

Establishing A Farmers Market

Before you establish a farmers market, consider the following to make it successful.

First, focus on your community's needs.

Talk to friends, family and neighbors, asking if they want to shop at a farmers market and what products they would want to buy. You can also conduct an informal survey at places in the area where you would like to establish a market – local stores and public spaces like libraries, school and athletic events, or churches.

Find out what community members think about farmers markets and what features they would want their neighborhood farmers market to have. Ask what day(s) and time(s) would be convenient, and where the market should be located.

Having a clear vision of how your farmers market will fit the needs of your community is the key to making a farmers market a successful experience long-term.

Second, get familiar with the workings of a farmers market.

Visit successful farmers markets and observe how they function. Chat with volunteers and vendors to find out how the market was started, and with customers to see how they feel about their market. Ask the market manager if you could interview them by phone or in person.

Third, volunteer at a successful market.

Get hands-on experience working at a market to gain an understanding of how a market operates. The locally-focused site www.LetsGrowOurOwn.org lists markets you might visit and managers to contact.



Finally, answer the following questions.

- Why do you want to start a farmers market and what are your goals?
- Do you have a support organization with experience doing markets?
- Who is your potential customer base?
- How will your operating hours, day(s) and location reflect your customers' needs? Will the market be seasonal or year-round?
- How many customers could you expect daily?
- Potential locations? Adequate parking? Loading and unloading space for vendors? Visibility? Costs? Zoning? Regulations? Permits?

- Is there another market close by? If so, is there a need for an additional farmers market in the area?
- Who will manage the market? Paid or volunteer? What kind of hours will they need to put in? What kind of qualities does a manager need? Is there a market advisory board that includes community members?
- Do you have a marketing plan?
- What are your costs? Rent, signage, advertising, tables, tents, lights, porta-potty?
- Where will your market income come from?
- Would you have other products - value-added and prepared foods, crafts?
What kind of income can your vendors expect?
- How will you handle credit/debit /SNAP/FMNP?



Resources

Starting a New Farmers Market

This is a component of “The Farmers Market Management Series” from the University of California-Davis.

<http://sfp.ucdavis.edu/files/144703.pdf>

Farmers Market Toolkit

The Farmers Market Toolkit is designed to help individuals and small groups who want to strengthen their community’s access to healthy food by creating a farmers market or improving an existing one in their local community.

http://www.behealthyaz.org/uploads/5/9/3/7/59377533/toolkit_final_jan_2016__1_.pdf

Accepting SNAP Benefits at Your Farmers Market or Market Booth - A How-To Toolkit

This toolkit has been developed to assist market vendors, managers, volunteers and customers in offering a successful “SNAP at the Market” program!

This toolkit provides clear information about what accepting Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)/Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) entails, how it can benefit the market, vendors and customers, and what everyone involved will be asked to do.

http://www.behealthyaz.org/uploads/5/9/3/7/59377533/accepting_snap_benefits_at_your_farmers_market_or_market_booth.pdf

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