

This resource is intended to provide vendors with tools for self-promotion, marketing, and customer recruitment. Thank you to the HBD Gardeners' Market vendor committee for suggesting this resource.

Building Your Brand

- ✓ My Story; Your Audience
Santa Fe Farmers' Market Institute
- ✓ Farmer's Market Display Checklist
University of Vermont Extension
- ✓ Booth Display
Santa Fe Farmers' Market Institute



Telling Your Story

- ✓ Print Material; On-line
Santa Fe Farmers' Market Institute
- ✓ Cultivating A Strategy for Social Media Success
Pacific Coast Farmers' Market Association
- ✓ Social Media Best Practices for Market Vendors
Liz McCall Design



General Technical Assistance

- ✓ National Center for Appropriate Technology
Free statewide resource that provides assistance to farmers and gardeners, including but not limited to:
 - *Communicating your story*
 - *Product-based promotion and messaging*
 - *Best tools for promotion based on "ideal" customer*
 - *Product pricing and more!*





My Story

worksheet

The Goal: To create Top-Of-Mind Awareness/To become the go-to person for what you do best!

The Process:

The story of my farm

KEY CONCEPTS: Authenticity, Transparency, Trust, Connection

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER: Who am I? What makes me unique? What do I want to be known for/How do I want to be remembered? What do I consider my greatest personal and professional successes?

The story of my product

KEY CONCEPTS: Seasonality, Variety, Approach

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER: How do I grow/raise my products? What sets my products apart from those around me? How do I prepare each product/what recipes have I developed?

The story of my value

KEY CONCEPTS: Fair Prices, Honest Information, Sense of Community

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER: When do I feel most inspired? What deeply frustrates me? What is my personal mission? How do I like to connect with others? What sets my business apart from those around me? What is my Motto (or favorite quote) and how does it inspire my actions and being?



My Story

Brainstorming worksheet



Your Audience

It's important to know who you are currently selling to and who you would like to sell to, because this will inform the best way to market to them.

Nationally, the largest demographic of Farmers' Market customers are middle aged and older women.

Age 20-35 (15% of customers): Strong online presence; Impulsive

Age 35-55 (55% of customers): Straightforward (facts, research, and customer testimonials);

Combine traditional marketing efforts with online presence

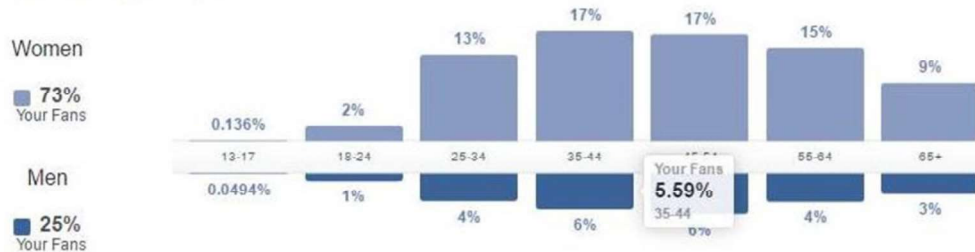
55+ (30% of customers): Prefer traditional marketing tools such as flyers, newsletters and postcards, website searches; Place higher faith in face-to-face communication / Word-of-Mouth; They would be interested in knowing what your business stands for; They are the least likely to make an impulsive purchase; Use larger fonts, single images

Women (65% of customers): Product details; Demonstrations; Comparison shopping / bargain hunting

Men (35% of customers): Visually-driven; Look for quality

Facebook

The people who like your Page



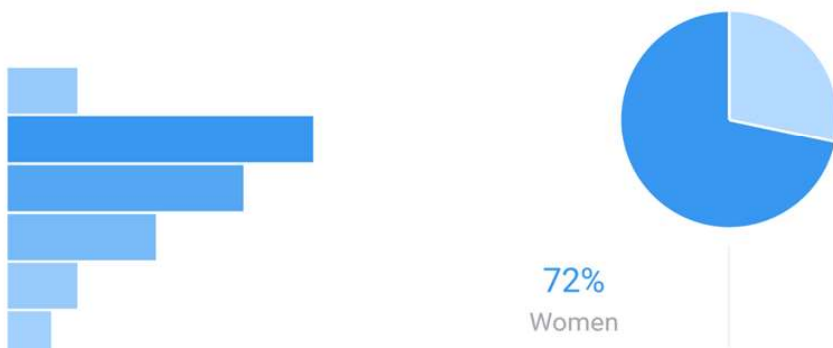
Instagram

Age Range

All Men Women

Gender

13-17
18-24
25-34
35-44
45-54
55-64
65+





Your Audience

worksheet

What are ways you might market to each sample customer?

