

# Idaho Farmers Market Manual

A comprehensive guide to market establishment, management, and promotion.



Market Development Division  
Idaho State Department of Agriculture  
(208) 332-8530 [www.agri.idaho.gov](http://www.agri.idaho.gov)

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# Introduction

People in communities throughout Idaho have expressed interest in forming farmers' markets. While more than forty markets are presently operating in Idaho, many more are yet to be formed. This handbook is intended to be a resource for individuals and groups who wish to establish farmers' markets. Although not exhaustive in nature, this resource provides useful information on the many factors necessary for the creation and operation of a successful farmers' market.

The recent success of farmers' markets has taken many by surprise. For others, this is a tradition that has been in place for centuries. Many consumers are tiring of the sterility of narrow supermarket aisles and opting to shop at bustling open-air markets alive with a mix of farmers and shoppers. In most areas, the farmers' market has become as much a social event as a point of sale. The nostalgia of buying agricultural products directly from their producer attracts many customers. Other customers are drawn by the search for superior quality or unique produce, or the opportunity to talk to the person who grew the product they are about to buy. Even festivities such as small concerts and amusing themes can be used to help routine produce shopping blossom into a farmers' market ripe with activity.

There is also an increased awareness of the benefit of buying locally produced goods. Consumers understand local produce is not only fresher and tastier, but that purchasing it can have positive effects on the environment and the local economy. Agriculture is a vital part of many Idaho communities, large and small. Farmers' Market patrons support family farms and the preservation of farmland which is not just a part of Idaho's heritage, but a vital part of it's future as well.

Farmers' Markets affect the local economy in many ways. Money spent at the market, whether it goes to a farmer, specialty food producer, or crafter, is then re-circulated within the community. Markets are also great business incubators—a place for people to try out new ideas or products.

Downtown markets can draw customers to other businesses in the area and be a part of a larger downtown revitalization—something needed in many rural Idaho communities.

The purpose of this handbook is to help organizers establish their own farmers' market. It is designed to guide you through the creation of a farmers' market and provides supplemental information on various useful topics. The sequence of events included in this handbook, however, may differ somewhat from your market. Therein lies the uniqueness of your planned market. For one-on-one assistance with your market, contact the Idaho State Department of Agriculture.

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# Getting Started

Every farmers' market begins differently. Location, population, economic base, organizers, weather patterns, and other factors will influence the way a market comes together. A metropolitan city with goals of downtown development will have a different set of priorities, problems, and resources than a smaller, rural community. Because of the many possible environments for a farmers' market, it is up to the reader to determine what organizational structure will best serve your particular situation. However, the organization of most farmers' markets begins with an individual. As the farmers' market evolves, small groups or committees are formed which take over various organizational functions. Occasionally, established non-profit organizations or local businesses organize and operate farmers' markets. Regardless of these variations, certain activities usually take place during the development of a farmers' market.

## ***Evaluating the Need***

A farmers' market will never be successful without the interest, support, and efforts of the community. As the organizer, you must "test the waters". Is there a *need* for a farmers' market in your area? Why do you want to have a farmers market? You must be able to clearly articulate the answers to these questions. You will also need to evaluate if there is sufficient farmer and customer base in your community to support a market.

Make sure you have a distinct idea of your goals and can clearly communicate them. What is your vision for the market? Is it to support local growers, downtown revitalization, community health, food security, economic development, or any combination of the above. It would be a good idea to visit other markets in communities similar to yours and talk to market manager and vendors to learn what has and hasn't worked for them. This will help you establish a clear vision and realistic goals for your market.

## **Making Contacts**

Once you have clearly defined your purpose, prepare a short summary of your intentions so that you can leave them with each person you contact. Make certain that your name, phone number, and email are on the handout.

As you set out to measure support for a farmers' market, don't neglect to contact the various groups and organizations in your community.

### **Agricultural Organizations:**

- Idaho State Department of Agriculture
- University of Idaho, College of Agricultural and Life Sciences
- University of Idaho Extension
- County Farm Bureau
- Future Farmers of America Chapters
- Local Grange Associations
- School or University Ag Departments
- Community Garden Clubs
- Regional Resource Conservation and Development Councils
- Non-Profit Farm Organizations

### **Consumer/Civic/Religious Organizations:**

- Food Banks
- Consumer Cooperatives
- Food Buying Clubs
- County Nutrition Programs
- Church Groups (most have a newsletter)
- Service Organizations (Elks, Rotary, etc.)
- Chamber of Commerce
- Downtown Development/Merchants Assn

### **Media Organizations:**

- **Newspapers** - find out who reports on community and agricultural events and ask if they would like to be kept informed of the market's progress.
- **Radio** - try to get free public service announcements or short "community interest" bulletins.

- **Television** - save these contacts for events such as a big meeting or opening day.

When you have developed a list of people and groups to be contacted, you are ready to hit the streets. Be sure to take along a pen, your handout and plenty of paper for recording the contacts you have made. Never leave a good contact without obtaining his or her name, phone number, address, and email. The information you gather should then be compiled into a mailing list. This information will allow you to quickly mobilize a strong support base as well as provide a list for future market newsletters. If at all possible, establish email as your primary means of communication as this will save you much time and money. You may still want to use paper mailings for your large event announcements, but email is best for most communication.

## **Officials**

Contacting officials may be a step you take after at least one preliminary meeting, so that you have a clearer idea of what you'll be doing, but they like to be in the loop and can be great champion for your cause. City and state officials may be concerned with a few things we have not yet discussed.

Depending upon the scope of the products that are sold at your market, the city will issue a business license or permit for the market and a county health official will want to ensure proper health standards for your location. Also talk to planning and zoning and the city Fire Marshal. Occasionally, a city code will not address a specific function of your market and you will need to abide by an official's ruling.

It is especially important that you set up an appointment and meet with these officials in person instead of by phone. Don't be discouraged as many farmers' markets experience a problem or two at this stage. Just be ready to give an answer to every question an official is likely to ask. You should also have these answers printed on a

"leave-behind" handout. This means you need to do your homework before you start. Be sure to invite these officials to your next meeting. Include the meeting information on your handout. A few suggestions for those to invite would be the City Mayor and the City Manager, members of Planning and Zoning, the City Council members, the County Environmental Health Officer, County Commissioners, the County Extension Educator and the Chamber of Commerce.

## **Making Grower Contacts**

You should have enough feedback after several weeks of general inquiries to know whether or not to proceed. Assuming the response has been favorable, it is time to begin making contact with the producers who will be supplying the market. Find out which farmers are interested, what crops they will grow, and when the crops will be ready for market. If you have decided to allow specialty foods and crafters into your market, begin contacting them as well to gauge their interest. The role of non-farmer vendors at your market will be discussed in another section. Do not forget to record each potential vendor's contact information for a separate mailing list. Keeping them separate will save you time when only the vendors need to be contacted.

The most difficult part of establishing a farmers' market may be locating the farmers and gardeners. While the best contact is person to person, you may have to rely partly on a few well-placed posters, radio announcements, and word of mouth. It is also a good idea to contact the editor of the local newspaper about doing a story on the possibility of starting a farmers' market in the community.

However, rely on these methods only to get producers in touch with you. Making contact in person is an absolute must. Without it, you will not be able to develop a pool of committed growers. Getting growers to buy into the vision of the market is a must for success.

# Getting Started

The best candidates for growers are usually small-scale farmers and large-scale gardeners, but neither will participate unless they have an incentive. Share with them the following advantages of selling at a farmers' market:

- Higher returns
- Growers set their own prices
- Cash sales, immediate payments
- Maximize utilization of family labor
- Opportunity to meet the consumers
- Additional outlet for their produce
- Good educational experience for the younger generations
- Market research to identify demand for specialty products
- IT'S JUST PLAIN FUN!

During the meeting, be alert for growers with leadership ability or organizational skills. Make every effort to build an internal structure that will be able to survive conflict or the loss of a key sponsor or organizer. Identifying leaders early will allow you time to prepare them to take charge when the need arises.



## The First Meeting

The first meeting for a potential farmers' market is unique in that it will serve as the basis for all subsequent activity. It is important to start promptly and be organized as you are setting precedent for following market meetings. Properly facilitating the meeting to allow ample time for discussion will help you gauge the level of buy-in of the group, as well as potential leaders for committees. Keep the conversation moving towards concrete outcomes and avoid getting bogged down in details that are irrelevant at this early stage.

Pick a neutral location that is easily accessible and preferably free. Some options may be a the county extension office, local school, library, community center, Chamber of Commerce, or at a supportive business or non-profit.

Send out an invitation or letter a month prior to the first meeting. This invitation should share the purpose of the meeting, describe the some of the key benefits that the market will bring to the community, and of course, date, time, and location. Follow-up emails and phone calls with your key contacts will help assure their participation.

In most cases, the audience will not only support the concept but will make the transition from *talking* about the market to *working* on it. Although a significant amount of work has gone into organization prior to the first meeting, this is most often the turning point that will mark the birth of the market and relieve you of much of the work.

Before you look over the suggested meeting agenda on the next page, keep several things in mind. When talking to your audience, move from general to specific. Start with ideas rather than details. Do a good job of explaining the benefits to both the producer and the consumer. Use plenty of visual aids such as graphs, slides, signs, drawings and/or handouts.

# Getting Started

After presenting your case, you need to ask two key questions:

- Does the audience like the concept?
- Do they want to start a market in their community?

If you receive a yes to both these questions, begin to move forward with the planning immediately to keep up the excitement and momentum of the group.

At this first meeting choose the location of subsequent meetings based on proximity to the growers, not proximity to the market site. If the majority of the growers are from a particular area, then hold the meeting in that area. Once the market is operating, you can hold short meetings at the end of the market day if needed.

While not absolutely necessary, it would be a good idea to organize one or two meetings with the growers soon after the first meeting. The objective of these meetings should be to introduce growers

to the concept of the farmers' market and to develop a planting strategy to ensure produce availability for opening day. It is important to know what each grower will have and when it will be available. If you put this information in table form, you will be able to spot the gaps more easily and make subsequent adjustments to grower's planting schedules.

If several interested growers are concerned that they cannot grow enough produce to participate, **DON'T LEAVE THEM OUT!** Instead, discuss the desirability of a consignment booth. Consignment booths at other farmers' markets have had great success. The booth is run by the market association, which typically charges the consignor about 10 - 15% of his or her total sales. The grower simply brings his/her produce to the booth prior to opening, with the prices already marked. Sales of a particular grower's produce are recorded separately and at the end of the day, the market takes its commission and pays out the rest.

## **Sample Agenda**

### **I. Introduction of Speakers/Distinguished Guests**

- Organizer
- Speakers
- Other market organizers/sponsors
- Guests

### **II. General Explanation of the Market**

- What it is
- Advantages to producers
- Advantages to consumers
- Slide show or presentation by established farmers' market

### **III. After You Get the Go-Ahead**

- Stress that careful planning and preparation are necessary
- Establish committees for grower recruitment, market location selection, advertising, finances, and rules and regulations
- Begin to discuss what produce will be available and which will need to be grown
- Form a rules committee composed of both growers and organizers
- Discuss feasibility of creating a market association

### **IV. Set the Next Meeting Date**

- Preferably in one or two weeks so that interest is not lost
- Expect preliminary reports from the committees

# Getting Started

A steering committee needs to be formed at this juncture. In order for opening day to run smoothly, a committee composed of growers and organizers should develop guidelines for the market. Make sure that all participants are given the opportunity to be involved. This committee or subcommittees should tackle issues such as market analysis, site selection, financial needs, and the vendor mix. All this must be held consistent with the goals and vision of the market.

## The Second Meeting

Begin with introductions and a brief review for the benefit of those who did not attend the first meeting. Be sure you don't leave out any officials in the introductions. Explain the purpose of the meeting, why the officials are there, the progress you have made and the progress you hope to make at this meeting. If you are still seeing new faces, it may be necessary to briefly go over the farmers' market concept. Just remember that most of the people have probably heard it at least once.

Some of the officials will want to make a presentation to the group or make a few comments. Be sure you allow for this and even encourage it by supplying them with a farmers' market fact sheet or other background materials in advance. After all officials have had the opportunity to speak, call a short break and inform the officials they are free to leave but are welcome to stay and participate in the rest of the meeting. Don't forget to send these people thank you notes!

Your working committees have had a week or two to investigate their assigned areas and should be ready to share their findings. This is a good time for brainstorming, narrowing choices, locating problems and making decisions. Make sure that everything is discussed in an orderly manner and appoint committee heads when appropriate. Make sure someone is designated to take minutes of the meeting. These will be useful in addressing issues as you move forward so questions don't go unanswered.

The financial Analysis Committee should project all likely expenses which may include:

- Site rental
- Insurance and licenses
- Computer equipment and office rental
- Garbage collection
- Signage and marketing materials
- Advertising and special events
- Printing supplies
- Website creation and maintenance
- Postage
- Staff wages and benefits

Don't be alarmed if it seems that you end up with more questions being raised than answers given. Many of the answers have already been found by other farmers' market groups and they will be happy to share their experience with you. Contact the Marketing Division of the Idaho State Department of Agriculture at (208) 332-8530 for referrals.

A few weeks will have passed since your last meeting. Most growers will be more sure of the date their crops will be ready. Come up with a target opening day to propose at the third general meeting. Also have a time for the growers to share what they will be growing so you can be sure to have all the main crops supplied at your market. You don't want multiple farmers growing large amounts of peas and corn and no one growing tomatoes and beans. Make sure there is balance in varieties of products as well as seasonality of products.

