCE vendors are responsible for collection, reporting, and paying sales tax to the State of Nebraska. Beatrice's tax rate is 8.0%. Vendors must provide proof of application for sales tax number.

Continued On Reverse Side

Vendor Information, Rules, & Regulations continued.

Your products Should be Home Grown/Made, no "Store Bought" produce, baked goods, or items of any sort are to be sold without value being added and permission from the manager.

SCALES

Only legal scales with the state permit sticker are allowed at the Market. Vendors without legal scales must sell by the piece or per quantity. If you wish to sell product by weight but do not have a legal scale, you may weigh and package items at home and sell them by the bag or package at the Market. Weight **MUST** be at least what is marked on the package.

Baked Goods and items such as honey are to be sold by weight/volume. If you have questions contact Nebraska Food Safety or Weights and Measures for more details at 402-471-3422.

SIGNAGE

Vendors are required to have a sign with their name and city of location, and growers must list prices. Signs can be simple or elaborate and can have a business name rather than your personal name. Street addresses are not necessary.

PARKING

You may vend from your vehicle (ie: truck bed). If you are not vending from your vehicle please consider moving it to the parking lot to avoid crowding vendor spaces. Trailers will be approved on a case by case situation depending on space available.

RIGHT OF REFUSAL

Main Street Beatrice and the Farmers' Market Manager reserves the right to restrict the sale of any product or the use of any stall space to any vendor at any time.

PETS/ANIMALS

Pets must be leashed & under control if not in an enclosure.

PHOTOS & SOCIAL MEDIA

Please note that we will utilize photography and use of social media (posts, live video, etc.) to help promote the market. By signing the vendor application form you agree to and understand that an image or video of you may be used as part of promotions.

COVID-19 RULES & GUIDELINES

We ask that all vendors take steps to ensure health & safety. Please use social distancing and utilize and make visible hand sanitizer. Unlike 2020, masks are not a requirement.

QUESTIONS

If you have questions please contact Main Street Beatrice at 402-223-3244 or through email or Facebook.

Vendor Application Form

PLEASE PRINT:

Individual Name and/or Business Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Daytime Phone

E-Mail Address

Tax ID Number

Products to be Sold:

Please indicate how you sell your products:
____ Side Of Vehicle Rear Of Vehicle
____ Table(s) only; no vehicle

Please **circle** the 2021 dates you *plan* to sell at the Market:

_____ Full season (May 20 - October 14)

May	June	July	Aug	Sept
May 20	June 3	July 1	Aug 5	Sept 2
May 27	June 10	July 8	Aug 12	Sept 9
	June 17	July 15	Aug 19	Sept 16
	June 24	July 22	Aug 26	Sept 23
		July 29		Sept 30
October	Oct 7	Oct 15		

REGISTRATION

_____ \$12 per week non-commercial

_____ \$85 Season non-commercial stall
(12'x12' display space or less)

_____ \$15 per week - double sized non-commercial

_____ \$115 Season double sized non-commercial stall
(12'x12' display space to 24'x24' space)

_____ \$25 per week commercial stall

_____ \$180 Season Commercial stall

Ask us about our Main Street contributing partner and young grower discounts.

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$ _____

Please make checks payable to: MAIN STREET BEATRICE

Vendor's signature on the application verifies that the vendor has carefully read and understands and agrees to all provisions of this Agreement and the Farmers' Market Rules of the State of Nebraska. Any violations of the Main Street Beatrice Farmers' Market rules and responsibilities will result in the following sanctions:

- First violation results in a warning.
- Second violation for same offense results in expulsion from the Market on that day, with no stall refunds.
- Third violation results in expulsion from the Market for balance of season with no refund of vendor fees.

Checks returned by the bank will incur a \$20 fee and must be redeemed in cash. A second returned check will result in a \$30 fee in addition to the check, and any remaining fees must be paid in cash.

Vendor agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the Beatrice Farmers' Market, Main Street Beatrice, Inc., the City of Beatrice, Centenary United Methodist Church, Nebraska Extension, and their employees and volunteers from any and all causes of action which may arise from the operation of this Farmers' Market, not caused by negligence of the Main Street Beatrice Farmers' Market, Main Street Beatrice, Inc., the City of Beatrice, Country Centenary United Methodist Church, Nebraska Extension, and their employees or volunteers.

By signing this application, I acknowledge that the Agreement has been read and is understood, liability waiver granted, and I will abide by the terms presented in the Information Rules and Regulations and the regulations of Nebraska.