What are methods that would appeal to more than one sample customer?

#1: Middle-aged woman who works full-time and has no children. Looks for good deals and promotions, but quality and local are the most driving factors. Uses social media and gets the Market newsletter. Enjoys the Saturday Market because it's a community event and she always runs into people she knows.

#2: Retired couple who enjoy cooking together. Willing to try new things. Are interested in getting to know you and to know about your farming practices. Deals aren't as important as quality. Comes to Every Tuesday Market because it's not as crowded.

#3: Single mother that works full time. Goes to the Southside Market because it is close to home and her kids' school. She uses EBT and so is interested in a good deal. Looking for staples and quick & easy recipes ideas.

#4: A lower income 20-year old who works in the service industry. Needs affordable, quick meals. Will also pick up last minute/un-planned items.

#5: Working families who come with their children. Looking for fun, affordable meals. Makes their choices based on budget and quality but will also try new things.



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FOOD



UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT

EXTENSION

CULTIVATING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Farmers' Market Display Checklist

Prepared by Mary Peabody, UVM Extension

Before the market season begins (or between market seasons), take some time to evaluate your display and make any necessary changes/upgrades. The time and resources you invest in participating in a market are significant; you deserve the best return on that investment. That return will be achieved by having a quality product to sell, a display that shows your product to best advantage and a great attitude.

Display Preparation

	Complete	In Progress	Not Required	Comments
Sketch out your display area on graph paper				
Make a product list month-by-month of the items you will be selling				
For each of the products identify what type of container you will use to display it				
Make a list of the supplemental display materials you will need—banners, signs, table coverings, awnings/umbrellas, tables, racks, water containers, misting bottles, bags, etc.				
If you use a scale at your market...get it calibrated				

Plan Ahead Tasks

Collect photographs of your farm and determine how you want to use them in your display				
Collect recipes, product use and care tips, brochures, business cards or any other promotional items—get them designed and printed making sure your farm name and contact info are clearly visible and accurate.				
Evaluate your display materials. Repair broken parts, clean/repaint tables, racks, etc. Wash/clean banners, tarps, table coverings.				
Make attractive, durable product labels. Do not include the prices on the permanent labels; instead leave a space where the price can be added.				
Create a binder with frequently asked questions and the answers for market staff to reference				
Set up a mock display and check your measurements. Take photos, makes notes.				



Booth Display



Basic Components—Booth Set Up

- **Main Business Sign/Banner**—should contain larger font so easily seen from afar, Durable/reusable (avoid hand-written unless VERY neat and legible), should include important attributes of your business (i.e. Organic, grass-fed, farm location, etc.)
- **Price and Product Signage**— Display clear pricing, product type/variety, other info, such as “picked today,” Organic, grass-fed, landrace varieties into your product packaging, business cards, etc. Think about laminating your signs or purchasing reusable signs, such as chalkboard signs. Keep a folder of your signs handy for market day. Customers may just walk away if they feel uncomfortable asking for prices.
- **Market Specific Signs (DUF and WIC)**— This signage is **essential**, display it prominently and appropriately





Print Materials

Have brand consistency across materials and platforms. Use simple language, limited text, your logo, and an image. Make sure to give away with each purchase (staple to product bag or hand to customer).

Fliers and business cards should include: Logo, Business name, Owner name, Contact info (phone, email, web, social media)

Fliers: Keep to half page or quarter page; List what's in season, what produce to expect next week, or any specials; Storage tips; Recipes; Markets you sell at, CSA/Restaurants/Co-Ops that sell your product.

Punch cards/Reward programs: brings them back! Could be on the back of your business card.