Take plenty of time to go over the **proposed** market rules one by one. Make sure that the growers understand what a rule means and the rationale behind it. After discussion, approve the rules or amend them as necessary. Make sure to remind the growers that the rules can be revised as the market evolves and circumstances change. Emphasize that it is best to have rules in advance to ensure that the market runs smoothly, and to avoid unnecessary situations in the future. *See an example of market rules in Appendix B.*



# Getting Started

At the last meeting you discussed the possibility of forming a market association. The growers should have had enough time to consider the pros and cons. The market will need an organizational structure that will last beyond the initial formation activities. The market will also need an internally generated source of funds for operations and promotional expenses, unless managers would rather continually search for grants. Membership dues from an association would help offset some of the fixed costs, such as insurance. Try to reach a decision. If the decision is made to form an association, assign a committee to draft Articles of Incorporation and by-laws. Keep your by-laws as simple as possible to allow for easy changes down the road. *Sample Articles of Incorporation and by-laws are included in Appendix A.*

## The Third Meeting

Begin this meeting by giving a report on what happened and what was decided at the previous meetings. Don't be overly optimistic when deciding the opening date. Take the average of the growers' earliest estimates and then add a few weeks. Opening the market with little or no produce could jeopardize future turnout.

The working committee in charge of site location should have enough information to select a site now. Their efforts should be directed toward securing the site and making whatever preparations are necessary.

The Advertising Committee now has the opening date and location to include in their material. Decide on what advertising strategy and media will be used. Decide on any opening ceremonies and whether you will want television coverage (highly recommended).

You also need the committee in charge of finances to present a proposed budget and bring funding possibilities up for discussion. If the market location has to be rented or leased, have that committee work with the Finance Committee.

The committee that has been working on association bylaws and Articles of Incorporation should be ready to present a draft to the group for approval. Approve the by laws and Articles and prepare to file them with the Secretary of State's office, as is explained in Appendix A.

## New Smiles City Farmers' Market!

### ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

**Wednesday April 12, 2001**

**7:30 p.m.**

**High School Auditorium**

*The agenda will include these and other topics:*

- Possible name for the Market
- Location of the Market
- Opening Date
- Membership details
- Market Rules and Regulations
- Liability Insurance
- Market Manager(s)
- Fund Raising
- Health Department Regulations
- Committee Reports

Contact U.B. Gardening at 234-4321 if you have any questions about this meeting.



# Getting Started

## Market Government Structures

Markets can have a formal or informal structure of management. Markets can be formally incorporated as a non-profit or as a business, be managed by an outside entity as an owner, or have no official structure.

Most markets have a board of directors, formal by-laws, market rules, and a paid manager. The board oversees the market development and creates the market rules, enforcing the bylaws, hiring the market manager, and managing the budget.

### *Informal*

Having a market where anyone can come and set up a booth may be the simplest way to manage a market; however, this may cause difficulties as the market grows. There are fewer rules, less budgetary needs, and less time required, making this a suitable structure for a small market, with little funding or community partners. The downside is that there is lack of quality control, liability protection, tax status, or income for market improvement or promotion. Markets with informal structure may eventually wish to form a formal organization in order to build and develop the market.

### *Third Party*

In some cases a local business or city agency may choose to start a farmers market and therefore be the governing body. Having a third party manager may relieve markets of the responsibility for site location, liability, and even market promotion—depending on the sponsor. On the downside, vendors may not have as much say over how the market is managed.

### *Market Management Organization*

Incorporation will offer several advantages. It will limit the liability of the individual members while at the same time securing the advantages of continuity, free transferability of interest and centralized management. The drafter of the Articles of Incorporation should keep in mind that in the financial benefits and advantages should accrue to the

members because of their patronage and not because of their investment. Consulting an attorney is recommended.

Articles of Incorporation and a set of by-laws should be decided upon by the group and filed with the Office of the Secretary of State in Boise, along with a \$30 filing fee for a non-profit, cooperative corporation. The Office of the Secretary of State has free incorporation handbooks that guide interested parties through the process, as well as forms that can be filled out and then filed with the state. In addition, their website at [www.idsos.state.id.us](http://www.idsos.state.id.us) also has application information.

To obtain 501(c)(3) status through the Internal Revenue Service can be beneficial for your organization. The purpose of the association/cooperative must fit a specific criteria to be a 501(c)(3) and there is a \$300 filing fee. A market association may also be a 501(c)(6), but this status does not always fit the requirements for grant application etc. For more information on forming a non-profit organization go to [idahononprofits.org](http://idahononprofits.org).

### *Duties of the Market Manager*

A manager can have many different roles at the market. It is important to clearly specify the expectation you have for your manager. In some cases the manager is only responsible for the coordination of the onsite operations of the market, and in other cases the manager also oversees paperwork and behind the scenes duties.

Possible duties may include:

- Enforcing market rules and vendor paperwork requirements
- Maintaining order and cleanliness
- Collecting vendor fees
- Facilitating orderly setup and parking by vendors
- Ensuring vendor compliance with state and local regulations
- Handling consumer complaints
- Resolving disputes among vendors

# Getting Started

- Promoting the market
- Tracking vendor contact information and daily sales
- Working with vendors to supply adequate supply of diverse products.

Having a well paid market manager is a key factor to having a successful farmers market.

## Final Preparations

Your final preparations will consist of rechecking what you've done, reminding your growers of opening day "musts" and launching a publicity campaign. Call your growers and inform them of your progress. Remind them of the importance of looking good on opening day. This doesn't mean suit and tie, it means having lots of growers with lots of top-quality produce available. Start them thinking seriously about the best ways to display their crops as well as price them.

It is best to have a pre-season vendor meeting including presentations from the local Health District, Idaho Tax Commissions, ISDA Farmers Market Representative, and other interested parties. This can help to get everyone on the same page and prepared for a successful season.

Draw a map of the market arrangement and be sure you don't have a group of vendors with the same or similar products next to one another. Mix up the commodities as best you can.

Two weeks before the market opens, deliver a press release to all local newspapers, radio stations, and television stations. Hang posters and place fliers everywhere. Any supporting organization with a newsletter should run an article. If you want, arrange a little press conference and include an interview with a participating farmer. You can also contact the Marketing Division at the Department of Agriculture for additional assistance in publicizing opening day.

Three days before the market opens, call all the

TV stations to remind them of the market opening. Ask if they would like to send a camera crew to cover the opening ceremonies or market activity. Having a locally-known personality on hand for the opening will help you get TV coverage.

You will need some help on opening day. Get down to the market site early enough to hang some colorful signs and banners. Adding to the festive atmosphere with balloons and flags is always a good idea and draws attention to the market (more about marketing will be covered in subsequent sections). Direct growers to their assigned spots as they drive in. Don't allow early customers to interfere with growers as they set up their displays. Set up an information booth or table and have someone there at all times. Be watching for the media and if they arrive, show them around, answer questions and make introductions.



Now that you have an overview of how to start the market, continue reading for details regarding permits, licenses, and regulations; market managements, and vendor practices.

# Permits, Licenses, and Regulations

At this point, make sure that you have all necessary permits for the market and that all individual vendors have all the necessary licenses

Do not wait until the last minute to obtain all of the necessary permits, certificates and licenses. Some of them will require cash outlays such as your liability insurance, so advanced planning is imperative. Allow at least a two-week safety margin. The officials who attended your second meeting should have informed you about license and permit requirements. A few of the more important ones are the business license, liability insurance, Health Department approval and any lease agreement.

## Sales Tax Requirements

Since many of your growers may not have had experience with selling directly to the end user or consumer, you will want to inform them of the tax requirements outlined below. Keep in mind that the local tax field office has the final say on tax matters pertaining to your farmers' market. Call the tax office nearest you and get their advice before you open your market.

The whole issue of collecting sales tax and obtaining seller permits and tax identification numbers will tend to make some growers shy away from direct marketing. However, when someone takes the time to explain how simple the process is, the fears should go away.

The tax code states, that farmers who ordinarily sell their grain, livestock and other horticultural products for resale or processing are not subject to tax. However, when they sell to ultimate consumers or users, they must obtain a seller's permit and report sales tax on their taxable sales. It also states that an agent or broker selling the produce on the growers' behalf is responsible for the proper collection and remittance of sales tax. This would be applicable if the market decided to have a consignment booth.

Vendors can either obtain a temporary or permanent permit. If a the vendor plans on attended multiple markets on a regular basis for the duration of the season, they will need to obtain a temporary permit for each market or a permanent license. Any business can only have three temporary permits per year.

### **Regular Permit**

There is no fee for obtaining a regular seller's permit. Apply through your local field office and they will send the application to the Boise office. A tax number will be sent to you. You are then required to remit collected tax and file a quarterly accounting. This requires that each vendor obtain an Idaho Business Registration-1 (IBR-1) form from their local field office. All forms are also available on Tax Commission website at [www.tax.idaho.gov](http://www.tax.idaho.gov).

### **Temporary Permit**

Temporary permits (ST-214 form) can be obtained two different ways. Individual vendors can call into their local tax office to obtain the permit. This is done over the phone and temporary permit and number will be sent to the vendor.

The ST-124 is also used for "Promoter Sponsored Events". If the market wants to take this approach, the market manager can distribute and collect the forms from each vendor and submit them to the tax office all together. The market received a \$1 tax credit for each form submitted if all tax forms are submitted by management. The promoter can also face fines for every vendor that does not have sellers permit.

When your event is over, the permits will expire and you must remit the taxes and form to your field office.

If the Tax Commission decides to visit your farmers' market and finds a vendor without a seller's permit, they have the authority to shut down operations until regulations are complied with. It will be up to the market manager to make sure every-

# Permits, Licenses, and Regulations

one obtains and properly displays their permit. Questions should be addressed to the field offices.

## State Tax Commission Field Offices

### Boise

800 Park Blvd., Plaza IV  
Boise, ID 83722  
(208) 334-7660  
(800) 972-7660

### Idaho Falls

150 Shoup Ave., Suite 16  
Idaho Falls, ID 83402  
(208) 525-7116

### Pocatello

611 Wilson Ave., Suite 5  
Pocatello, ID 83201  
(208) 236-6244

### Coeur d'Alene

1910 NW Blvd., Suite 100  
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814  
(208) 769-1500

### Lewiston

1118 "F" Street  
P.O. Box 1014  
Lewiston, ID 83501  
(208) 799-3491

### Twin Falls

440 Falls Ave.  
Twin Falls, ID 83301  
(208) 736-3040



## Liability Insurance

Liability insurance can be one of the most expensive start-up costs for farmers' markets. It is important that you make every effort to get the best deal for your insurance dollar. When you talk to insurance agents, be aware of these three important points:

1. Most insurance companies may not have a clear idea of what a farmers' market is. As a result, they may attempt to charge you a higher premium or choose not to insure the market at all.
2. The system used by many markets (obtaining a full-year policy and then canceling it at the end of the market season) is very uneconomical for the insurance carrier, since this requires redoing all the paper work at the beginning of each year.
3. The more information that the market organizers can supply to the insurance agent, the better the chance of being insured at the lowest possible cost.

The first problem could be solved by having a summary sheet or a brochure which describes and explains your farmers' market. Be sure to include the market controls - everything from the market manager's duties to applicable federal and state laws.

Leave a written statement with the agent which answers the following questions:

1. What is the exact location of the market?
2. What are the parking conditions?
3. Is there regular cleanup and maintenance?
4. Are booths permanent or temporary?
5. What becomes of the site when the market is not in operation?
6. Is the site covered by another policy?
7. What is the condition of all products offered at the market?
8. What is the estimated revenue for all sales?
9. What is the stall fee per vendor?

Check into obtaining a year-round policy instead of

# Permits, Licenses, and Regulations

canceling at the end of each season as some markets do. A good agent will be able to explain why it is more cost effective to pay more for a full year policy. Some types of coverage allow for a policy to revert to an inactive status during the winter months and then be reactivated when that market opens. Ask your insurance agent about this.



## Health Department Rules

As the popularity of farmers' markets grows throughout the United States, so does the need for increased food safety. With the danger of food-borne illnesses and the potential for litigation, farmers' market vendors should pay close attention to Health Department rules as well as common sense caution. The rules for selling food products to the public are explained in the Idaho Food Code and its updates, which are available online at [www.foodsafety.idaho.gov](http://www.foodsafety.idaho.gov) or from your local District Health Departments (see contact information at the end of this section). Your market manager should work with the Health Department staff to develop a statement of understanding that will allow you to provide safe food and beverages to the public.

This section will attempt to clarify the existing health rules for agricultural markets and the products that can be sold by vendors at those markets and which vendors will need to be licensed through the health department. It is strongly recommended that all agricultural and food vendors and all market managers talk with their local health department regardless of the products they are

selling. This will allow them to have a better understanding the food safety rules and be assured they are operating within law - even if a health permit is not required.

An agricultural market is defined as any fixed or mobile retail food establishment engaged in the sale of raw or fresh fruits, vegetables and nuts in the shell, but may include as a minor portion of the operation the sale of factory-sealed, non-potentially hazardous foods. If the vendor is only selling the above items, there will likely be no need for a health permit.