>>> _____
Vendor Signature **Date**

Appendix C: Vendor Handouts

We asked. Market managers answered. It's hard to be an expert in everything right away. The Vendor Handout Series is intended to make being a manager a little easier. Managers can share links to the online versions or provide hard copies directly to vendors. Handout topics range from vendor stall layout, to licensing, and insurance.

HANDOUT 1: Business Opportunities at the FARMERS MARKET AND BEYOND!

VENUE CELL LEVEL, REGNER

LOCAL BURRITOS SUCCESS STORY

In 2009, Kyle Jack saw that no one was selling hot prepared food at the local City Farmers Market and seized the opportunity to start Local Burritos. He sourced ingredients from area farmers, acquired a food business and opened for business. Today, Local Burritos is the full-time job and a market mainstay—with a dozen other prepared food vendors joining him on Wednesday Street each Saturday. Kyle also does food truck events and sells his *Hot Burrito Burrito* in other areas.

Whether you're a seasoned vendor looking for a new enterprise or budding vendor curious about opportunities, here are strategies to give you an edge. Do research both online and in person at area markets. Look for the gaps in available product and pay attention to quality, pricing, and marketing. You want to be in the right place at the right time with the best product.

“ANYTHING THAT IS AN IMPURIFIED ITEM IN THE GROCERY ISLAND IS A BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY.” — KYLE JACK

DO SOME RESEARCH

STUDY FOOD TRENDS

As a small business owner, you can make changes to your offerings very quickly and seamlessly. As a result, you're uniquely positioned to take advantage of new changing food trends. When planning for the next season, simply do a wide search of "Food Trends." There are many online resources, including what will be hot on the food scene in the upcoming year. Some vendors may be out of touch but others are more flexible. Maybe purple vegetable. Or perhaps velvet flowers. You just want to be the one who has the product when it's in demand and everybody wants it. Check it out!

MARKET & FEASIBILITY STUDIES

As a general rule, you'll want to figure out if you're going to make any money pursuing whatever venture you choose. Take a stroll around the farmers market located near you to see if anyone else is selling the items that you're interested in. Visit other farmers markets across town or in neighboring states. Notice the quality of the product, its pricing, who is purchasing it, and what kind of marketing is in place. Take some notes. Do a cost analysis. Calculate the costs of production, including time. Analyze the data to decide if this is still an opportunity worth pursuing. Consider reaching out to a credible business advisor, such as a Small Business Development Center, near you that can help with your business plan.

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HANDOUT 2: What To Know as a FIRST TIME VENDOR AT THE FARMERS MARKET

VENUE CELL LEVEL, REGNER

TINY DONUTS BRING BIG SUCCESS

Travis and Erika Quammen moved from Hawaii to Cedar Falls to be closer to family. At the same time, they were looking for a way to channel their entrepreneurial spirit. Inspired by Portland-based donut shops and coffee shops, they decided to open a farmers market stand selling Mini Donuts. In their first farmers market meeting, they found the communal vendor atmosphere. He was looking for the best market. They chose one by figuring out the location for all the needed equipment, from donut press to a hot water station. After six months of testing donut recipes and around this time, they called the health department to identify licensing needs. Lilli Donuts opened up for business selling made-to-order donuts and pour-over craft coffee from local roasters. As a beginning market vendor, Travis says he got the most valuable assistance from the Small Business Center at UNI and the farmers market manager. While doing his own research and looking for Lilli Donuts in a good position for the market, those resources accelerated progress and gave Travis and Erika confidence and support.

“I DID A LOT OF RESEARCH AND RESEARCH THROUGH HEALTH DEPARTMENT WEBSITE - BOTH STATE & COUNTY - SO I COULD LAUNCH THE PROBABLY THE MOST SAFE & HEALTHY DONUTS.” — TRAVIS QUAMMEN, LILLI DONUTS

MANAGERS WANT YOU TO KNOW

RESEARCH THE FARMERS MARKET

What's the best way to go to a fair for a farmer market you're looking to become a vendor at? Go! While there, scope out the vendors and check out their booths. What do their stalls look like? What are they selling? Are they heavily stocked? Keep your eyes open for any gaps in products sold at the farmers market. Also be sure to talk and talk with the market manager about what it takes to become a vendor at the market. They may have different rules and may not apply to all markets. (For example, local vs. production only.)

