

# Farmers' Market Expectations and Innovations

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# Why Should You Listen To & Ignore Me?

## Setting Expectations

Business experience  
Customer & supporter  
Marketing

No one-size-fits-all solutions  
Flexibility and self-evaluation are key  
You are the experts and laboratory  
One or two new ideas

# Lessons from a Teenage Farmer

Denver Post, 11/11/12

Perception is everything

- Brown eggs sell, white eggs don't
- Sells more when dad isn't around
- If customer's are coming over she wears pigtails and gathers eggs in a basket vs. 5 gallon bucket



**“People like to buy eggs from little kids skipping through a pasture with a basket of eggs.”**

# Who Comes to Market?

Do you know your customers?



3





# Who Comes to Market?

Don't assume she is . . . . .



# Increasing Sales Means

Deepening your relationship & becoming one of the chosen three



# Look at 3 Levers to Grow Sales

Price



Product



Customer experience



# Price vs. Volume



## Breakeven

Does raising prices or raising volume have more of an impact on profitability?

### Profit Impact of Changing Price vs. Changing Volume

Assumptions		Baseline	Price Chg	Vol Chg	
	Sales	\$100			Price * vol
70%	VC	\$70			
\$5	FC	\$5			
	Profit	\$25			
	\$ Change				
	% Change				





5<sup>th</sup>

Behind freshness & quality considerations

# Ground Rules



- If your product is better, sell it for more
- Don't undercut other growers
- Don't sell for less at the end of the day
- It's too cheap if no one says it's too expensive



- **Compete on value, not on price**



# Make It Easy for Me to Pay



Help me, pay you



53% of purchases are on credit cards

People pay 36-100% more using credit cards



“Consumers who pay with a credit card focus on the benefits of a purchase, while consumers paying with cash focus on its cost.” -Chicago Tribune



# Make It Easy for Me to Pay



## Alternative Payment Options





# Make It Easy for Me to Pay



## Expand the Appeal of Markets

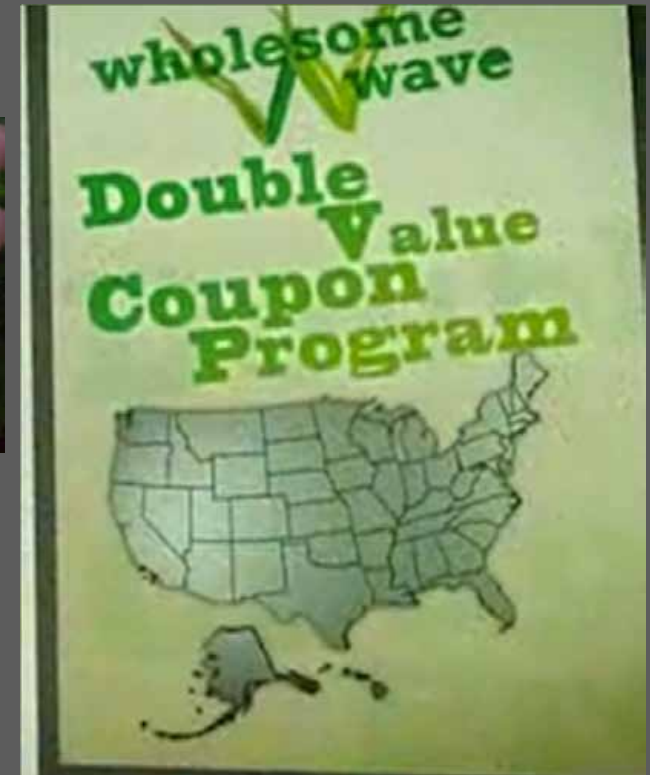


**Food Stamps (SNAP) and  
Credit and Debit Cards  
Gladly  
Accepted  
Here!**



Please visit the Market Information Booth  
for more information.

The Portland Farmers' Market SNAP Program is made possible by a community partnership  
between Cultivating Community: Healthy Portland, and the Portland Farmers' Market Association.



# Go Before & Beyond The Market



 College of the Atlantic

[home](#)[about](#)[contact](#)[Order](#)

Online farmers market serving the Blue Hill Peninsula and surrounding area. Service is free and open to all: shop for one week or all season. All profit goes to local food producers.

## *how it works*

**Saturday 8AM – Tuesday 8AM:** Look at the order form to see what is on offer this week. Do your weekly shopping and add items to your box. Ordering closes Tuesday for Thursday pickup. Single easy payment done on-line with Paypal, debit, or credit card.

**Thursday:** Pick up and pay for your box anytime between 2 p.m. – 6 p.m. at the Blue Hill Wine Shop.

Click **"Order"**: For simple step-by-step instructions (top of this page)

Join our mailing list below and we will let you know when and how to order!