## Potentially Hazardous Foods

The sale of potentially hazardous foods, which include cut melon, raw seed sprouts, garlic in oil mixtures, cooked plant food, and raw or cooked meat would make the market a regulated food establishment in need of licensing. Therefore, the market or individual vendors would need to obtain a license. Vendors whose food types require licensing must have their actual farmers' market stand, equipment and services inspected by an Idaho Health District Environmental Health Officer. If the foods are being prepared or processed off-site, that location must also be a licensed and inspected facility.

## Product Sampling

Vendors may cut and provide samples of products, with the exception of potentially hazardous foods. Samples of melons, and/or tomatoes, may be provided if a temporary food permit (license) is purchased. Melons and tomatoes may be cut for display purposes and **cannot** be provided to consumers in any form after cutting. The production of food for sampling is still subject to legal control, Idaho statute does not distinguish between selling food and providing samples.

Samples need to be protected from undue handling, so ensure they are stored or displayed out of reach. Make sure customers don't touch the other samples. The use of toothpicks, tongs, or samples cups is the best way to ensure no cross contami-

# Permits, Licenses, and Regulations

nation. Keep sample quantities to a minimum and toss out uneaten food not eaten after four hours.

## Processed Foods

If your vendors would like to sell specialty or processed foods, these products must be produced in a licensed commercial kitchen. No commercial food processing is allowed in your home kitchen. Food processors are considered "food establishments" under the Idaho Food Code. Therefore, food processors will be governed by Idaho Food Code. Individual vendors will be required to obtain a license.

## What Is A Processed Food?

The criteria are as follows:

1. The character of the food must have been altered in some manner, such as foods that have

been peeled, skinned, cut, mashed, creamed, liquefied, pureed, squeezed, blanched, dried (except if dried in the field), fermented, brined, salted, cured, canned, milled, pulped, smoked, bleached, ground, aged, shelled, shucked, baked, irradiated, blended, cooked, broiled, pasteurized, frozen, etc.

2. An additional ingredient has been added to the food. Foods which are fabricated from two or more ingredients and require labeling would satisfy this criteria.
3. Foods that have been packaged in bottles, jars, boxes, cans, tanks, cartons, bags, or securely wrapped from the time of processing until the consumer receives it. *Exception to this criteria:* Raw fruits, vegetables or nuts in the shell that have been packaged in the field or packing shed, in retail packages, or in bulk

## For more information contact your local District Health Department listed below:

### Idaho Department of Health and Welfare

Food Processing Program  
4501 W. State Street  
Boise, ID 83720  
Tel: (208) 334-5938  
Fax: (208) 334-6581  
[www.healthandwelfare.idaho.gov](http://www.healthandwelfare.idaho.gov)

### Southwest District Health Department

920 Main Street  
Caldwell, ID 83605  
Tel: (208) 455-5400  
Fax: (208) 455-5405  
[www.publichealthidaho.com](http://www.publichealthidaho.com)

### Southeastern District Health Department

1901 Alvin Ricken Drive  
Pocatello, ID 83201  
Tel: (208) 239-5270  
Fax: (208) 234-7169  
[www.sdhdidaho.org](http://www.sdhdidaho.org)

### Panhandle District Health Department

8500 N. Atlas Road  
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83835  
Tel: (208) 415-5200  
[www.phd1.idaho.gov](http://www.phd1.idaho.gov)

### Central District Health Department

707 N. Armstrong Place  
Boise, ID 83704  
Tel: (208) 327-7499  
Fax: (208) 327-8553  
[www.cdhd.idaho.gov](http://www.cdhd.idaho.gov)

### District 7 Health Department

254 "E" Street  
Idaho Falls, ID 83402-3597  
Tel: (208) 523-5382  
Fax: (208) 528-0857  
[www.idaho.gov/phd7](http://www.idaho.gov/phd7)

### North Central District Health Department

215 10<sup>th</sup> Street  
Lewiston, ID 83501  
Tel: (208) 799-0353  
Fax: (208) 799-0349  
[www.idahopublichealth.com](http://www.idahopublichealth.com)

### South Central District Health Department

1020 Washington Street, North  
Twin Falls, ID 83301-3156  
Tel: (208) 734-5900  
Fax: (208) 734-9502  
[www.phd5.idaho.gov](http://www.phd5.idaho.gov)

# Permits, Licenses, and Regulations

containers for distribution.

4. There is a unique quality or characteristic about the food. For example, water is not changed in character, but it is packaged and regulated. Also, because of the hazardous nature of wild mushrooms, the collection of these foods for wholesale or retail sales is specifically regulated.

For more information on commercial food processing, please contact your local District Health Department office or the Idaho State Department of Agriculture, Division of Market Development. The Idaho State Department of Agriculture has published a useful manual "*Starting a Specialty Food Business*" that may be obtained free of charge by calling (208) 332-8530.

## Exceptions

"Limited sales (not on a regular basis) of non-potentially hazardous food made in a home kitchen may be allowed for certain non-regulated food operations, such as agricultural markets and bake sales, where the consumer would reasonably assume the food is not from an approved source; and such home kitchen prepared foods allowed shall be limited to breads, cookies, cakes, fruit pies, jams, jellies, candy, and honey. For any other food you feel may fall under this category, please contact your local health department for a determination of possible status as a potentially hazardous food."

Specifically prohibited from sales are foods which are home canned or hermetically sealed. The exception being jams and jellies which are often hermetically sealed, but not done so as a requirement for safety.

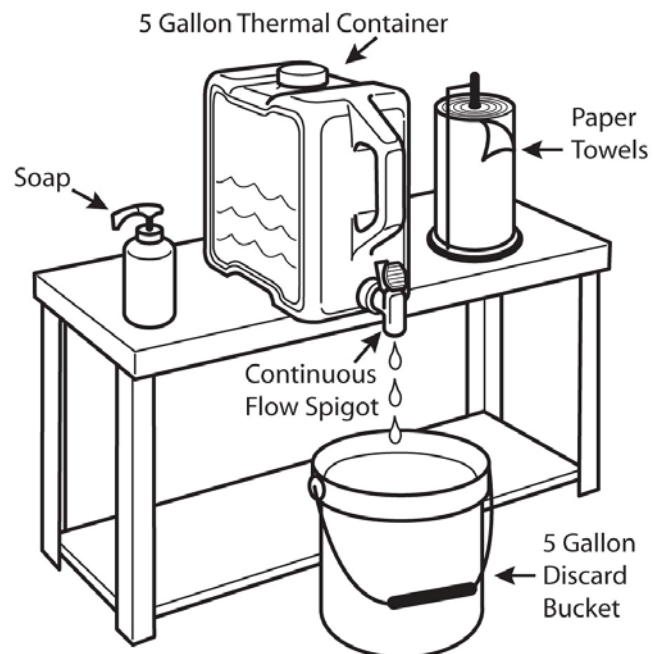
The *Idaho Food Safety and Sanitation Manual* is now on the Internet and is very user friendly. Go to [www.foodsafety.idaho.gov](http://www.foodsafety.idaho.gov)

## Hand Washing

Vendors that require licenses will need to have a hand washing station in or near their booth. All

markets should have at least one available for their vendors whether required by the health department or not.

The proper hand washing station requires 5 gallon container of warm water (100°F) which has a continuous flow spigot (this allows hands to be vigorously rubbed together during washing), a catch bucket (do not allow water to flow onto the ground or down storm drains), soap, and drying towels (See the diagram)



## Food Safety Begins on the Farm

There are endless number of opportunities for food to be contaminated with bacteria, viruses, or parasites between the farm and final consumer. To request a copy of "Food Safety Begins on the Farm" contact the Cornell Good Agricultural Practices Program at [www.GAP.cornell.edu](http://www.GAP.cornell.edu) or (607) 254-5383.

## Soil

Farmers need to understand how to properly apply manures and fertilizers to the soils to avoid contaminating food. Fecal contamination from domestic and wild animals also needs to be eliminated as much as possible.



# Permits, Licenses, and Regulations

## **Water**

Irrigation water needs to be monitored and tested for contaminants. Whenever possible use chlorinated water for washing and cooling produce.

## **Hands**

All workers need to be educated about bacteria contamination. Provide hand washing facilities to all employees handling the produce.

## **Surfaces**

Before and after harvesting and packing, clean all bins and work surfaces with a sanitizing solution. Ideal surfaces are smooth so they can be thoroughly cleaned. If using wooden tables, use plastic sheeting.

## **Transportation and Storage**

Transport food in suitable containers. Containers and vehicles should be cleaned on a regular basis. For agricultural products, cardboard boxes with paper liners are sufficient, but plastic sealable containers are better for bakery products and meats. Some products must be transported and stored in insulated coolers or refrigerated containers to stay below a specific temperature to prevent bacteria growth.

## **Preparation**

While at the market, vendors should wash and dry their hands from time to time, regardless of the product they are selling. If using utensils, have the ability to wash and sanitize them.

## **Basic Hygiene**

- Keep yourself clean and wear protective clothing such as an apron.
- Always wash hands thoroughly before handling food, after using the toilet, after handling raw food or waste, and after every break.
- If you have a skin, nose, or throat problem, or an infected wound, do not handle unwrapped food.
- If you have a stomach upset, do not handle food for at least 48 hrs after you are free of symptoms.

- Ensure that cuts, spots or sores are covered with a brightly colored waterproof covering.
- Do not smoke, eat, or drink where open food is handled.
- Clean as you go - keep all equipment and surfaces clean and disinfected.
- Avoid unnecessary handling of food.

## **Selling Organic Products**

The organic certification program is designed to enhance consumer confidence regarding the term "organic" when it is used in the marketing and labeling of food products. The statute provides a definition of the term "organic," and the rules that establish production standards.

The Idaho-certified organic food product is one which has been produced without the use of synthetically compounded fertilizers, pesticides, or growth regulators for a period of at least thirty-six (36) months prior to harvest. It is a product marketed using the term "organic" in its labeling or advertising and is processed, packaged, transported and stored to retain maximum nutritional value, without the use of artificial preservatives, coloring or other additives, irradiation, or synthetic pesticides.

If a product is marketed as "organic," it must be registered or certified by the Idaho State Department of Agriculture. If a producer grows less than \$5000 worth of produce they can register with ISDA and call their produce organic. If they sell more than \$5000 they must be certified organic and then they call their produce "certified Organic" and use the USDA seal. Vendors that are registered organic will have a letter from ISDA, certified organic vendors should have a certificate. If vendors are using the word organic to promote their produce, make sure they have the appropriate documentation.

The Idaho State Department of Agriculture has many resources available to assist organic growers. If you or one of your vendors would like addi-

# Permits, Licenses, and Regulations

tional information regarding the sale or production of organic products contact the ISDA's Organic Certification Program at (208) 332-8673 or go online to [www.agri.idaho.gov](http://www.agri.idaho.gov). All applications and regulation are posted on the website.

## Selling Products By Weight

Many of your growers will not have scales of their own unless they have been operating a road-side stand or have participated in a farmers' market before. Scales are not necessary and can be expensive to purchase. Some have found older, used scales at thrift stores or garage sales. Some just sell their produce by the bag, bunch, or piece instead of by weight. You must find out if growers will be using scales and arrange to have the scales certified by the Idaho State Department of Agriculture's Division of Weights and Measures. Have them contact the nearest field office for more information. You can find this information at [www.agri.idaho.gov](http://www.agri.idaho.gov) or by calling (208)332-8690.



## Nursery Licenses

Farmers' markets are becoming an increasingly popular venue for nursery/florist growers to sell their products.

A farmers' market has a choice in nursery licensing. Each individual vendor who is selling nursery and florist stock must purchase a license or the market association can purchase a license on behalf of the entire market. The Department of Agriculture has the responsibility and authority to

inspect the nursery or florist stock of growers and vendors, and are expected to visit each farmers' market during the farmers' market season.

The nursery license runs on the calendar year, and must be renewed by February 1 of each year. The application and \$100 fee can be mailed to the Department of Agriculture, Plant Industries Division, P.O. Box 790, Boise, ID, 83701.

A \$25 late fee is assessed on renewal applications received after the February 1 deadline. The application is available online ([www.agri.idaho.gov](http://www.agri.idaho.gov)) or you can call 332-8620 to request one.

## EBT Cards

Across the nation, paper food stamps are being replaced by a system called Electronic Benefits Transfer, or EBT. This is facilitated through the use of a card similar to a debit or credit card, that tracks that individual's account balance. Farmers' markets face a number of obstacles when it comes to the ability to accept EBT cards - access to telephone lines and electricity.

### How Does EBT Work at the Market?

A customer at the market will use a staffed centralized point (market managers booth) to purchase even dollar amounts of scrip with their EBT card. Most often this is represented by tokens specific to that market. The customer can then use the tokens at vendors within the market to purchase staple food items they intend to use for feeding themselves and their families at home.

### Steps the Market Needs to Take

1. The market must have consensus of their vendors that they will accept EBT cards
2. The Market must apply to the USDA to be a registered food stamp vendor
3. The Market must include with the application a plan of how they intend to manage the acceptance of EBT cards and reconciliation of payments
4. The market needs to notify the State of Idaho's

# Permits, Licenses, and Regulations

EBT manager when they have mailed their application and plan to the USDA

5. The market must have a bank account to handle the reconciliation of payments made by the state for EBT purchases at the market
6. When the application is approved by USDA, the State's EBT contractor will contact the person listed in the USDA application and ask for a contract to be signed along with banking information for payment reconciliation
7. When the contract is received from the farmers market, the State's EBT contractor will furnish point of sale equipment, training of how to the furnished equipment and will troubleshoot any installation and usage problems
8. The Market should then train their staff who will use the point of service terminal and the vendors who will accept the tokens
- 9.

