

Recipe for Market Success: Preparing for Market

Great Plains Growers Conference, January 8, 2011



Who we are

Kansas City Center for Urban Agriculture

Growing Farmers, Feeding the City, Cultivating Change



catholic  charities
OF NORTHEAST KANSAS

New Roots
FOR REFUGEES



- Resettling refugees in Kansas City since 1975
- Helping refugee farmers start independent small farm businesses in Kansas City
- Growing farmers markets and access to healthy, culturally appropriate food
- 17 farmers selling at 8 markets in 2011

Who are you?

- Currently selling at a farmers market?
- Haven't started selling yet, but will soon?
- Any retail or sales experience?

The Farmers Market is a Broadway Opening, every single week!

- Planting, weeding, harvesting, push push push!
 - Covered in dirt, sweat, working hard!
- And then, taa daa! the **MARKET**
- Clean, organized, lively but calm
 - Vegetables looking like art, beautiful, colorful, displayed
 - And TALKING talking talking



How to go from farm to market

- **Begin with the market:** Where do you want to sell at, what do you want to sell, who do you want to sell to?
- **Move out to the field:** set up and stick to a production schedule to ensure steady products at market, manage the harvesting, washing, and packing for best quality
- **Set up systems-** check off lists, white boards, divisions of labor to get yourself, your product and your crew to market
- **Pack smart!**
- Give yourself enough **time**
- **Be happy** to share your produce, your life at the farm with your customers

Choosing Markets

- No two farmers markets are alike!
- Things to consider:
 - Times and Location
 - Customer Traffic and Product Demand
 - Market Management (staff/farmer/volunteer) and events
 - Tents vs. Pavilion
 - Culture of Market (wholesale, producer grown, organic, etc.)
 - Pricing
 - Fees/Farmer Requirements
- Visit Markets and see for yourself!



Overland Park Farmers Market



- Wednesdays at 7:30 and Saturdays at 6:30
- High customer traffic, especially on Saturdays
- Traditionally a sweet corn and tomato market- seems to be a demand for a wider variety of product
- Managed by full time staff that coordinate weekly live music
- Pavilion
- Historically a high resale market, moving toward producer
- Pricing
- \$793.00 for one stall for 2011

Brookside Market



- Saturdays 8-1
- Medium customer traffic, but all are coming to buy
- Part time market manager who coordinates special events and music. Farmers are required to be involved in leadership of the market.
- Must bring own white tents
- All local and organic market. High focus on producer as vendor.
- Pricing
- \$540.00 for one tent in 2010

KCK Greenmarket



- Wednesdays, 8-1
- Medium traffic, mostly seniors using vouchers
- Part time market manager, very little special events, no live music
- Cooperative atmosphere that has worked out well for new farmers
- Bring own tent or fight for shade space
- Producer only
- Historically low pricing, working with farmers to change this
- \$170.00 per season

Evaluate all of your options and choose a market that works for you!



Product Planning

- Who are your customers?
- What do you like to grow and eat? What can you sell with passion?
- "Niche Farm" versus "Full Service Farm"
- What do other growers at your market sell?
- Filling supply gaps



New Roots for the Mountains Market Supply Checklist



| | |
|--|--|
| Scales | |
| Calculator | |
| Pricing Signs | |
| Brooms/Crates | |
| Basins | |
| Shallow tubs for greens | |
| Mulch/bark | |
| Dry Creek Markets | |
| Pans or Pencils | |
| Seasons | |
| Scotch Tape | |
| Sticker (with sales records and harvest records) | |
| Spray bottles | |
| Grocery bags | |
| Talcum powder | |
| Brochures | |
| Tables | |
| Volunteer Schedule and Sign-in Sheet | |
| Flat boxes | |
| Chairs | |
| Barrows | |
| Weights for sale | |
| Aprons | |
| Tools | |
| Money Boxes and Change | |
| Recipe cards to hang banners | |
| CSA information (phone numbers) | |
| Water | |

Harvest Records

- Night before: framing income potential, setting goals
- Reference points: week to week, year to year
- Helps fine tune your plantings, your harvests, your sales goals




Sales Records

Farmer: _____
 Date: _____
 Market: Overland Park

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| 1. Starting Change: | |
| 2. Total in Drawer: | |
| 3. Total Sales: (2-1) | |
| 4. Tax: (3* .07525) | |
| 5. Bank: (3* .20) | |
| 6. Total to bank: (4+5) | |
| 7. Take Home Cash: (3-6) | |

CSA Comments: _____

Marketing Progress
 Scale Usage: _____
 Display: _____
 Change: _____
 Other: _____



What sold good? _____

What sold bad? _____



Pricing

- Price compare: grocery stores & other vendors
- Compare quality
- Compare story and branding

Packaging

- Makes product look good
- Allows for easy transport to market and home for customers
- Doesn't overwhelm customers
- Makes sales easy for farmers
- In balance with cost and creating extra waste

Pint Boxes

- Plastic- feels like a grocery store
- Ready to take home
- Not reusable



- Pulp- customers like the feel of these
- Still require bag, and might get squished!
- Reusable



Greens Bags



- Greens need to breathe!
- Be careful about amount in greens bags, don't stuff them full
- Practice with a scale

Cut Flower Sleeves



- Inexpensive
- Allow for easier transport to market and home for customers
- Some flowers don't fit or get crushed inside

Market Customers Eat with their Eyes *(and their noses, and hands, and ears...)*

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The Fives Senses at Market

- Sight
- Smell
- Feel
- Taste
- Hearing

Sight

- Color
- Abundance
- Order
- Clear signage
- Other customers
- Smiles



Smell

- Big markets, especially daily ones, have a unique smell
- Smaller markets, maybe more individual stands
- Cooking demos
- Herbs
- Here, smell this!



Feel

How does a tomato feel? Carrot greens?
Peppers and Eggplant?
Encourage (gentle) handling!
Farmer bagging versus Customer bagging



Hearing

- Noise of the crowd
- Sound of conversations
- Farmer laughter
- Music



Taste

- Best way to sell your produce!
- Check the health codes first
- Whole samples, cut, cooked
- Especially good for new or unusual veggies



Play to all their senses!

- Sight
- Smell
- Feel
- Hearing
- Taste



Customer Service



Tell stories, connect eaters with the farm, build loyalty

Connect with other farmers



Questions?

More information at

www.newrootsforrefugees.org

www.kccua.org