## *producers*

[Backstage Farm](#)[Bagaduce Farm](#)[Blue-Zee Farm](#)[Clayfield Farm](#)[Crown O' Maine](#)[Fortenberry Farm](#)[Four Season Farm](#)[Horsepower Farm](#)[Little Island Oyster Co.](#)[Living Branch Farm](#)



# Over 100 Farmers Together



In Ohio – 3 years old



# Include Your Customers



## Educate & Talk to Your Customers

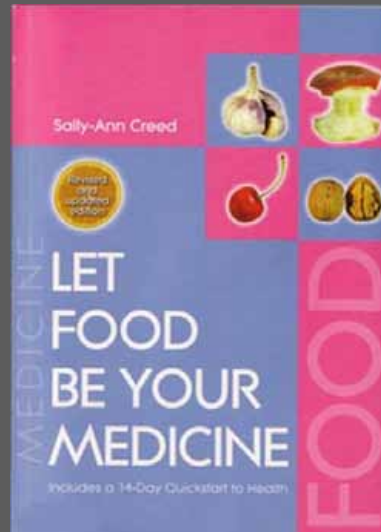




# Be First



Makes You Unique & Commands a Premium



# Be Incredible



Laser like focus on a single product





# Entice Me



Group Items Together, Give Me a Recipe and a Sample



# Service Sets You Apart



Delight Your Customers and They'll Return

People like:

- People
- To feel in control
- To engage their senses
- Abundance





# Know Who I Am & Include Me



## Make Me Feel Welcome

- Form personal relationships with customers
  - Learn names, remember what people like
  - Make small talk
  - Ask me what else I want
- If you can't do it, hire someone who can
- Have farm photos – talk about the farm
- Don't make customer feel alone
  - Step out front or restock during quiet times so customer isn't approaching empty booth
- Say "Hello" and "See you next week"
- Don't make the market a once a week "affair"



# Don't Make Me Be A Pest



## Educate Your Customers

- Give me information: asking feels like committing
- Make signs for everything: make prices clear
- If you hear a question a lot, make a sign
- Tell me how to store and prepare food
  - Print recipes



# What's Different About You?



I'll notice

Hollywood, CA



<http://www.hollywoodfarmersmarket.net/images/hollywood-farmers-market-1.jpg>

Brookfield, WI



[brookfieldfarmersmarket.com/SmallCrowd.JPG](http://brookfieldfarmersmarket.com/SmallCrowd.JPG)

The Woodlands, TX



[http://www.gmva.org/images/2008farmers\\_market.jpg](http://www.gmva.org/images/2008farmers_market.jpg)



# Show Me What to Do



Make it an experience





# Engage My Senses



Help me eat with my eyes, smell and other senses

## Sound

– Music/ wind chimes



## Feel

–Hands and under-foot



Draw people in with a new texture, sound or entertainment

Carpet: <http://3.bp.blogspot.com/-j1La5m6Brit8/Tvk93jHnXui/AAAAAAAAAAhQ/hkEfjqDRaSo/s1600/Outdoor-Carpet-Rug.jpg>

Boom Box: [http://s8.thisnext.com/media/largest\\_dimension/3E377FFC.jpg](http://s8.thisnext.com/media/largest_dimension/3E377FFC.jpg)

Fiddler: [http://www.outsideinn.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/IMG\\_3038.jpg](http://www.outsideinn.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/IMG_3038.jpg)

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# Engage My Senses



Help me eat with my eyes, smell and other senses

## Smell

- Flowers
- Crushed herbs



## Taste

- Cut individual samples, don't leave a plate for grazers
- Say: "have you tried..." not "do you want to try..."





# Engage My Senses



## Think About Your Display

Height

- Structure
- Layers

Depth

Color



Contrast

Focal points

Distance &  
scale

If people sense limited supply in your stall, they will imitate that feeling with their wallets





Do you really know how you are doing?

Photograph and evaluate your display

- Abundant or cluttered?

Video- or audio-record yourself during busy times

- Can you improve your efficiency?
- Do you look stressed?
- Are you routinely missing a sales opportunity?
- Observe your customers
  - Are they disoriented or confused?



# Moving Beyond Price



Focus on the Customer: Beautiful, Fresh, Unique, Informative, Easy & Welcoming = Value & Loyalty



This is the ONLY  
Week for Winter Squash.  
Buy it now, and ~~it~~ cook it  
now. They will Not keep very  
long at all. You can cook a bunch  
at once and freeze it.

Seckel  
Pears  
- sweet like honey  
1. <sup>80</sup> pound



# Questions

Thanks



# Market Ideas



## Promotions to Draw Customers In

### Advertising for new customers

- Keep it local (30 miles)
- 80% of people check weather
- Regular small ad is more effective than a huge ad once

### Promotion

- Invite reporter to dinner or to be a farmer for a day
- Tell press if something happens!

### Reminders/announcements for regular customers

- Facebook, emails, blogs
  - ✓ Portland ME Farmers market: 7000 “likes”

### Ask schools to perform at Market



Image: [http://4.bp.blogspot.com/\\_6hJMozGX1eQ/TKDmn2aiZII/AAAAAAAAABao/4HsIWLMdyLs/s1600/IMG\\_4368.JPG](http://4.bp.blogspot.com/_6hJMozGX1eQ/TKDmn2aiZII/AAAAAAAAABao/4HsIWLMdyLs/s1600/IMG_4368.JPG)

# Market Ideas



## Reach out to Tourists

- 23 million visitors last summer
- Spent \$3 billion on food
- \$1 billion on recreation

If each tourist spent 20¢ at market, revenue would double



Photo: Portland Press Herald

# Market Ideas



## Make Market a Food and Recreation Destination

- Accentuate the local and unique
- Sell easily prepared foods
  - Pre-washed salad
  - Fruit
  - Cross-merchandize
- Make shopping an experience, not a chore
- Street Performers and Artists
- Target advertising to tourists



Photo: Portland Press Herald



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