KNOW YOUR STRENGTHS

Becoming a farmer market vendor is not a cakewalk. It takes a time commitment. Markets usually happen every week and an ongoing personality. Selling at the farmers market can be fun, exciting, and profitable, but it's only enjoyable if you're making new people and talking about your business.

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HANDOUT 3: Know Before You Go: DO YOU NEED A LICENSE TO SELL MY PRODUCTS?

VENUE CELL LEVEL, REGNER

IT'S A VENDOR RESPONSIBILITY

It is ultimately the responsibility of each vendor to research and secure any necessary license. Start by contacting your County Health Department. The Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals (IDIA) oversees Iowa's food code. Locally, county health departments inspect and issue licenses to businesses. A vendor who offers a product for sale at a farmers market shall have the sole responsibility to obtain and maintain any license or sell or distribute such products. - Code of Iowa, Sec. 1379F

FARMERS MARKET LICENSING CAN BE COMPLICATED. VENDOR MUST CONTACT THE DEPARTMENT OF INSPECTIONS AND APPEALS WITH ANY QUESTIONS.

NO LICENSE REQUIRED TO SELL (1-3)

- FRUITS & VEGETABLES**
Whole and uncut fresh fruit and vegetables may be sold at a farmers market to consumers without the vendor being licensed as a food establishment at the market. Once cut, fruits and vegetables may be considered "potentially hazardous foods." For example, melons, grapes, berries, soft berries, cucumbers, and all "raw" if these fruits or vegetables are offered as samples, the vendor would have to keep them under temperature control and maintain a log of temperature control and maintain a log from IDIA.
- BAKED GOODS**
Property labeled baked goods which are non-potentially hazardous or shelf-stable bakery products (non-perishable items that do not require refrigeration for food safety reasons) can be sold without a license. The term "baked goods" is limited to biscuits, cakes, donuts, pastries, breads, rolls, cookies, biscuits, and pies (excluding meat pies). Pies that require temperature control items that have been prepared in a "potentially hazardous food."
- SHELF-STABLE FOODS**
Prepackaged, shelf-stable food products such as frozen jams, jellies, or dried noodles may be sold at a farmers market without a license. These products still require a label which must include: 1) name of product, 2) a list of ingredients, 3) name and address of where the food is processed, and 4) net weight, volume, or numerical count. Questions about "homemade" canned goods should be directed to the Department of Inspections and Appeals.

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HANDOUT 4: The Sale of Home-Baked Goods SELLING BAKED GOODS AT THE MARKET

VENUE CELL LEVEL, REGNER

A NEW TWIST ON AN OLD KNIT

For Tom Thompson, baking started out as a hobby. When she decided to sell baked goods at a farmers market, she was looking for a mission to take her hobby not only help her retail, but also to become her small business. Instead of dough, she was a vendor at the local farmers market. She puts a unique twist on traditional knits by adding flavors like caramel, pistachio, chocolate, and pumpkin. Her products are handmade and packaged in reusable bags and boxes. She is a member of the Green Free Market group. She takes special care for her handmade goods, from the ingredients she uses to the way she packages them. She uses a few flavors. No fancy ingredients. She says, "I wanted to look at other sales. I would encourage new vendors to go bigger markets and get ideas. I produced baking my own at home on local use what it is better and make sure there was enough space for my products and customers."

“THE THERMAL PRINTED BAGS - DON'T BE AFRAID TO TRY, THERE ARE A LOT OF THINGS YOU CAN PUT YOUR OWN TWIST ON AND DRAW PEOPLE IN.”

SWEET OR SAVORY?

DECIDING WHAT TO BRING TO THE MARKET

Think about what you're especially good at baking. Do you make incredible chocolate cakes, but not so spectacular cookies? Check out what currently being sold at the market. Are there any gaps you can fill? Also, consider the customer base. Animal goods might go over well at one market. At another, customers might be looking for more traditional goods.

SWEET

Cinnamon rolls, sticky buns, donuts, cupcakes, cookies, etc.

MINDFUL INGREDIENTS

Organic or fair-trade ingredients, such as gluten-free, plant-based, etc.

PERSONAL/SNACK SIZE

Items easy to eat right there at the market, such as mini pies or single items like cookies, donuts, cookies, and more.

SAVORY

Meat or herb breads, butter croissants, rolls, savory scones, etc.

KID-FRIENDLY

Items that are fun and colorful and appealing to kids. Like mini cupcakes or thumbprint cookies, etc.