## **State of Idaho EBT Manager**

Orie Garcia (208)334-5820

## **Promoting Access to Farmers Markets**

Markets may be able to apply for grants through the USDA for promotion of their market and the ability to accept EBT cards. The USDA, the state, and the State's EBT contractor all have limited promotional materials available to all retailers who accept EBT cards and food stamps. Promoting the market's ability to accept EBT cards should be a priority for the market once they are set up.

# Managing the Market

## Rules

Even though writing the rules for the market may not be the most pleasant task, it is one of the most important. Rules are imperative to maintain a properly functioning market as well as to maintain integrity and peace within the market.

Rules should be written by the market's advisory board, easy to understand, available for all participating parties, equitably enforced, protect the market, work to the advantage of producers selling at the market, and protect the credibility of the market.

Rules should include:

### ***Hours of Operation and Important Dates***

Be sure the rules include dates for the first and last market day of the season as well as the due date for annual fees. Along with the daily hours of operation of the market, there should be instructions regarding when vendors are allowed to setup, sell, and tear down. Specify any specific instructions for vendors arriving late or leaving early. If you are charging a daily fee, state how and when they are required to make the payment to the manager.

### ***Who Can Sell***

Is this a grower or producer only market? Will reselling be allowed? Do local producers have priority? Are there geographic restrictions for vendors? These are all questions you must answer in your rules. Many markets require farmers to sell only the produce they grow, or maybe allow a small percentage of reselling. Crafters also need to have MADE the products they are selling. These kinds of rules help maintain the integrity of your market.

Many markets will make exceptions in the area of reselling or geographic restrictions if they are selling a product no one currently vending at the market has, especially if it adds value to the market. For example, an Idaho market that has a rule that vendors must live within a 100 mile radius of the market may allow a strawberry vendor to come in

from Oregon if no one at the market is selling strawberries at that time. The strawberries are very popular and draw people to the market. Attendance goes up and EVERYONE's sales increase. It's because of this that many market have a "non-compete" clause in their rules.

This would apply to reselling as well. Maybe the market has a rule that a vendor can only sell what they grow themselves. In some areas, it may be impossible to grow certain crops. If this is the case, they may allow one of it's vendors to bring in peaches from another part of the state to resell at the market. This should be managed closely on a case-by-case basis. If markets do allow reselling, it is normally on a very limited basis.

Markets may require that the crafters go through a jury process before being admitted into the market. Crafters and artisans will present their products to the board on a set date (pre-season). The board will evaluate the quality and authenticity of the items that are going to be sold at the market and will decide whether or not to let that individual sell at the market.

### ***What Can be Sold***

Most markets have a mix of produce, food, and craft vendors at their market. Finding the right balance is something most markets struggle with. If crafts can be sold and how many craft vendors can be allowed should be clarified in the rules. When making this decision, you may want to consider that people buy and consume food every week, but may only buy craft ones in a while. Crafts do however add diversity and consistency to the market. Many markets limit the number of crafters to a certain percentage (20-30%).

Rules should establish the market manger's right to monitor the quality and authenticity of the products being sold. Without quality products, the market has very little to offer.

Ready-to-eat foods can be also draw an entirely

# Managing the Market

new crowd to the market, increase overall sales, and add increased diversity to the market.

## **Market Fee Structure**

The fee structure of the market needs to be clearly expressed in the rules with time lines for payment and any exceptions for non-profits or one-time vendors. More about fee structures will be discussed in a following section.

## **Stall Assignments**

Specify how stall assignment will be made. Is it first come first serve, are they decided by the market at the beginning of the season, are they different or the same every week, are they based on product or seniority, etc. It's important for vendors to know what to expect when it comes to their location, so be as consistent as possible. In most cases, giving the market manager a lot of authority in this area is important to help market day run smoothly, especially for walk-on vendors.

## **Product Pricing**

Price fixing is never a good idea, but pricing wars can be detrimental to vendor profitability and everyone's happiness. It is best for all vendors to set a fair price in line with other vendors of similar products at the market and stick with that price through out the day. Clarify in your rules that there will be no "dumping" at the market. If a vendor has a lot of product they need to move one week, suggest options other than drastically dropping the price at the market. Dropping the prices at the end of the day also needs to be prohibited. Customers will come to expect this and not buy the product at full price, waiting around until the end of the day for a deal. Contact a local food bank or shelter to come to the market at the end of the day to pick up any remaining produce that the vendors don't sell.

## **Required Vendor Performance**

What is expected of your vendors? Are they required to attend any meetings before or during the season? Are they required to volunteer any time to the market? Are they required to stay the duration of the market even if they sell out? These are

just a few of the things you should clarify. It's also good to talk about vendor behavior toward customers and other vendors. Create guidelines specifying that vendors wear shirt and shoes, don't smoke or use vulgar language, treat each other with respect - for example.

You may also want to address the issue of vendors bringing pets to the market and the behavior of any young children at the market. Also create a protocol for dealing with any disputes that arise with other vendors or with customers. Include language that will limit the gossiping and spreading derogatory information about another vendor or the market. This may require creating a venue where thoughts can be shared openly among vendors, but spreading negative feelings to the public or the media could easily damage the entire market and should be addressed. Again, it's good to give the market manager plenty of authority, as in many cases it will come down to a judgment call.

## **Market Safety**

Vendors can take many steps to make the farmers market a safer place. The number one cause of safety issues at markets is improperly secured canopies and umbrellas. All canopies and umbrellas must be sufficiently secured to the ground from the moment it is erected until the time it is taken down. This will require weights - approximately 25 lbs. per leg of a canopy and 50 lbs. per umbrella. These weights should be securely attached to the legs of the canopy and be designed and positioned in a way that will not create a tripping hazard.

Rules should also restrict any other vendor behavior that could cause hazards to customers such as running electrical cords across walk ways or creating slipping hazards by dumping ice or water on the ground.

## **Required Paperwork**

Specify what paper work and licensing is required to be provided by the vendors before participating at the market.

# Managing the Market

## ***Rule Enforcement and Penalties***

Rules are no good unless they are enforced fairly and consistently. Specify when action will be taken. Many markets give a verbal warning, a written warning, a fine, and then the vendor may be dismissed from the market. This may vary with the offense. Be clear about the penalties for each of the rules and how they will be enforced. In many cases the market manager will be the final judge. Be sure to give the manager enough power to maintain the integrity of the market through enforcing rules.

If the rules specify that the seller must be the grower of the product, make it clear that the market reserves the right to visit any vendor's operation to verify the production of the items being sold at the market.

## ***Communication***

Consider a weekly or monthly "newsletter" for vendors, reminding them of rules and updating them on any issues the market has been facing. This will keep them all on the same page and give the management a great venue for communicating about any pressing issues or events.

## ***Contracts/Application***

Vendors need to sign a contract agreeing to abide by the rules.

Included in this contract should be a "hold harmless" clause. This states that vendors agree not to hold the market responsible for injuries or accidents that might happen to them while they are at the market. Even with the market having its own liability insurance to protect against site-wide costs such as customer injury, it is still important for vendors to have their own liability insurance for their own operations.

## **Market Location Considerations**

The degree of success your market will have depends partly on how well you select your location. One common reason consumers don't shop at farmers markets is the perceived lack of convenience. This issue can largely be addressed with proper site selection.

The site should be selected by a committee since there are many things to be considered and a substantial amount of leg work is involved. The committee should ask the following questions of each of the possible sites:

1. Is there adequate space for the number of vendors you are anticipating.
2. Does this site have adequate parking for the vendors?
3. Will there be ample customer parking next to the market?
4. Do sufficient numbers of people live, work, shop, or play in the area?
5. Is this site rent free or will there be a fee? If so, can you afford it?
6. Are there zoning restrictions which would preclude a market? (Get input from public works, health, police, fire, and planning departments)
7. Is the site easy to find and highly visible
8. Are restrooms available and nearby
9. Is water or electricity available to both vendors and customers?
10. Does the site have any shade during proposed market hours?
11. Is the atmosphere conducive to the image you want for the market?
12. Will the footing be restrictive for the elderly or handicapped or create a tripping hazard?

Once these questions have been answered for all of your site possibilities, a simple comparison should show which is the best site. But don't forget that market sponsors are often very important and will partly determine your location. For instance, if the downtown merchants association would like to sponsor the market, they will want

# Managing the Market

you to be generating foot traffic in front of their downtown businesses. A blocked-off street may be the better choice. Just make sure you are consistent with the purpose of the market.

## Considerations for Market Layout

The layout and design of the market are also very important to the market's success and should be considered along with site selection.

A key consideration for market layout is booth size. A typical canopy used at farmers markets is 10'x10'. If the booths are facing each other, 10-15 feet is recommended for the center aisle. It's important to ensure plenty of access for parents with strollers and people using wheel chairs or scooters.

Will there be room behind each booth for vehicles to park? Many farm trucks can be 20 feet long. Many vendors will bring their product to the market in a truck or van. If vendors cannot park behind their booth for the duration of the market, is there a way for them to easily load and unload their products and supplies without doing it all by hand from a distant parking lot?

It's good to do a sketch of the market with 10'x10' booths to get a good idea of how many booths you have and visualize traffic flow through the market. When allotting booths, remember to save a slot for a market manager's booth.

Market layout plays a large role in the atmosphere of the market. The market needs to have a bustling and festive atmosphere. Your site will largely dictate your basic design. An empty lot might work well for a circular or box style layout where the traffic would flow in a circular fashion around the inside of the market. As the number of vendors increases, you may add a row or additional circle of vendors facing outwards towards the other vendors. If you are in a street, the booths should be along the outside of the street facing in towards each other. If the market is smaller at the beginning or end of the season, move the booths closer

together so there are no empty slots.

It's important to have defined entrances into the market. You want your customers to know that they have arrived. It's ideal to have a large flagship produce booth at your entrance to impress your customers as they arrive at the market. Consider spacing vendors with similar products so they are not directly across from or next to one another.

If your market has ready-to-eat food and entertainment (both highly recommended), it is good to put them not only next to each other in a central area of the market, but to also provide some seating. This will allow your patrons who purchase something to eat, to be able to sit and enjoy the entertainment while they eat it. The longer they are at the market, the more they will purchase. This also will add to the festive atmosphere.

If most of the parking for the market is located across the street from the market, special action must be taken. A crosswalk should be clearly marked. Adding flags or signs to warn traffic is also recommended.

If the market is in a closed-off street, use large, unavoidable, and highly visible barriers to block all vehicle traffic. Be sure to block all ways and any possible way that a stray vehicle could enter the market. If there are not funds to purchase a barricade, a vendor vehicle with a sign or banner would do the trick as long as it meets the requirements of the local authorities.



# Managing the Market

## Vendor Fee Options

Stall fee arrangements should be one of the most important considerations in organizing your market. Your decision will influence the number and type of vendors at the market. The following are some examples of stall fee arrangements which are presently in use either individually or in combination.

**Annual Membership Fee:** Many markets charge vendors a fee at the beginning of the season. Paying up-front will encourage vendors to continue their participation at a minimal fee, while ensuring that the market is funded. This is often combined with a percentage daily fee charged each market day. This combination is the most common structure for vendor fees among Idaho Farmers' Markets.

This system provides a market with start-up capital at the beginning of the season when it is needed most. Markets may choose to allow vendors to not pay this fee by giving them the option of paying a higher percentage of their daily sales or higher flat fee per market, or both.

**Flat Daily Fee:** With a daily flat fee, vendors pay one set amount for each market day. Fees can be collected as growers enter the market. Many markets started with this method but changed because it discourages the small scale vendor with limited produce. A \$5 or \$10 stall fee is too much to pay if you will only sell \$25 worth of produce. Large-scale growers pay the same fee but it is a much smaller percentage of their sales. Markets have the option of charging a different fee for different types of vendors to encourage attendance of one type over the other. For example, if the market had too many craft vendors and wanted more produce, they could charge the craft vendors a higher fee.

**Percentage Daily Sales:** A fixed percentage of gross income is perhaps the most equitable stall fee option since it is directly related to benefits re-

ceived. This method does require calculations and depends on the honesty of the vendors. The fees are collected as the vendors leave the market.

**Participating/Nonparticipating** - If a grower chooses to put his or her time into helping the market by working on publicity, acting as voluntary market manager, bringing new growers into the market, etc., he or she could receive a reduced stall fee.



## Publicizing Your Market

Since the success of your farmers' market depends to a large extent on the number of people participating, publicity will be extremely important. No matter what method you use, the message must be both informative and motivational. If you are able to effectively publicize both the organization and the activities of your market, then the logistical planning of your market will be much easier to perform.

### Identifying Your Customer

When you are promoting anything, it is important to know your target audience. Most people that shop at a farmers market highly value the quality of their food, their health, their family, the environment, and the community. They typically come to the market for fresh local produce, the fun atmosphere, ready to eat food, music, family activities, and arts and crafts. When making their purchasing decisions, the number one thing they are looking for is quality produce; secondly, natural and organic products; and thirdly, knowing the farmer. Price is NOT a top decision making factor at farm-



ers' markets.