Stickers with logo: On your packaging; Hand out to kids

Other Ideas?

On-line

Farmers' Market website: Get us contact information, "My Story," social media links, images, and video to enhance your Market profile page.

Social Media Timing:

For the Market clientele, people are on Facebook and Instagram most often between 9am and 9pm. Peak times are around 6-8pm.

Successful Facebook Posts:

On Facebook, photos and videos get significantly more engagement than links and status (text-only) posts.

Show All Posts ▾

Reach Post Clicks Reactions, Comments & Shares

Type	Average Reach	Average Engagement
 Photo	2,278	77 Post Clicks 61 Reactions, Comments & Shares
 Video	1,982	32 Post Clicks 33 Reactions, Comments & Shares
 Link	973	41 Post Clicks 15 Reactions, Comments & Shares
 Shared Video	812	32 Post Clicks 10 Reactions, Comments & Shares
 Status	387	6 Post Clicks 8 Reactions, Comments & Shares

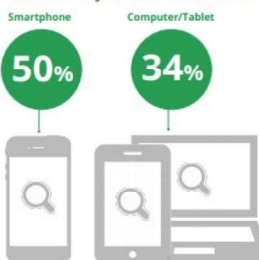
CONSUMERS SEARCH WITH LOCAL INTENT ACROSS DEVICES

4 in 5 consumers conduct local searches on search engines. They search on:




CONSUMERS ACT QUICKLY AFTER THEIR LOCAL SEARCH

% of consumers who visit a store within a day of their local search:



Consumer behavior before visiting store and while in-store:





On-line

Online Marketing Best Practices, Tips, & Tricks

- Establish your goal
- Understand your audience
- Know how you want your audience to feel
- Uncover what will elicit the feelings.
- Share your story *
- Be consistent
- Create a community

*There are many ways you can Share Your Story via Online & Print Platforms. Here are three examples of Umbrella Topics:

The educational story. Using your marketing efforts to educate consumers provides your business with the opportunity to establish a trusted reputation as a source of valuable information. Educational storytelling can incorporate factual information about topics related to your business, use simple stories to communicate difficult concepts and use illustrations to demonstrate services.

Capitalizing on current news. This is another way to weave storytelling into your marketing strategy. Finding ways to tie current news stories into relevant pieces of information that will affect your customers is a smart way to use storytelling. Will new legislation affect how your business works? Will the USDA Organic Program challenges in NM affect me?

Client stories. As you develop a relationship with customers, you have opportunity to learn their stories – how they use your products, how you've helped them. Ask for permission to use their story, and then add it to your promotional materials. Use their success as an opportunity to showcase how you were able to help, letting potential customers know that you'll do the same for them.

Social Media Best Practices

In order to build a loyal and eager following, you must give people a reason to follow you on social media and, in turn, to the market. This takes a mix of personal, professional, and educational visually appealing posts posted consistently/regularly (not in fits and spurts).

Sample Approaches:

Each Friday send a Market Availability report on your Facebook page, or simply take a beautiful photograph of this week's Featured Item with a teaser posted to Social Media.

Update FB/ Instagram with the farm's activities: seeding, harvesting, produce, processes, funny things you see around the farm.





CULTIVATING A STRATEGY FOR SOCIAL MEDIA SUCCESS

PCFMA was awarded a 2017 Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP) grant from the USDA for a project entitled "Multi-Channel and Multi-Generational Marketing Strategies to Engage Farmers' Market Shoppers." The goal of the project is to develop best practices for using email, social media and text messaging to inform and motivate farmers' market shoppers. Ten months into the project, PCFMA has developed recommended best practices for engaging farmers' market shopper via social media. These eight steps have allowed PCFMA to increase its reach on Facebook by 82% over the past four years.

PCFMA.ORG fb.com/PCFMA

1

GET TO KNOW YOUR CUSTOMERS

Surveying your farmers' market customers - online via email or social media or in person at the market - is essential to knowing how best to reach those customers. PCFMA's customer survey in Fall 2017 received over 2,700 responses: 49.2% of customers are on Facebook, 38.0% use Nextdoor, 10.7% are on Instagram, and 6.3% use Twitter, while 25.6% do not use social media.