SHAREABLE/FAMILY SIZE

Items customers can take home and share. Like a giant sticky bun, bag of croissants, or a pack of muffins.

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HANDOUT 5: Do-It-Yourself STAND IMPROVEMENTS

DIY WAYS TO DISPLAY YOUR PRODUCT

VENUE CELL LEVEL, REGNER

AT-BOOTH TIPS FROM GRAPE & GARDENS

Grape & Gardens has been selling at the Dec Moines Farmers Market since 2009. They say that first and foremost, you should make sure you have a high-quality product. The local grape harvest is in season and they have a lot of product to offer. And finally, make your booth stand out. Use creative, attract customer attention and wooden crates to stack and present your products perfectly.

“WE USE A LOT OF CRATES TO HOLD OUR PRODUCTS. IT'S CHEAP AND IT'S EASY TO MOVE AND CHANGE UP AS NEEDED.” — MARY ELLEN, GRAPE & GARDENS

3 ELEMENTS TO CONSIDER:

- 1) RE-USABLE SIGNS**
Whether you prefer one big sign board or several price boards, there are ways to make your signs low-cost and reusable. For example, make a simple sheet on your table and make a stand that leans up at an angle. If you're going to use signs, you can use a dry erase marker to update the price per pound or bundle. Don't just rely on the signboard. Get creative with chopsticks or velcro to display it.
- 2) SPACE LIMITATIONS**
If you have one-dimensional space, limited goods, or multiple goods with vertical space, stack wooden crates on top of each other, create a simple sheet on your table, and make a stand that leans up at an angle. If you're going to use signs, you can use a dry erase marker to update the price per pound or bundle. Don't just rely on the signboard. Get creative with chopsticks or velcro to display it.
- 3) EYE-CATCHING COLOR**
The more you attach the stand, the more likely customers are to stop. Think about all the items you sell and how you can organize them in a way that makes customers want to reach out and grab them. Have many different colors. Arrange like a rainbow. Want to display items in baskets? Put a bulging bag (or similar packing) in the bottom to make baskets look full when only half full.

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HANDOUT 6: Vendor STALL LAYOUT

CREATING A LAYOUT THAT WORKS

VENUE CELL LEVEL, REGNER

TAKING PRIDE IN YOUR VENDOR STALL

Anna Boht took so much pride in the Farmers Market booth for Low Oaks Farm as she did in the snow vegetable garden, but health, cheap, and buying from the small, certified organic farm. Anna wanted to create a stall that allowed space for multiple customers to look over the abundance of products and questions, and being about the seasonal varieties of produce through selling out different ingredients. Anna found that the best option was to use smaller tables with baskets and bins on the wings of the main table similar to the L-shaped table, but instead of using tables of the same size and design, she used crates.

“CREATING A NEAT, CLEAN, AND INVITING BOOTH IS ESSENTIAL. I WOULD BE LOOKING FOR WAYS TO FEEL HOMEY, AND MAKE MY VENDOR STALL LOOK AND FEEL INVITING.” — ANNA BOHT, LOW OAKS FARM

VENDOR STALL BASICS

TIDY: The most visually appealing displays attract the most customers. Successful vendor stalls, pens, and stands organized and filled with an abundance of product on display from market to market to finish. While your booth should look full, avoid overcrowding. When setting up, create an aisle between the booth or stacks of customer signs. A vendor should also know how your business feels about food safety.

SHELTER: The shelter is typically one of the first things a customer will notice when walking through the market. Make sure yours is clean and welcoming—no holes, no broken pieces hanging, nothing that could look dangerous. A white or black shelter is suggested as other colors will call a limited glow over your products, making some appear discounted. When buying your vendor stall, remember to include space for shelter weights.

EASY TO NAVIGATE: If done strategically, the direction and flow of the movement of customers when they enter your vendor stall. When buying out your space, be careful when placing items on or near the ground so not to make them tripping hazards. It's just as important to pay attention and move or adjust items if customers are knocking over or having trouble reaching products.

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HANDOUT 4: What Type of VENDOR INSURANCE DOES MY MARKET REQUIRE ME TO HAVE?

WHY CARE ABOUT INSURANCE?

Insurance is protection against some of the risk involved in doing business. There are multiple types of policies that can be purchased to insure yourself and the products you sell at the market. It's important to research insurance coverage and what will not be covered in your policy. Liability insurance is in place to cover legal claims against the insured and is commonly required for vendors at Farmers Markets in Iowa.