Consumers also want something that is convenient, meaning it's easy to get to and there is plenty of parking. It needs to be reliable - there rain or shine, same place and same time, with consistently good products. They also want something that makes them feel good and allows them to have a good time.

You must know exactly what you are promoting. Consumers base purchasing decisions on benefits. What are the benefits of a Farmers' Market?

### **Benefits of Farmers' Markets**

- Produce travels a smaller distance to reach the consumer. Therefore, the consumer gets a fresher product, and less fuel is used to transport the item.
- The community will have increased access to fresh fruits and vegetables, resulting in increased consumption and increased health.
- As the shopper goes to the market, they may make purchases from other local businesses in the area which multiplies the benefit the market has on the local economy.
- When money is paid to local producers, they spend most of that money back into the community. When imported food is purchased, the bulk of the money leaves the community almost immediately.
- Helping local farmers be profitable protects farmers and farmland from urban sprawl. This helps ensure food security for the community along with economic security.

Contact the Idaho State Department of Agriculture at (208) 332-8530 and request your market be included in the "Guide to Idaho's Farmers' Markets." This publication is produced each spring and is sent to local travel centers, chambers of commerce and University of Idaho County Extension Offices. It contains information on all of the farmers' markets in the state, their locations, dates, hours of operation, and market contacts. The next step will be to develop a media mailing list. Include all local newspapers, radio, television, and organizational newsletters.

The best form of publicity depends on the message you are sending and the audience you are trying to reach. An effective piece of publicity takes forethought and planning. Free publicity in the form of public service announcements on radio, television, and in newspapers is usually the most effective. These types of messages are read out of interest for the information they convey. Many people tend to block out or ignore advertisements.

### **Press Releases**

The basic vehicle for getting your message to the media is a press release. Here are a few of the basics for preparing a press release:

1. Don't be wordy. Keep your message concise and to the point.
2. The lead sentence should contain the main point of the story. Without being awkward, it will answer as much of who, what, when, why and how as possible.
3. The body of the release builds on the central facts, supporting and expanding on them.
4. The release should be typed, double spaced, and have at least a one-inch margin on all sides.
5. At the top of the page type the name, address and telephone number of your organization's contact person.
6. Also at the top, type FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE or specify a release date.
7. If you need more than one page, type the word MORE on the bottom of the first page.
8. Centered below the last line of the story, type the page number as #- (i.e. -2-).
9. Ensure that everyone has a copy at last one week before you wish your press release to appear.
10. Follow up the mailing with phone calls asking if they can use the story or need additional information.

Your first press release should accomplish several things. It should inform the public that a market is forming, it should solicit growers, and it should invite interested persons to your first meeting. Re-

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member to try to be motivational when you write. These can be sent electronically or hard copy. Establish a good relationship with reporters as soon as possible. They can be invaluable in getting the message out. Reporters usually look for stories with broad appeal, and farmers' markets have potential benefits for everyone. Don't be pushy with a reporter, just be helpful in providing interesting information.

If you are providing a service other than simply promoting your own interests you will have a much better chance of getting free media coverage. For example, offer to write a weekly article about new products that are available and include a recipe for the Life section of the paper. Consider writing a weekly or monthly article for the business section featuring one of your vendors.

Be creative with your targeted publications. Consider venues other than the mainstream newspapers such as newsletters of non-profit organizations, churches, schools, neighborhood associa-

tions, hospitals, food banks, extension, etc. You may need to tailor your article to meet their specific audience. Their endorsement of your market will give you greater credibility in the eyes of their readers. This kind of free coverage must be sought out.

## **Public Service Announcements**

Public Service Announcements (PSAs) are free radio and television spots for community activities. Radios are required to play a certain number of PSA's and their creation can be fairly inexpensive.

## **Circulars/Fliers/Posters**

Since printed circulars and posters cost money to produce and distribute, volunteer labor and donations are very helpful. Another way to save costs is through holding a design contest. You can encourage the local art community or even schools. This in and of itself would be good promotion. If your organization has the resources, circulars are a very effective way to publicize your market. They serve as a more permanent announcement

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 27, 2009

Contact person: Lacey Menasco, (208) 332-8530

## **2009 Farmers' Market Season Kicks Off**

Spring is here, the growing season is upon us, and Idaho farmers' markets will soon be offering fresh locally-grown fruits, vegetables, herbs, honey, farm fresh eggs and fresh cut flowers to consumers.

Farmers' markets are rapidly gaining popularity in the Treasure Valley and across Idaho as consumer interest in organic and locally grown produce continues to rise. "Consumers want to know the conditions under which their produce is grown. Farmers' markets provide an excellent opportunity for the buyer and the producer to meet, exchange information, and in many instances, establish a relationship," said Lacey Menasco, Trade Specialist at the Idaho State Department of Agriculture.

This year Idaho boasts 34 markets across the state, from Bonners Ferry to Soda Springs. Depending on the growing season in each area, the markets will be open in May or June and run through September to October. Consumers will be able to find products in Idaho farmers' markets ranging from certified organic produce to gourmet specialty foods to fresh herbs and flowers, and even homemade crafts.

Every year the Idaho State Department of Agriculture produces a guide to the farmers' markets across the state. The guide provides the dates, times, and locations of the markets, as well as the point of contact for the market. For a free copy of the guide or to include your market in the publication, contact Lacey Menasco at the Market Development Division at (208) 332-8535 or send an e-mail to [lmenasco@agri.state.id.us](mailto:lmenasco@agri.state.id.us).

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that can be kept for future reference.

Keep your circular or poster direct and simple. Only include that information which is necessary for conveying your message. A cluttered or rambling circular will detract from the main point and discourage people from reading further or from reading it at all. Location, time, dates, parking information and the sponsor's name, telephone number, email, and possibly web address, should be included.

## **Email Lists**

The market can work to collect the emails of customers, media, community partners, etc, and send periodic emails. These emails could include information about products available and upcoming events (a day or two before the market). This is good way to keep the market fresh in people's minds. There could even be a sign up sheet at the market managers booth for people who wish to be added.

## **Develop An Attractive Logo**

While it may not be critical for smaller markets to have a logo, an attractive emblem offers endless opportunities for building market recognition and consumer awareness both on and off site. A logo can be put on virtually anything and go anywhere. An appealing logo promotes a professional and cohesive image for the market. Place it on signs, letterhead, T-shirts, caps, aprons, market bags, buttons, price signage, market cookbooks, library bookmarks and flyers.

Through a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Idaho Commission on the Arts has trained arts leaders from across the state in consulting and workshop techniques. There may be an artist next door to help your farmers' market develop a readily identifiable logo! For more information, call the Community Development Director at (800) 278-3863 or (208) 334-2119.

## **Market Website**

Although some young market may not readily have

the ability to immediately develop a website, this should be high on their list of priorities. Consumers are being taught to go to the web for information on a regular basis. If there is not a member of your market planning team that has the skills and willingness to develop and maintain a market website, look to other community partners who will let you post market information on their already existing site.

When developing your webpage be sure to include the date, time, and location of your market as well as contact information. This should be the very minimum. Other items you might consider including are dates of special events, recipes, a list of your vendors and links to their websites, a link to Idaho Preferred<sup>®</sup>, a list of any sponsors, information about parking, and other logistical information such as the use of credit or EBT cards at the market. Another key component of the website is a produce availability calendar (available through ISDA). Many consumers are not aware of the timing of different products and this is your chance to educate them. This will also help to manage expectations so you have a happy customer.

The website should also have information for vendors or potential vendors. This would include market rules and by-laws, vendor application/contract, and educational information.

Be sure the website is current at all times. An outdated website is an immediate turn off to many consumers. If it cannot be updated on a regular basis, be sure that the information you post is not time sensitive and will be good and accurate for the entire season.

## **Community Relations**

Have the manager or board members attend public meetings such as city or county council meetings. If there is a time for public comment, they should stand and share about the market and how it benefits the community. Everyone should be prepared with a 30 second "elevator speech" about the value of the market. This can even be

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used on call in radio shows. The market needs to be promoted year round. Attend any local trade shows, health fairs, or other events where you can spread the word about the market.

## **Commercial Advertising**

There may be times when paid advertising is deemed necessary. You can decide between a classified ad or a commercial "display ad," both of which the newspaper will design for you. While this medium may be more expensive than others, its benefits are long lasting. Like a circular or poster, an ad can be kept and referred back to, giving it a longer life.

Commercial advertising is often the most beneficial and cost effective during the first year of the market. While free community sponsored publicity will help to announce the opening of the market, commercial advertising will serve as a reminder to the public that the market is an on-going event that will last throughout the summer.

Some rural or agricultural papers have a "direct marketing" column in the classified section. Farmers will sometimes place an ad jointly and divide the cost. Larger-scale growers can benefit from this method by taking bulk phone orders for pick up at the farmers' market.

Ads should make an effort to publicize popular seasonal produce such as fruits, melons, berries, tomatoes and sweet corn. These items will tend to draw bigger crowds and all growers will benefit. You should also use announcements of market events to indirectly introduce people to the regular operation of the farmers' market.

## **Ideas For Attracting Customers**

Beyond the basic consumer expectations that you will meet, interesting and fun promotional ideas can be used to stimulate increasing sales and customer count. Even better, a good market will stimulate word of mouth advertising. The following ideas are just the beginning.

## **Create An Attractive Atmosphere!**

Many things can be done to create a festive atmosphere at your market. You could decorate the entrance with flowers, vegetable displays, scarecrows, or balloons. Similar decorations inside a market add a festive element which will create a sense of cohesion. Another idea is to hire local musicians to perform during market hours. Many will play if they can leave their hat open for contributions, others will simply volunteer for the exposure.

## **Organize Theme Events and Festivals**

Make it fun to come to the market. Using the themes of fresh and locally grown foods can create numerous events to stimulate interest in the market. Events that are part of a market's promotion create reasons for people to come and explore possibilities.

Before the season begins, organize a schedule of special events which will highlight the season and create special reasons for people to come. For each event, ask yourself the question, "What do we want to accomplish with this event and who is it aimed at?"

The following are some ideas:

- **Contests** - Contests stimulate excitement and interest. Everybody likes to win and wants the chance to win. And even if you don't win, you want to know who does! This brings attention to the market. Consider contests that focus on local produce. How about a watermelon seed spitting contest, an apple salad recipe contest or even a cucumber eating contest?
- **Scarecrow Making** - Kids love to stuff their old clothes with hay!
- **Container-mania!** Feature bedding plants, pots and experts on potting. Invite a master gardener to come and give a class.
- **Pumpkin Carving!** Everyone loves to create an original piece of pumpkin art.
- **Christmas in July** A great way to find and sell Christmas crafts and foods.

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- **Cooking Demonstrations.** Invite local chefs to come to the market to cook with local ingredients.
- **Customer Appreciation Day.** Plan this event on the last day of the market, with events and sales to benefit the patrons who have helped to make the market season a success.
- **Celebrate Cultural Diversity.** Invite cultural groups to come and share through dancing or teaching a traditional art or skill.

Remember, always take advantage of opportunities to attract additional publicity. With some imagination and work, you can make your farmers' market into both an entertaining and exciting place to shop.



## Record Keeping

The future of every market will be brighter with proper record keeping. The market board should start with keeping copies of all permits, licenses, correspondence, legal paperwork, expense reports, and meeting minutes.

The market should keep information for each vendor for ease of communication to ensure compliance with all regulations. These records should include: name, address, phone number, email, website, fee structure agreed upon, attendance record, product information, insurance verification, sales permit, any other required licenses, and a signed agreement of compliance or a contract.

Tracking particular measures for the markets and the vendors will go along way toward helping managers gauge success and make adjustments for coming seasons. This will need to be done on a daily basis by the market manager.

### ***Minimum daily market records should include:***

- Stall fees collected
- Number of vendors
- Daily market sales totals (per vendor)
- Weather conditions
- External special events
- Market layout
- Inadequate supplies of certain products
- All other income and expenses by amount, and type

### ***Other helpful information:***

- Customer foot traffic counts
- Vendor sales by category
- Availability of seasonal products.

Tracking vendor sales is one of the most beneficial and most controversial reporting issues of farmers' markets. These figures give market managers the ability to see how different seasonal crops affect market sales and evaluate how well vendors in different categories are doing. They can use this information to adjust their vendor mix, stall fees, or even to plan events around popular items. It can be helpful to have the vendors include their particular product offering when they report their weekly sales.

Vendor sales data is also a great marketing tool. Showing the financial significance of your market to the community can give you greater leverage with policy makers, local businesses, and other community partners. Establishing a track report like this will also help in the recruiting of new vendors to the market.

The other market data can be used in an endless number of management decisions. Studying the flow of foot traffic throughout the season or even different times of the market day can help determine customer trends and behavior that vendors

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can capitalize on. If a particular outside event or holiday weekend always reduces customer count or sales, the manager can advise vendors to bring less product that week. They could also consider partnering with the other event to benefit from their crowd drawing abilities.

Vendors need to keep some of their own records as well.

## **Vendors Should Record:**

- Total Sales
- Fee payments
- Stall location
- Available products

The market will grow and improve as each individual vendor improves their marketing skills. Encourage your vendors to keep records and work on anticipating sales swings and seasonal flows. Your vendors are a great asset in evaluating market trends and will be able to help you in coming up with creative ways to increase a slow time of day or season, improve market layout, and work with community partners, but the research is done by weekly record keeping.