TOP 3 UTILIZED SOCIAL MEDIA OUTLETS BY PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS



2

CRAFT A CONTENT CALENDAR

Surveys can also tell you what topics are of the greatest interest to your customers. PCFMA's customers said they were most interested in learning about farmers' markets and food events in their community, recipes using seasonal produce, and food and nutrition information. This information informs the monthly content that we create and share with our customers.

TOP 3 TOPICS BY PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS WHO WERE INTERESTED OR VERY INTERESTED



3

DEVELOP AND SHARE YOUR CONTENT

Once you know what your audience says it wants, generate content in those areas and track its impact. We found our highest engagement with posts about farmers' markets, just as our customers said. But we also found more views on Facebook posts about sustainable agriculture and farmer profiles than on posts with seasonal recipes. This was a surprise as in our survey more customers said they were interested in recipes

TOP 3 POST CONTENT TYPE BY AVERAGE AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT

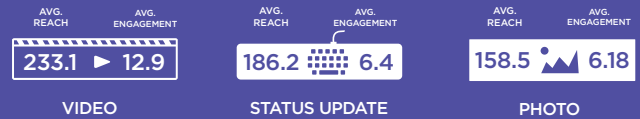


4

TRY DIFFERENT MEDIA

Facebook, and other social media, allow you multiple ways of delivering your message. PCFMA has found that Facebook video posts generate the most visibility and interaction, followed by text updates, photos, and then links to online content. But we also found this varies by topic: customers are more likely to respond to recipes when delivered by video, but responded more to farmer profiles when those are delivered as photos. This information allows us to prioritize our content development budget.

TOP 3 MEDIA BY AVERAGE REACH AND ENGAGEMENT



5

BUILD YOUR AUDIENCE

Marketing has a dual purpose: to motivate current customers and recruit new customers. Social media, when not paying for advertising, requires engagement by your current audience in order to reach a broader audience of potential customers. Photos and videos have proven to be the most effective at generating engagement by our current audience, which exposes our posts to our potential audience. On average 15% of our photo and video post views are by persons who don't yet like our farmers' market Facebook page.

TOP 3 MEDIA BY PERCENT OF TOTAL REACH OF NON-PAGE FOLLOWERS



6

AUDIENCE VS. CUSTOMERS

According to PCFMA's survey data, across all our farmers' markets, 76% of the customers are 45 years of age or older and are 4 times more likely to be women. Across PCFMA's 35 farmers' market Facebook pages, 58% of the audience are younger than 45 years of age and 54% of the audience are women. Recognizing differences between our customer and our audience helps us identify gaps in our outreach.



7

TRACK AND ASSESS IMPACT

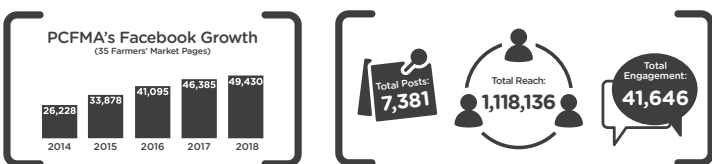
While Facebook provides useful insights for its pages, you can export data on your posts to do a deeper dive using simple tools in Excel or Google Sheets. PCFMA analyzed 12 months of posts - nearly 7,500 of them - from 35 farmers' market Facebook pages. Among our useful findings is which recipe sites generate the most engagement, and that posts from a farmers' market garnered 7 times more engagement than posts done at any other time. This led us to develop a training program for our market managers to help them get comfortable posting live from their farmers' market.



8

CROSS PROMOTE ACROSS CHANNELS

No single outlet will reach all of your potential customers. PCFMA regularly uses social media, email and text messaging to engage directly with customers. Cross-promoting across these channels has proven effective in building our audience. To build subscriptions for our text messaging service, we recently posted about it on Facebook for two farmers' markets. The post was seen by over 500 people and within 24 hours of the post, we had more than 50 new text message subscribers. And, as part of the sign-up process for text messaging, new subscribers are asked for their email address to receive the monthly email newsletter for their farmers' market.



