



Selling at a Farmers' Market

Whether you've been selling at a farmers' market for several years or you're in your first season, you want to make sure you have an eye-catching display that will attract customers.

The following tips will help you get organized, sell all your farm products by the end of the market day and make your trip profitable. Following these guidelines will help make your farmers' market trip as enjoyable for you as you make it for your customers.

- Make sure your display is neat, clean, attractive and inviting, providing ease of movement throughout.
- Give customers a sense of bounty, whether you have a diversity of produce or a single niche product.
- Display all produce and farm products at least six inches off the ground, using sturdy equipment such as wooden boards, inverted crates or bushel baskets, tables or other dispensing equipment.
- Display your products neatly and make them easily accessible to all people, including the physically challenged.
- Incline your containers so customers can see the fruits and vegetables and other farm products easily and from a distance, while simultaneously giving prospective buyers an impression of choice and abundance.
- Post product and price signs above every display container or on a blackboard, indicating clearly and legibly the unit price and product variety.
- Make better use of vertical display space by using portable fixtures that allow customers to see the products from elbow to eye level.
- Replenish the containers as they get empty. Bring a range of different-sized containers to the market so you can put your products into smaller containers as quantities diminish.
- Create eye appeal by using contrasting colors, sizes and shapes as you display your vegetables, fruits, and other products.
- Bring only your highest quality products to market, clean and harvested at their optimum maturity and freshness.

When preparing for market day, consider bringing the following:

- Crushed ice or a spray water bottle to keep crops such as lettuce, mesclun and broccoli looking fresh.
- A cooler to ensure safe storage of meat, poultry, eggs and other perishables.
- An appliance thermometer in the cooler to monitor temperature; maintain temperature at 41 degrees Fahrenheit or below.

- Drinking-quality water for misting sensitive vegetables, for drinking and for washing your hands.
- Paper towels and soap.
- Signs.
- Farm business sign.
- Price and products signs.
- Other signs or posters.
- Products price list.
- A white or beige canopy, tent or umbrella to define your sales area and protect farm produce and products from the elements.
- Portable displays such as tables, sawhorses, wooden boards, shelves, etc., on which to display your produce and other products.
- Sandbags or other weights to anchor your table, canopy, fliers, etc. in the event of wind.
- Tablecloths to dress up your table displays and hide the extra inventory and other items.
- Clean and undamaged containers such as wooden or wicker baskets, crates, bushels, etc.
- Fabric or plastic container liners to keep fruits and vegetables free of bruises.
- Plastic or paper bags, new and sturdy.
- Cash box with change and small bills.
- Receipt book and calculator.
- Licensed scale, if you choose to sell by weight.
- Cellophane paper/plastic and rubber bands to cover small fruit containers.
- Florist sleeves, if you are in the cut flower business.
- Bakery cardboard boxes for fruit or poultry pies or dumplings and other value-added products.
- Shopping baskets – a great convenience for customers, allowing them to purchase more products.
- Fliers about your farm: include information about what you sell, recipes, a picture of your farm, contact information.
- Business cards.
- Anti-fatigue mats and a stool for you to rest on if you need some support.
- Blackboard.
- Clipboard, extra paper and pen to write any comments, notes or customers' feedback.
- Heavy paper and marker pens for making new signs if needed.
- Adhesive tape or staple gun (with extra staples).
- First-aid kit.

Make sure your sales crew

- Understands the importance of hygienic practices such as washing their hands after using the bathroom.
- Knows about your farm operation and farm products.
- Is well informed about handling, storing and using each of your products.
- Wears aprons, T-shirts, or caps with your farm name or logo.
- Appears neat and well groomed.
- Is full of enthusiasm, with genuine smiles.

Other things to consider

Insurance:

- Product liability insurance is recommended. Also, make sure your liability insurance is adequate for selling at the farmers' market.

Safety:

- Keep your dog at home. Hopefully your customers will do the same
- If the market chooses to have farm animals on site as an attraction, make sure the animals are there for visual effect only and not for petting. Food safety and people's safety should be your primary concern.

State and Local Regulations:

- To certify weighing scales: For more information contact the New Hampshire Department of Agriculture, Markets & Food (NHDAMF) <http://www.state.nh.us/agric/aghome.html> Bureau of Weights & Measures: 603-271-3700
- For a General Permit/Restricted Pesticide Permit (required if you use organic or synthetic pesticides on the crops you sell), contact NHDAMF Division of Pesticide Control: 603-271-3550.
- For processed foods such as jams & jellies, cheese and bottled milk, contact the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services, Bureau of Food Protection at 603-271-4589 or 1-800-852-3345 Ext. 4589 <http://www.state.nh.us/gencourt/ols/rules/he-P2300.html>

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