## **Budgeting**

Knowing the total expenses that the market will incur over the course of the season is necessary information. You must know this to be able to move forward with advertising, setting a salary for the market manager, planning events, purchasing assets for the market, and most all other market functions.

Some costs that might be incurred by the market are:

- Rental or lease of site
- Licenses and permits
- Site improvements (resurfacing, storage, restrooms, signage, etc)
- Administrative expenses (meeting facilities, telephone, printing postage, travel)
- Advertising (design, printing, distribution, materials, website)

- Market managers salary
- Liability Insurance
- Equipment and supplies (market tent, first aid kit, fire extinguisher)

Along with knowing the expenses, it's important to know the income of the market. The market should be planned to support itself. The main source of income for a market are its stall fees. As a non-profit, it may be possible to get many products and services donated or at a discounted rate.

Look for donations or discounts in these areas:

- Labor and materials for site improvements
- Distributing flyers
- Office supplies
- Utility or printing expenses
- Prizes for promotional activities
- Sponsors for events

## **Market Evaluation**

It is a good idea to sit down with the market board or other interested individuals and evaluate the market, revisiting its initial goals, and casting a new vision for the future of the market. This is good to do a minimum of once a year. One approach would be to do a SWOT analysis, evaluating the markets strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. This is simple and yields good actionable information. Another approach would be to evaluation the market one piece at a time. There are number of areas that deserve a close look.

## **Fee Structures**

Are the vendor fees sufficient to support the budgetary needs of the market? Do they allow for adequate vendor participation while still demonstrating enough commitment from the vendors at the market? These are key questions that must be answered. As the market grows and develops, it is likely that the fee structure will need to be adjusted.

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## **Budget**

Is the market able to run smoothly and reach its goals in the area of its finances? If the market is facing obstacles that could be solved with the proper investment of financial resources, the budget needs to be reworked.

## **Staffing**

Is there adequate staffing to ensure a well run market day, as well as proper management of behind the scenes duties (bookkeeping etc)? The market may need to enlist more volunteers or consider increasing the hours of its paid staff.

## **Market Layout**

Does the market feel full and festive but not over crowded? If not, it may be time to look at a new layout for your market. Evaluate the flow of foot traffic through your market, taking into consideration the entrance to the market and the location and the most popular vendors. Don't be afraid to mix things up and see how it affects the atmosphere of the market.

## **Location**

Is the current location allowing the market to meet its goals? Is there enough space, power, restrooms, water, etc.? Are there other locations that would be better or can the current location be more effectively utilized? Consider that a change in location is a large obstacle to overcome and it can take a couple years to get the market back up to speed.

## **Parking**

Is there adequate customer parking? Have there been any complaints about the parking situation? While the customer is most important, also evaluate vendor parking. Is there any way to more efficiently use the current parking or increase the availability?

## **Safety**

Have the management, the vendors, or the customers noticed or commented on any potentially hazardous situations? Consider the footing, vehi-

cle traffic, cords, canopies, and even hygiene. Safety needs to be a top priority and evaluated on a regular basis.

## **Attendance**

How well was the market attended? How does this compare with previous years? What can be done to increase market attendance?

## **Vendor Mix**

What products are the biggest sellers at the market and how many vendors are selling those items? Are their adequate vendors throughout the entire market season? Is there room to increase the number of vendors? How can you help increase vendor sales?

## **Manager's Duties**

Can the market make better use of their manager? Are there other functions that the manager should be doing on market day or in the off-season? Can the manager's salary be increased? How well does the manager interact and communicate with the board and the vendors?

## **The Board**

Are there changes that need to be made in the board? You may need to change or add members and their role. Are their new committees that need to be created or new issues that need to be addressed?

## **Rapid Market Assessment**

Rapid Market Assessment (RMA) is a simple and effective tool for learning more about your market. RMA was developed at Oregon State University. For a complete guide to Rapid Market Assessment go to [www.oregonfarmersmarkets.org/create/marketresearch.html](http://www.oregonfarmersmarkets.org/create/marketresearch.html).

There are three components to the RMA process.

- 1 - A customer foot traffic count
- 2 - A fun, easy, and interactive method of collecting customer feedback to some specific questions

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3 - A debriefing period to receive feedback and discuss observations.

The RMA process requires a number of volunteers. On a busy market day, it is difficult for a market to come up with enough individuals from their own staff and vendors. The ideal way to staff the RMA process is to bring in market managers and board members from neighboring markets. Their expertise will provide you with valuable insight and they will benefit from the experience as well. Another option for volunteers would be a local 4-H or FFA group.

## **Customer Count**

This is easier than it sounds. Place individuals to count adults entering the market at all entrances. Counting should take place for 10 minutes during every hour (ex: for the 9:00 hour, count from 9:25-9:35) and then multiplied by six. This information will allow vendors to estimate potential sales as well as allow the market to document its role in the community to city leaders.

## **Dot Surveys**

Identify the information needed to improve your market and carefully construct up to four questions that will help you gather this information. Use one flip chart for each question. Write the question across the top with columns below for each potential answer. The flip charts should be erected in a central location of the market and staffed by volunteers

Volunteers should invite market patrons to “do the dots” and hand out small circle stickers (four stickers for four questions). Instruct the customers to answer the questions by placing one dot on each of the flip charts. Charts should be changed every hour, or the color of the dot can change to see how customers’ preferences change throughout the day. At the end of the day, total all dots per answer and divide as a percentage of the total (the total number of answers per question may not be the same).

## **Qualitative Analysis**

At the end of the market a debriefing session allows for sharing observations from the day. Have the RMA staff take notes throughout the day on specific aspects of the market.

- 1 - Physical characteristics: access, traffic flow, liability issues, organization
- 2 - Vendors and Products: vendor mix, product quality, signage, displays, customer service.
- 3 - Market Atmosphere: the “feel” of the market, educational opportunities, shopper demographics, interactions.

## **Annual Report**

Creating a report at the end of every season will help the market track changes and growth in different aspects of the market.

The report should include:

- Number of vendors involved
- Number of shoppers
- Gross market sales
- Other key numbers (spillover effect, new vendors, first time shoppers, charitable giving, etc)
- Percentage change in any of the above numbers that show growth in the market
- Vendor testimonials
- Customer comments
- Photographs from the market

Be sure the report isn’t just statistics, but tells the story of the market - how it sustains family farms, improves access to healthy foods, expands entrepreneurship, and builds community.

This report should be presented and shared with a number of groups. Be sure the board, vendors, market sponsors, and local government all receive a written copy of this report. Presenting the report to vendors can help them feel a sense of ownership, build excitement, and allows feedback. Such a presentation can also help to build support from local government and community partners. This is a great opportunity to communicate the market’s impact on the community.



# Vendor Best Practices

Good vendors make a good market, and excellent vendors make an excellent market. It is important for all markets to educate and train their vendors in the art of selling at farmers' markets.

Customers will evaluate every vendor based on four basic attributes, their products, their booth, their story, and the individual themselves.

## **Products**

To attract customers based on products, vendors must know their customer's desires. Are they looking for unique specialty or ethnic items or are they looking for bulk products to can or preserve? How price sensitive are they? Are they purchasing produce to feed their family for the week, or are they vacationers only purchasing for the weekend?

Manage the seasonality of your products as much as possible. Plant some crops in succession to have them available the longest amount of time possible. Consumers want to find the same thing at the market every week - this will create repeat purchases. It is also important to manage the customers' expectations of product availability by putting a chart up in the booth or having a small brochure available specifying when items will be available throughout the season. On the same note, if they are expecting to find an item at the market that is in season, be sure you can meet that expectation.

Consumers want clean food. If you are selling produce, be sure to wash it thoroughly and freshen it with a spray bottle throughout the day. It may be appropriate to have the products sitting on ice in extreme heat.

Be able to clearly communicate why your produce is better than typical produce at the grocery store. These reasons could include: superior quality, freshness (picked last night or this morning), different varieties, key attributes, locally grown, better for environment, supports local economy, and safe for the family.

## **Sampling**

Offering samples is especially important if you are trying to introduce new products to your consumers. Samples draw customers to your booth and makes your booth look busier. It is a way to encourage people to try something new and increase their purchases. Consider even creating a recipe with a unique product using more than one product that you sell. When sampling, be sure to follow health department guidelines.



## **Packaging**

Produce can be sold many different ways, including by the pound, by the piece, or in prepackaged amounts. All are good methods, but you must select which method works for you, your customers, and the product. Lettuce greens are ideal for prepackaged bags of a couple pounds. The same may work for items like green beans. Prepackaging also reduces possible bacteria contamination for the public touching the product as they select and bag their own purchases

Selling by the piece is good for light weight items by the pound for heavier items. This reduces the consumer's perception of the cost of the product.

Selling in pre-selected amounts or by the piece can save time on the day of the market as you won't have to weight items with each transaction, but requires more time prior to the market. This can also add security to the customer because they know the exact dollar amount of the items, versus guessing the pounds. However, most peo-

# Vendor Best Practices

ple are used to buying produce by the pound and may not be happy with making this change.

If you sell by the pound, you must have a certified scale.

Consider other creative packaging techniques with multiple products. For example, put everything someone would need to make fresh salsa all in one bag with a recipe attached. This is convenient for them and they may not have bought as many items without this added step. Preparing and sampling some salsa at the same time may boost sales even more.

For processed items consider creative packaging. Most people want products they buy at the farmers market to have a country or homemade look to them. Also consider gift packaging. You can get more money per transaction by bundling items into a gift basket for example.

## **Product Display**

Make sure the display makes your products easy to see without needing to stand directly above them. Try putting containers at 30 or 40 degree angles to increase the visibility of the product. If you begin to run out of a particular item and it no longer fills the container it was in, move it to a smaller container.

Make sure the display is organized in a logical manner with like products together, making it easy for customers to find what they want. Using highly visible price tags is also a good idea. Know one wants to have to ask the price of the product. Put price tags on or near the product. Use tags that are consistent in look and feel. If you are pricing items both by the piece and by the pound, make sure this is VERY clear on your price tags.

There are different philosophies when it comes to how much product to display at once. Some vendors say, "stack it high and watch them buy." One vendor would stack mountains of green beans in clam shells on the table, and they would sell very

quickly. Other vendors don't want to look like a grocery store display and only put out small amounts of products at a time in little baskets, and every time they sell a few, they would just refill the basket. Each vendor must determine what works for them and the customers at that specific market.

## **Booth**

Each vendor wants their booth to stand out from others. Be creative with your display and signage. Simple things like a brightly colored sign will help people remember and locate you from week to week. Be creative! If you sell lavender products, consider a purple canopy.

The booth needs to be inviting. Use a canopy or umbrella to make shade, use fun colors, and have a non-committal design. Place the table towards the front of the canopy with room for the seller behind it. The sellers' attitudes and actions also play a huge role in drawing people to the booth.

Keep the booth organized at all times. Use one theme for displaying your products (i.e. all baskets or crates, red and white checkered fabrics, etc), this will help your booth look tidy. Put empty boxes back in your vehicle or tuck them away under your table (be sure your table cloth is long enough to hide them). If you are sampling, have garbage cans out for the toothpicks or sample cups.

## **Telling Your Story**

Signage at your booth is your opportunity to tell the story of your operation. Knowing the producer and the story behind the food is one of the key decision making factors for consumers. You must identify what makes your operation unique. It might be your farm history, production practices, environmental impact, your community involvement, or something else. Consider creating a small brochure telling your story that they can take home with them. Adding a recipe to the brochure will increase the likely hood that consumers will take it and look at it. Be sure to use lots of pictures of your farm and family to communicate your

# Vendor Best Practices

story clearly.

## **The Vendor**

Vendors need to have knowledge of the products they are selling, giving the consumers security in the food they are purchasing. It's ideal to have the grower themselves selling, or at least an employee or family member who is directly involved with the growing of the crops. They need to be able to communicate about the production practices, the superior quality of the produce, and how the produce should be prepared. Recipes are also good for sharing ideas for using the products.

While still looking authentic, vendors should have a nice clean appearance. If you are dirty, consumers will think your food is dirty too. If there are multiple sellers in your booth, consider a uniform of sorts (matching shirts, ball caps, or aprons). Name tags help customers identify you and give a personal touch. A unified appearance helps your booth look attractive and is another way that you can distinguish yourselves from other vendors.

Vendors should be standing at their booth (not sitting), and should be alert to the customers' needs. While at the market, the customer is the number one priority. Vendors should not be eating or smoking while attending to customers at the booth. If the seller has small children at the market, it may be advisable to bring an assistant to help attend to the kids so customer service doesn't suffer. Children are a nice touch at a Farmers' Market, especially if they are involved in the growing of the crops. At all costs, avoid making the customer feel like a bother.

Customer service is another quality that sets farmers' markets apart from other retail outlets. Use eye contact and a smile to acknowledge the presence of every customer that approaches your booth. When possible, engage in conversation, asking about their taste and preferences, learn their children's names, and remember the information they share. Although misbehaving pets or children can be a problem for vendors, you can

easily lose a customer for good if you are rude to their children or their animals. Show them that they are important to you. If you have a particularly faithful customer, let them know that you appreciate them.

Always be positive! Don't be critical of other vendors or the market management. Explain the quality of your products without tearing down anyone else's. If you don't have a product someone is looking for, be willing to refer them to someone else at the market.