The Pacific Coast Farmers' Market Association (PCFMA), non-profit organization founded in 1988, that operates more than 50 weekly farmers' markets in more than 35 communities of the San Francisco Bay Area. Our mission is to empower California farmers to be enormously successful in San Francisco Bay Area communities. Each of PCFMA's farmers' markets is certified by the state of California, which ensures that all of the fresh produce in each market is grown and sold by California farmers.



To: Healthy By Design
From: Liz McCall Design
Date: 7-24-19

Social Media Best Practices for Gardeners' Market Vendors

Facebook

Create a Facebook cover photo and profile picture

- The Facebook Help Center provides a step-by-step process to upload your cover photo image file: <https://www.facebook.com/help/www/333543230019115>
- Add a profile picture or change your current profile picture by following these steps: https://www.facebook.com/help/163248423739693?helpref=faq_content

Cover photo guidelines

Keep the following in mind when choosing a cover photo:

- Use a unique image that represents your business, a popular product or a picture of people using your product.
- Update your cover photo regularly to get more exposure with your page followers.
- If you have photo editing software, adjust your cover image dimensions to 820 pixels wide by 360 pixels tall for optimal viewing on desktop or mobile devices.
- Do not apply copyrighted images to your page to avoid violating copyright law. The stock image source has the right to make you take it down if you have not paid for its use. There are many royalty-free stock photo image sites that offer free or low cost images. These include: Unsplash, Pexels and Freephotos.

Track which posts get the best reaction from your Facebook followers

- Take behind-the-scenes images and videos of planting, harvesting, crafting, gathering eggs, checking beehives, etc. Show customers how their food is grown or how a product is crafted.
- Try mixing up your post formats. Include text, image and video formats to extend your organic reach (unpaid distribution on Facebook).
- Use visual content. Facebook posts with images get 230% more engagement than those without images.
- To ensure capturing high quality images, check that the lighting is good and your shots are focused. Early morning and evening light is best for outdoor photography.
- An expensive camera is not required. Most smartphones can capture high quality images and you are more likely to have your phone handy.
- When you are due for a phone upgrade, consider picking a phone that features a good camera.
- Practice, practice, practice, so when a great shot presents itself, you can capture it.



- Consider taking a photography class during the winter through community Adult Ed or online in preparation for the next market season.
- Follow other farmers on Facebook and Instagram to see what they are posting and how to compose shots and videos for online engagement. Remember to share your unique story. [Sample Facebook and Instagram pages can be provided if desired.](#)
- If you have photo editing software, the standard preferred image size for Facebook posts is currently 1080 x 1080 pixels.
- Hashtags do not boost engagement on Facebook. If you are also posting to an Instagram account, consider adding the hashtags: #HealthyByDesignYellowstone #gardenersmarket #farmersmarket #eatlocal #gardenfresh [Any other hashtags suggestions you wish to include?](#)
- Take selfies with favorite customers when time permits and with their permission. If you are not comfortable being photographed or on video, then let your produce or product take center stage.
- Feature your team members and businesses in your community that support you.
- What if you get a negative comment on your post? Be sure to monitor your account and respond in a professional and positive manner, especially the first few hours after posting. Offer to replace an item if the customer is unhappy with the quality. If a customer takes the time to comment favorably, thank them.



What information do you want to communicate with your posts?

- Consider posting weekly to notify friends and followers about your upcoming events and what produce or products will be available. Include the price and quantities available to help customers plan their visit to the market.
- Take into consideration when your customers might be online. Your post might get lost in the feed if you are posting in the middle of the night,
- Give location updates. If you participate in more than one market, let your customers know where to find you.
- Timing is key. If you are posting about an upcoming event, give your followers enough notification to attend.
- Encourage the local community to participate in the Gardeners' Market. Begin posting in the weeks before the market season to remind your customers that you are still in business and will be participating in the market. Tell them what you are growing, what new varieties you are planting or what items you are making for the upcoming season.
- Be sure to include your social media and website URLs on banners, business cards, product tags and packaging to connect with customers.
- Consider sharing interesting facts about your produce, methods, materials and team.
- Tell the story of your business.
- You are a professional resource for your customers. If you regularly encounter a question about your products, consider answering it in a post.
- Talk about the particular benefits of your produce – no pesticides, not genetically modified, supporting the local economy, fresh, nutritious, affordable.