WHY NOT WORRY ABOUT BUSINESS YOU'RE IN? THERE IS ALWAYS RISK INVOLVED. INSURANCE IS ONE WAY TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM THESE RISKS.

WHO TO TALK TO ABOUT INSURANCE

- MARKET MANAGER**
As a member of the market, the market manager will be able to answer general questions and refer you to talk to for more detailed information. Talk to them about insurance requirements for vendors at the market. Don't forget to ask if the market is a member of the Iowa Farmers Market Association, which may have access to membership public related to insurance.
- INSURANCE PROVIDER**
Have a conversation with your current home auto/liability insurance provider. When talking to a stranger, be clear about what products you are covered by the policy and make sure the policy covers the products you are selling at the market. Who is their agent and partner? What kind of claims do you have to file? What information should you gather before meeting with an agent?
- MEMBERSHIP VENDORS**
Chat with Farmers Market vendors who sell similar products and ask them questions. Experienced vendors are a wealth of knowledge and can speak to situations where insurance has helped them. Who is their agent and partner? What kind of claims do you have to file? What information should you gather before meeting with an agent?

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HANDOUT 5: SETTING PRICES THE MATH BEHIND THE MARKET

EMMA + MARCUS BUFFALO RIDGE ORCHARD

Emma and Marcus Johnson returned to Emma's family farm, Buffalo Ridge Orchard in Central City in 2012—the same year that an untimely frost knocked out the entire eastern apple crop. The next year's crop had to make up for the 2012 loss. That change in price forced the family to take a holistic look at how they priced their products. Buffalo Ridge Orchard recognized that pricing structure based on labor, equipment, profit, margin comparison, and the fluctuations of awaiting any market—recognizing the importance of on-farm production being informed by the pricing and who wins. This holistic view of pricing and production as a whole leads to improved on-farm labor production and organic marketing.

IF THE PRICE WE NEED TO BE ON IS COMPARE THEM WE WILL ONLY SELL A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF APPLES AT THE FARMERS MARKET, IF NOT, THEN WE WILL ONLY PRODUCE ENOUGH ON THE FARM TO SUPPLY THAT NEED.

PRICING IS UNIQUE AT FARMERS MARKETS

THE UNSPOKEN RULE
Many vendors may be selling similar items at the farmers market, but the "market price" is not the same. The general spoken rule is that you set your price to what you value a unit of your product. If you're selling a dozen eggs, you set your price to what you value a dozen eggs. It's not about the market price, it's about what you value.

THE MARKET IS YOURS
If you're the only one with a certain product (like the first crop of the year), the market is yours. Sell that product for as much as you think you can get for it. If you're an entrepreneur in the market, you'll find a more traditional cost analysis to find your price by adding those expenses, mark, and profit into the costs for the products you are selling at the market.

DIVERSITY IS KEY
If you're selling a diverse range of products, you can have a wider range of products of value. Consider the profitability of each product. For example, having more money on an herb garden than you do on a bush. But by growing both herb garden and bush, you can reach a larger customer base than by just growing one or the other.

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HANDOUT 6: How Do I RECORD SALES? BEST METHODS TO TRACK ACTIVITY

TRACKING SALES WHY + HOW TO DO IT

Having a record of sales by item at each market empowers you to make critical business decisions by tracking sales and costs as well as calculating the profit of your business. You will be better informed when planning for next year's market.

IF BY KEEPING RECORDS, WE CAN TRACK FARM PROFITABILITY, DETERMINE NECESSARY CHANGES TO PRODUCTION, AND EVALUATE FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE.

BOOKKEEPING TIPS + TRICKS

COMPARE MARKET TO MARKET

Take time to compare your sales from each market so that you can decide which markets are the best for your operation. This will also help you adjust what you sell, when and where. For example, if at the previous week's market you sold more than 100 apples, but you sold less than 50 at the next market, you know you need to bring more apples to the next market.

REVIEW YEAR TO YEAR

You can use past year's records to not only get a overall perspective of success, but also to compare specific market data from year to year. This June we had June, a really market in a really market. For example, if a holiday market stood out as one where your products were especially desirable, you plan accordingly.

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HANDOUT 10: Accepting FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM BENEFITS

FAIRM FRESH FOOD FOR EVERYONE!