# Farmers Market Resources

## National, Regional and State Resources

### Idaho State Department of Agriculture

The Market Development Division at the Idaho State Department of Agriculture offers informational workshops, pamphlets, funding resources, and an aggressive in-state agricultural marketing plan through Idaho Preferred.

[www.agri.idaho.gov](http://www.agri.idaho.gov)

[www.idahopreferred.com](http://www.idahopreferred.com)

P.O. Box 790, Boise, ID 83701

(208) 332-8530

### United States Department of Agriculture

[www.ams.usda.gov/farmersmarkets/](http://www.ams.usda.gov/farmersmarkets/)

(202)720-8317

### CSREES Small Farms Program

[www.csrees.usda.gov/smallfarms.cfm](http://www.csrees.usda.gov/smallfarms.cfm)

(202) 401-4385

### North American Farmers' Direct Marketing Association

[www.nafdma.com](http://www.nafdma.com)

[nafdma@map.com](mailto:nafdma@map.com)

62 White Loaf Road

Southampton, MA 01073,

(888) 884-9270

### USDA Rural Development

[www.rurdev.usda.gov/id](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/id)

9173 West Barnes, Ste A1

Boise, ID 83709

(208) 378-5603.

### Rural Roots

[www.ruralroots.org](http://www.ruralroots.org)

P.O. Box 8925

Moscow, ID 83843

(208) 883-3462

## Useful Publications

### “Starting a Specialty Foods Business in Idaho”

Available from the Idaho State Department of Agriculture (208) 332-8538

### Protecting Your Farm or Ranch A Guide for Direct Farm Direct Marketing in Idaho

[www.ruralroots.org](http://www.ruralroots.org)

(208)883-3462

P.O. Box 8925

Moscow, ID 83843

### Farmers' Market Resource Guide

Available at [www.ams.usda.gov/farmersmarkets/consortium.resourceguide.htm](http://www.ams.usda.gov/farmersmarkets/consortium.resourceguide.htm)

### Food Safety Begins on the Farm

Cornell University

[www.vegetables.cornell.edu/issues/foodsafety.html](http://www.vegetables.cornell.edu/issues/foodsafety.html)

134 A Plant Science Bldg

Ithaca, NY 14853-5904

607-255-4568

### “Growing for Market”

*A journal of news and ideas for market gardeners.*

Available from Fairplain Publications, P.O. Box 365, Auburn, KS 66402.

### “Marketing your produce directly to customers.” 1992 EXT 741

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# Farmers Market Resources

## University of Idaho Extension

For a complete list of all U of I Extension offices go to [www.extension.idaho.edu](http://www.extension.idaho.edu). The contacts below offer services specifically for small acreage growers.

Bannock County Extension Office  
J. Reed Findlay  
[rfindlay@uidaho.edu](mailto:rfindlay@uidaho.edu)  
(208)236-7310

Bonner County Extension Office  
Mike Bauer  
[mbauer@uidaho.edu](mailto:mbauer@uidaho.edu)  
(208) 263-8511

Canyon County Extension Office  
Ariel Agenbroad  
[ariel@uidaho.edu](mailto:ariel@uidaho.edu)  
(208) 459-6003

Canyon County Extension Office  
Stephanie Etter  
[setter@uidaho.edu](mailto:setter@uidaho.edu)  
(208) 459-6003

Clearwater County Extension Office  
Randal Brooks  
[rbrooks@uidaho.edu](mailto:rbrooks@uidaho.edu)  
(208) 476-4434

Elmore Country Extension Office  
Mir-Mohammad Savedbagheri  
[mirs@uidaho.edu](mailto:mirs@uidaho.edu)  
(208) 587-2136

Franklin County Extension Office  
Stuart Parkinson  
[stuartp@uidaho.edu](mailto:stuartp@uidaho.edu)  
(208) 852-109

Jerome County Extension Office  
Jo Ann Robbins  
[jrobbins@uidaho.edu](mailto:jrobbins@uidaho.edu)  
(208) 324-7578

Latah County Extension Office  
Cinda Williams  
[cindaw@uidaho.edu](mailto:cindaw@uidaho.edu)  
(208) 883-2267

Lemhi County Extension Office  
Shannon Williams  
[shannonw@uidaho.edu](mailto:shannonw@uidaho.edu)  
(208) 756-2815

Lewis County Extension Office  
Kenneth Hart  
[khart@uidaho.edu](mailto:khart@uidaho.edu)  
(208) 937-2311

Nez Perce County Extension Office  
Lydia Clayton  
[nezperce@uidaho.edu](mailto:nezperce@uidaho.edu)  
(208)799-3096

Nez Perce Reservation Extension Office  
Valdasue Steele  
[vsteele@uidaho.edu](mailto:vsteele@uidaho.edu)  
(208) 621-3514

# Farmers Market Resources

## Funding Sources

The Idaho State Department of Agriculture administers the **Agricultural Development Loan** to offer financing and assistance to individuals and organizations in Idaho whose agricultural projects or efforts will provide for rural economic development in Idaho and who cannot obtain credit from conventional sources. Contact ISDA at (208) 332-8530 for more information.

**The Rural Information Center** at the National Agriculture Library, Beltsville, Maryland publishes several guides that are very useful in linking individuals and funding sources.  
[www.nal.usda.gov/ric](http://www.nal.usda.gov/ric)  
(800) 633-7701

**Michael Fields Agricultural Institute**  
[www.michaelfieldsaginstit.org](http://www.michaelfieldsaginstit.org)  
(262) 642-3303

**The Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program (SARE)**  
[www.sare.org](http://www.sare.org)  
(435)797-2257

**National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service**  
[www.attra.org](http://www.attra.org)  
(800) 411-3222

**The Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP)** was created through a recent amendment of the Farmer-to-Consumer Direct Marketing Act of 1976. The grants, authorized by the FMPP, are targeted to help improve and expand domestic farmers markets, roadside stands, community-supported agriculture programs, agri-tourism activities, and other direct producer-to-consumer market opportunities. Approximately \$5 million is allocated for FMPP for Fiscal Years 2009 and 2010 and \$10 million for Fiscal Years 2011 and 2012. The maximum amount awarded for any one proposal cannot exceed \$100,000. Entities eligible to apply include agricultural cooperatives, producer networks, producer associations, local governments, nonprofit corporations, public benefit corporations, economic development corporations, regional farmers market authorities and Tribal governments.  
[www.ams.usda.gov/fmpp](http://www.ams.usda.gov/fmpp)

*Sample*

## **ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION \_\_\_\_\_ FARMERS' MARKET ASSOCIATION**

The undersigned, all of whom are engaged in the production of agricultural products, or other products deemed appropriate by the market, do hereby voluntarily associate ourselves together to form a nonprofit cooperative association, without capital stock, under the provisions of Idaho Code 22-2601 to 22-2628, and for such purposes do hereby adopt the following articles of incorporation, to wit:

### **Article I, NAME**

The name of the Association shall be \_\_\_\_\_ Farmers' Market.

### **Article II, DURATION**

The term of existence of the Association shall be perpetual after the filing of these articles of incorporation in the office of the secretary of State of the State of Idaho.

### **Article III, PURPOSES**

The purposes for which the Association is organized are to engage in any activity in connection with the marketing or selling of the agricultural (add other product types applicable to your market) products of its members. The Association intends to:

- A. Provide a location for agricultural producers (and others) to sell their products.
- B. Help improve the local agricultural economy while providing a needed service for the community.
- C. Promote the sale of agricultural products grown in the state of Idaho.
- D. Use any profits, above and beyond what is needed to ensure the existence of the market, for grants or other types of assistance to nonprofit organizations engaged in the field of agriculture. Such organizations may be working to solve the problems of the family farmer and the rural community.

### **Article IV, DISSOLUTION OF CORPORATION**

Upon the dissolution of the Association, the Board of Directors shall, after paying all of the liabilities of the Association, dispose of all the assets for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or shall be distributed to a state or local government, for a public purpose.

# Appendix A

## Article V, POWERS AND LIMITATIONS

The Association shall have the following powers:

- A. To act as the agent or representative of any member or members in any of the activities mentioned in Article III hereof.
- A. To buy, lease, hold and exercise all privileges of ownership, over such real or personal property as may be necessary or convenient for the conduct and operation of the business of the Association, or incidental thereto.
- A. To draw, make, accept, endorse, guarantee, and issue promissory notes, bills of exchange, drafts, warrants, certificates, and all kinds of obligations and negotiable or transferable instruments for any purpose that is deemed to further the objects for which this Association is formed and to give a lien on any of its property as security therefore.
- A. To cooperate with other similar Associations in creating central, regional, or national Cooperative agencies, for any of the purposes for which this Association is formed, and to become a member or stockholder of such agencies as now are or hereinafter may be in existence.
- A. To have and exercise, in addition to the foregoing, all powers, privileges, and rights conferred on ordinary Corporations and Cooperative Marketing Associations by the laws of this State and all powers and rights incidental or conducive to carrying out the purposes for which the Association is formed, except such as are inconsistent with the express provisions of the act under which this Association is incorporated, and to do any such thing anywhere; and the enumeration of the foregoing powers shall not be held to limit or restrict in any manner the general powers which may by law be possessed by this Association, all of which are hereby expressly claimed.

The Association shall be subject to the following limitations:

- A. This Association shall not market the products of non-members in an amount the value of which exceeds the value of the products marketed for members.
- B. It shall not purchase supplies and equipment for persons who are neither members nor producers of agricultural products.
- C. This Association is not organized for a pecuniary profit. It shall not have any power to issue certificates of stock or declare dividends and no part of its net earnings shall accrue to the benefit of any member, director or individual. The balance, if any, of all money received by the corporation from its operators after the payment in full of all debts and obligations of the Association of whatever kind or nature shall be used and distributed exclusively for purposes set forth in Section D above. Nothing shall prohibit the Association from retaining net earnings for the purpose of ensuring the market's existence for future years and this decision shall be at the Board of Director's discretion.



D. The Association shall not devote a substantial part of its assets to influencing legislation and shall not participate in a political campaign for or against any candidate for political office.

**Article VI, REGISTERED AGENT**

The name and address of the initial registered agent of the Association in the State of Idaho is \_\_\_\_\_, at \_\_\_\_\_, in the City or Town of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ County.

**Article VII, PRINCIPAL PLACE OF BUSINESS**

The place where the principal business of the Association will be transacted is the City or Town of \_\_\_\_\_, County of \_\_\_\_\_, State of Idaho.

**Article VIII, BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The number of directors constituting the Board of Directors is \_\_\_\_\_, and the term of office of each of such directors is one year or until his or her successor is elected and has qualified. The names and addresses of those directors who are to serve as Incorporating Directors until the first annual meeting of the members of the Association or until their successors are elected and qualified are:

Name	Address
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

# Appendix A

## *Sample*

### **BY-LAWS**

#### **\_\_\_\_\_ FARMERS' MARKET ASSOCIATION**

#### **Article I, NAME**

The name of this Association shall be the \_\_\_\_\_ Farmers' Market.

#### **Article II, INCORPORATION**

This Association is an Idaho non-profit organization evidenced by Certificate of Incorporation issued \_\_\_\_\_, 200\_\_ by the Office of the Secretary of State of Idaho.

#### **Article III, OFFICES**

1. Principal office of the Association will be the place of business for the open market held at \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Registered agent and mailing address will be \_\_\_\_\_.

#### **Article IV, PURPOSES**

The purpose for which the Association is organized is to engage in any activity in connection with the marketing or selling of the agricultural (add other product types) products of its members. The Association intends to:

- A. Provide a location for agricultural producers (and others) to sell their products.
- B. Help improve the local agricultural economy while providing a needed service for the community.
- C. Promote the sale of agricultural products grown in the state of Idaho.

#### **Article V, MEMBERSHIP**

1. *Admission:* Members shall be admitted to the Association upon the Association's receipt of a written application form and membership dues in such amounts as the Board of Directors may determine.
2. *Classification:* The Association shall have three classes of members – participating, non-participating and temporary.
  - A. *Participating:* A participating member must serve on the Board of Directors or on an adjunct committee. Annual dues are to be set by a majority vote of the members present at the annual meeting.

- B. **Non-Participating:** Non-participating members are not required to serve on the Board of Directors nor on an adjunct committee. Dues are to be set by a majority vote of the members present at the annual meeting.
  - C. **Temporary:** Temporary members are not required to serve on the Board of Directors nor on an adjunct committee. A daily fee is to be set by a majority vote of the members present at the annual meeting.
3. **Resignation:** Any member may resign, but such resignation shall not relieve the resigning member of the obligation to pay any dues, assessments or other charges theretofore accrued and unpaid, and the Association shall not be liable to return or refund any dues, assessments or other charges in the event of a resignation.
  4. **Transfer of Membership:** Membership in this Association shall not be transferable nor assignable.
  5. **Termination of Membership:** The Board of Directors, by affirmative vote of two-thirds of all Board members, may suspend or expel a member for cause after an appropriate hearing, and may, by a majority vote of those present at any regularly constituted meeting, terminate the membership of any member who shall be in default in the payment of dues.
  6. **Membership Rights:** Participating members shall have two votes each, non-participating members shall have one vote each, and temporary members shall have no voting privileges.