- Use humor. Be authentic. Customers are buying from you. Share your stories of waking up at the crack of dawn or working late to prepare for the market. Stay positive and avoid sharing political or religious perspectives. Do not post too often so your followers choose to unfollow your page.

How can you help create online buzz for the Gardeners' Market?

- Identify vegetables and fruits that are customer favorites along with their available season.
- Let customers know about upcoming events, music and activities at the market.
- Share recipes and suggestions on how to use your products.
- Post images of samples that will be available for tasting.
- Set up a social media posting calendar for the market season to assist in gathering content and scheduling posts.
- Consider posting about another market vendor (with their permission) to support a fellow small business.



Chicken and tomato photos by rawpixel.com from Pexels
Selling an apple photo by Erik Scheel from Pexels
Potato photo by JESHOOOTS.COM on Unsplash

Marketing Resources

Produced by the National Center for Appropriate Technology • www.ncat.org • 1-800-275-6228 (1-800-ASK-NCAT)
(Parent organization to the ATTRA Project, www.attra.ncat.org)

Here are some websites that will help you research demographic information for your market.

- **City Data.com tool, can look up neighborhoods**
<http://www.city-data.com>
- **Nielson's Market Research (Zip Code Finder tool)**
<https://claritas360.claritas.com/mybestsegments/>
- **US Census Bureau Data Tool**
<https://data.census.gov/cedsci/>



Guides to Developing and Refining your Marketing Plan

- **Marketing your Farm**
Appalachian Grown
<http://asapconnections.org/downloads/appalachian-grown-marketing-handout.pdf>
- **Developing Your Farm's Marketing Plan**
University of Wisconsin Extension
<http://learningstore.uwex.edu/Assets/pdfs/A3811-13.pdf>

Farmers Market and Financial Resources

- *The following resources are to help you refine your farmers market sales and business. **Building a Sustainable Business: A Guide to Developing a Business Plan for Farms and Rural Businesses.** Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture.
http://agmarketing.extension.psu.edu/Business/PDFs/build_sust_business.pdf*
- **Farm Commons.** Accessible information and tool kits on legal topics relevant to farmers.
www.farmcommons.org
- **Farmers' Market Display Checklist:** A booth set-up checklist and analysis tool from the University of Vermont Extension.
http://www.uvm.edu/newfarmer/marketing/marketing_resources/FarmersMarketDisplayChecklist.pdf
- **Fearless Farm Finances: Farm Financial Management Demystified.** A very useful book published in 2011 by the Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service (MOSES).
<https://mosesorganic.org/farming/farm-finances/>

Need Help with your promotion efforts or adjusting your marketing plan?

The Community Food and Agriculture Coalition and National Center for Appropriate Technology are here to help! We provide free one on one technical assistance.

Contact:

Tammy Howard; NCAT and ATTRA agriculture specialist
406-494-8683; or tammyh@ncat.org

Other Marketing & Promotion Resources

- ✓ Farm Marketing and Promotion
USDA and Community Food Agriculture Coalition of Missoula County
http://www.healthybydesignyellowstone.org/wp-content/uploads/Resource_FarmMarketPromotion_USDA.pdf
- ✓ Market Differentiation
USDA and Community Food Agriculture Coalition of Missoula County
http://www.healthybydesignyellowstone.org/wp-content/uploads/Resource_MarketDifferentiation_USDA.pdf
- ✓ How to Write a Business Plan
Santa Fe Farmers' Market Institute
http://www.healthybydesignyellowstone.org/wp-content/uploads/Resource_HowToWriteABusinessPlan_SFFMI.pdf
- ✓ Understanding Customer Behavior at Farmers Markets
Grow NYC and NY Farm Viability Institute
https://lissuu.com/grownyc/docs/marketingdoc_v4_hires
- ✓ How to Be Successful at a Farmers' Market
Colorado State University Extension
<https://extension.colostate.edu/docs/pubs/garden/04008.pdf>

For more information about the Gardeners' Market, visit
www.hbdyc.org/gardeners-market/