By accepting food assistance program benefits, your farmers market will have more inclusive to all numbers of the community regardless of their economic means. Beyond the community aspect, there are also economic benefits to participating in these programs. In 2016, the SNAP program alone reimbursed \$46.6 million spent on groceries across the country.

Farmers have an opportunity to partner with the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) to provide farm fresh products to low-income families. As part of the partnership, farmers receive a weekly point-of-sale machine for use on their farm. These machines allow farmers to accept Food Assistance Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards.

"THE WIRELESS POINT OF SALE MACHINE IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT TOOLS FOR LOW-INCOME FAMILIES. PROVIDING HEALTHY + AFFORDABLE." — MARIANNE WILSON, OWNER, MARIANNE'S MARKET

"SNAP SHOT:"

Your market may not accept SNAP benefits, but that doesn't mean you can't as a vendor. Here's how Donna Mathews of Morning Glory Farm did it.

"We attended four markets, two of which were SNAP markets. It's part of Morning Glory's mission to make sure that good healthy food is affordable for everyone in our community. We wanted to be able to take SNAP, so we contacted the Iowa DHS SNAP coordinator directly to make it happen. She was great. We talked numerous times on the phone and the owner drove to our farm to do a training. I recommend that other vendors get set up during the off season before markets begin. The process is simple and so worth it."

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HANDOUT 11: Optimizing PRODUCT MIX EVALUATING THE ITEMS YOU BRING TO MARKET

MIX IT UP! WHAT CAN YOU OFFER?

For Alexei Thomas of Growing Our Own, pricing is the main variable of a single product. They started their business by offering four to five varieties of farm at each Iowa City market. This repetitive goal to create variety "inspired by the fact we're trying to help a customer make a decision. It's an great strategy for the vendor," says Alex. "We wanted to focus on quality things and did not fear that we were selling less than the other vendors and within that category, we were able to diversify. At each market, we make sure to have both variety and season. Our time, we experimented with a lot of different combinations, but we were careful to keep the business."

"WE EMPLOYED THE PLANNING WE OFFERED AND AFTER ABOUT YEARS WE GOT TASTED A DYNAMIC MIX WE HAVE BOTH CONSEQUENTLY AND BEING ORGANIZED."

SMALL THINGS THAT HAVE BIG IMPACT:

- Small products that fit in well with your current operation.
- Add products that can be arranged or packaged together (e.g. salsa).
- Plan your mix and amounts of products you bring to the market so the road-side display is a good thing, but not overwhelming. For example, customers may be overwhelmed by too many choices.
- Having the big box of a product for the season brings customer to your stand and increases the likelihood of them buying other items.
- Plan your mix and amounts of products you bring to the market so the road-side display is a good thing, but not overwhelming. For example, customers may be overwhelmed by too many choices.

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HANDOUT 12: The Power of BRANDING YOUR FARM AND PRODUCTS

WHY BRANDING IS KEY FOR YOUR BUSINESS

Why brand? Branding sets a business apart from others in its category. As the owner and designer behind Matted Ink, what created a brand is based on customer experience, emotions, and meaningful moments. From apparel and accessories to prints and mug. "Brands can be as sophisticated with choices and you often times only have a light second to grab someone's attention," she says. "Clear branding does this."

Why brand? Branding sets a business apart from others in its category. As the owner and designer behind Matted Ink, what created a brand is based on customer experience, emotions, and meaningful moments. From apparel and accessories to prints and mug. "Brands can be as sophisticated with choices and you often times only have a light second to grab someone's attention," she says. "Clear branding does this."

BRANDING 101 FOR VENDORS

Personality: Think of your brand as the personality of your small business. What sets it apart? What sets it apart? How do you get started? How do you do products and/or services fit into the customer's life? If you're already doing business, talk to your customer. Ask if there are any real confusion about who you are or what you sell. Brand can feel vague at first, but it will become more specific as you identify what you want customers to feel and believe when they interact with your business.

Typeface: Choose one or two fonts to use consistently on all of your materials—signage, business cards, social media, website, and more. The details matter. It is easy to read? Does it reflect your business personality? What emotions does it evoke?

Logo: A logo is both the first impression and long-term identity of your business. It's worth investing in a professional designer to help you create a logo that is a beautiful, high-quality logo that can be used in many ways and on a variety of materials.

Consistency: Strive to be consistent in how you present your business to marketing materials, vendor booth, product labels and packaging, and customer service. A consistently delivered brand message will lead to an increased value of your company's products and/or services.

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