## Article VI, MEETINGS

1. **Annual Meeting:** An annual meeting of all three classes of members shall be held each year at a time and place designated by the Board of Directors for the purpose of presenting the annual report and other matters that may require general membership attendance. Notice of the annual meeting shall be given to every member at least seven days in advance of such meeting.
2. **Special Meeting:** The Board of Directors may call a special meeting that would require general membership attendance. Notice of any special meeting shall be given to every member at least seven days in advance of such meeting.
3. **Board of Directors' Meeting:** The Board of Directors shall meet from time to time as is necessary. Only board members and chairpersons of adjunct committees need be notified.
4. **Place of Meeting:** The Board of Directors may designate any place within the State of Idaho as the place for any annual, special or Board of Directors' meeting.
5. **Quorum:** At any annual meeting or special meeting, one-tenth of the participating and non-participating members shall constitute a quorum. At any meeting of the Board of Directors, a majority of the Board of Directors in office shall constitute a quorum.

# Appendix A

## Article VII, BOARD OF DIRECTORS

1. *General Powers:* The business and affairs of the Association shall be managed by its Board of Directors.
2. *Number and Tenure:* The number of Directors of the Association shall be no less than \_\_\_\_\_. Directors shall be elected at each annual meeting by participating and non-participating members by majority vote. Each Director shall hold office until the next annual meeting of members.
3. *Vacancies:* If any vacancy occurs on the Board of Directors, other than from the expiration of a term of office, the Board of Directors may fill the vacancy for the unexpired term at any Board meeting.
4. *Compensation:* The Board of Directors shall serve without compensation.
5. *Attendance at Board Meetings:* Directors shall attend all Board meetings unless extenuating circumstances occur.
6. *Manner of Acting:* The act of the majority of the directors present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Board of Directors.
7. *Standard of Care:* A director shall perform his or her duties as a director, including his or her duties as a member of any committee of the board upon which he or she may serve, in a manner he or she reasonably believes to be in the best interests of the Association, and with such care as an ordinary prudent person in a like position should use under similar circumstances. A person who so performs his or her duties shall not have any liability by reason of being or having been a director of the Association.

## Article VIII, OFFICERS

1. *Officers:* The officers of the Association shall be a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. The Board of Directors may appoint committees and committee chairpersons as they consider necessary. The officers shall serve without compensation.
2. *Election and Term of Office:* The officers of the Association shall be elected by the Board of Directors annually at the first meeting of the Board held after each annual meeting of the general membership.
3. *Vacancies:* A vacancy in any office, however occurring, may be filled by the Board of Directors for the remaining portion of the term.
4. *President:* The President shall call and preside at all meetings of the Association. The President shall also act as official representative of the Association and have general charge of its affairs.
5. *Vice President:* The Vice President shall, at the request of the President, or in the event of his/her disability or absence, perform any and all duties of the President. The Vice President shall also have primary responsibility for the development and management of a program allowing members to sell prepared foods at the market.
6. *Secretary:* The Secretary shall keep the minutes of the meetings, give notice of all meetings as

prescribed by these Bylaws, perform all duties incidental to the office and help the President perform his/her functions.

7. *Treasurer:* The Treasurer shall be the principal financial officer of the Association and shall collect, receive, deposit, invest and disburse the funds of the Association. The Treasurer shall maintain accounting books and a checking account, rendering a statement of accounts at each board meeting, filing required reports with Office of the Secretary of State of Idaho, and performing all duties incidental to the office and help the president perform his/her functions.

## **Article IX, COMMITTEES**

There shall be appointed various committees, members and a chairperson for each committee by the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall delegate duties to the respective committees.

1. *Committees:* The committees shall consist of:
  - A. Promotion and Advertising
  - B. Rules and Regulations
  - C. Grower Recruitment
  - D. Fund Raising
2. *Membership:* Each committee shall consist of a chairperson who is a member of the Board of Directors. Committee members shall consist of all participating members.
3. *Meetings:* Each committee is responsible for holding meetings at such regular intervals to assure the proper completion of the committee's duties.
4. *Chairperson:* The chairperson or his or her delegate shall give a report at every board meeting regarding the progress, accomplishments and goals of the respective committee.

## **Article X, INDEMNIFICATION**

The Association shall indemnify, to the extent permitted by law, any person who is or was a director, officer, agent, fiduciary or employee of the Association against any claim, liability or expense arising against or incurred by such person as a result of actions reasonably taken by him or her in the direction of the Association. The Association shall further have the authority to the full extent permitted by law to indemnify its directors, officers, agents, fiduciaries and employees against any claim, liability or expense arising against or incurred by them in all other circumstances and to maintain insurance for such persons to the full extent permitted by law.

## **Article XI, AMENDMENTS**

These bylaws may be altered, amended or repealed at any meeting of the Board of Directors at which a quorum is present by a majority vote of those present.

## **Article XII, FISCAL YEAR**

The fiscal year of the Association shall be as determined by the Board of Directors.

## **Article XIII, CONFLICTS**

In the event of any irreconcilable conflict between these bylaws and either the Association's Articles of Incorporation or applicable law, the latter shall control.

## **Article XIV, DEFINITIONS**

Except as otherwise provided in these bylaws, all terms used in these bylaws shall have the same definition as in the statutes governing Idaho non-profit corporations.

## *Sample*

### **City Farmers' Market Association**

The City Farmers' Market Association is a community based organization developed to support local agricultural producers and is also a member of Idaho Preferred®. The Association is managed by a Board of Directors who set policies for the market in accordance with the market's mission statement and goals.

The City Farmers' Market will be held every Saturday, May through October, in downtown City at the intersection of Front Street and 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue.

### **Mission Statement**

To promote and support local farmers and artisans and build a more sustainable community

### **Market Goals**

- To give local growers and producers of farm-related products alternative marketing opportunities.
  - To promote the sale of locally grown, raised, produced, or gathered farm products and to provide consumers and local farmers an opportunity to interact directly with one another.
  - To add to the variety, quality and freshness of produce available in the county, a wide range of fresh local produce including specialized items and organic and natural options.
  - To provide opportunities for local farms, food producers and artisans to test and refine their products and marketing skills. Small rural businesses are growing up in parallel with the market.
- To enhance the quality of life in the local area by providing a community activity which fosters social gathering and interaction.

### **City Farmers' Market Policies and Guidelines**

#### **Membership**

Vendor privileges are limited to the following:

Farmers and producers who live within 100 miles of the market - producers from outside this area may request special consideration of the market committee.

Producers/growers: those who cultivate and/or raise their own vegetables, flowers, fruits, herbs, plants, small animals, and animal products for public sale

Harvesters/gatherers: those who gather/pick wild growing fruits, plants or other material for public sale

Crafters/Artisans: those who create hand crafted products primarily from raw materials. Crafters/artisans shall not exceed 50% of total market membership. The Market Manager reserves the right to refuse any craft item that is deemed inappropriate (a craft jury will be help by the Board of Directors prior the start of each market season).

Food producer/processor – those who make value-added or ready to eat products from agricultural or food materials in accordance with all Idaho Health District regulations.

Farmer/producers will be given the priority at the market if space is limited. Crafter must not account for more than 50% of total number of vendors.

No brokers may sell at the City Farmers' Market (brokering is buying items and then reselling them at the market).

Produce may not be advertised as "organic" unless it is certified or registered organic. Current organic certification must be displayed and a copy must be given to the market Association.

# Appendix B

Products **not** grown or gathered by the vendor, or products grown or gathered by the prospective vendor **outside** of the 100 miles radius may be sold only with permission of the Board of Directors. The admittance of this product/vendor into the market will be heavily dependent on the availability of comparable product at the market at that time.

There will be no discrimination according to race, color, creed, sex, religions, sexual orientation, age, or nationality.

## **Membership Fees**

Vendors must apply for space by submitting a vendor application at the Spring Vendor Meeting or by printing it off the website and mailing it the market manager. The annual membership fee is to be paid at the Spring Vendor Meeting or by the first market attended. Memberships are not transferable or refundable (some exceptions may be approved by the market Board depending on individual circumstances).

### Fee Structure:

#### Annual Membership Fee

10x10 space - \$35.00 per year

10x20 space - \$70.00 *If you wish to park your truck, van, trailer or other full sized vehicle behind your booth, you must pay for two spaces. 10x20 is the largest allowable space*

5% of weekly sales at the market. Each vendor will be given a Weekly Stall Slip on which to report their total sales. All fees are due and payable before leaving the market each day. Fees are to be figured after the closing of the market for the day, not before 1:00pm.

## **Temporary Vendors**

Temporary vendors must apply for space by submitting a vendor application in person at the market or by printing an application from the website and either mailing it to the market manager or bringing it the morning of the market. All temporary vendors are held responsible to know and abide by all market regulations.

### Temporary vendor fees:

\$5.00 weekly fee

10% weekly sales

After three weeks of selling as a temporary vendor, the weekly fee may be applied towards the vendor's annual membership fees should they choose to become a member of the market association.

## **Insurance and Licensing**

The City Farmers Market Association will provide on-site liability insurance and an on-site nursery license. However, individual product liability is the responsibility of each vendor. Vendors are responsible for meeting all government regulations, obeying state, county, and local laws, etc.

### Sales tax:

The State of Idaho expects all vendors to pay sales tax, therefore, accurate reporting of sales tax is up to each individual vendor. Sales tax permits are available through contacting the Idaho Tax Commission.

### Prepared Food Regulations:

All vendors who prepare food for sale at the market must comply with the Panhandle Health District regulations. It is in the best interest as a vendor, as well as in the interest of the market, that all vendors follow food safety standards intended to protect the patrons of the market. All vendors will be provided with a copy of the regulations. Violation of food regulations are grounds for suspension of your privilege to sell



these items at the market.

## Nursery License:

Any vendor selling more than \$500 of nursery products (plants, starts, cut flowers) must obtain a Nursery License from the Idaho State Department of Agriculture.

## Scale Certification:

All scales must be certified by the Idaho Bureau of Weights and Measures. If you wish to sell produce in bagged quantities you should also contact this bureau for specific requirements and labeling guidelines.

## **Pricing**

Pricing is the sole responsibility of the individual vendor. However, the market encourages vendors to price their items for sale at a price that reflects the cost of materials, labor, marketing expenses, and a profit.

Vendors are expected to bring quality produce to the market. In addition, vendors are not allowed to give produce or other items away for free or at below-cost pricing to undercut the sales of other vendors.

## **Guidelines for Vendors**

The Board of Directors has set forth the following guidelines for vendor ethics:

- All vendors will respect their fellow vendor and will treat one another kindly. No foul language or offensive remarks will be allowed.

- All vendors will represent themselves in a professional manner when interacting with customers

- All vendors will maintain a clean, attractive display in their booth.

- All vendors will respect the rights of our customers to come to the market and find a welcoming environment where they can feel safe and secure to enjoy the family friendly atmosphere

- Vendors will be present during market times. They may substitute a family member or on-farm employee occasionally if the need arises.

- Vendors will not set up before 6:30 am and cannot tear down until 1:00pm/

- No vehicles will be allowed in the market from 8:00am – 1:00pm.

- Spaces are assigned at the discretion of the Market Manager, and may be based on factors such as seniority, regular attendance, high sales, time of arrival, and product mix.

- Limited electricity is available. Vendors must apply for use through the Market Manager

- New and temporary vendors must check in with the market manager before setting up.

- Vendors must notify the Market Manager 24 hrs prior to the market day if they will not be attending.

- Vendors will provide their own shade, tables, chairs, change, bags, and signage (all canopies and umbrellas must be weighted with a minimum of 25 lbs per leg).

- All trash created by the vendor must be removed by them and not placed in city dumpsters.

- Members shall be willing to serve on various committees as needed and take an active role in assisting the market to grow and thrive.

## **Managing Vendor Issues**

First Offense: The vendor will be notified verbally by the Market Manager and/or one board member of the rule violation. The vendor will be given the opportunity to correct the violation at that time if possible. If the vendor refuses to correct the violation they will be asked to leave the market immediately, but will be allowed to return once they comply with the market regulations.

Second Offense: The vendor will be asked to leave the market and special board meeting will be held immediately following that market day to determine if the vendor will be terminated for the season.

Third Offense: The vendor will be terminated for the remainder for the market season, but may re-

# Appendix B

apply for membership the following season.

All infractions will be notated in the vendors file and kept for future reference. The Board of Directors reserves the right to terminate membership immediately upon the first violation if the offense warrants such action. No portion of any membership fees, or weekly fees paid will be refunded to any vendor if membership is terminated due to violations.

## **Miscellaneous**

No vendor's animals allowed in the market areas except Service Animals.

Children of vendors under the age of 10 must be under control of their parents or guardian at all times.

No soliciting by charitable or activist groups in any area of the market.

No smoking by vendors permitted on the market area.

The Market Manager may refuse to allow any vendor or nonprofit organization to set up or sell at the market.

The manager is the first and final authority at the market.

*Sample*

## City Farmers Market Vendor Application

Vendor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of family members or employees who will be working in your booth: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address (if different from above): \_\_\_\_\_

Items to sell at the market (list all in detail): \_\_\_\_\_

Indicate Dates of Market Participation (Please circle)

May	June	July	August	September	October
2	6	4	1	5	3
9	13	11	8	12	10
16	20	18	15	19	17
23	27	25	22	26	24
30			29		31

Sales Tax Number (required) \_\_\_\_\_

What size of booth would you like (10x10 - \$35, 10x20 - \$70) \_\_\_\_\_

Do you need Electricity? Yes/No

Do you need your vehicle at your booth? Yes/No

I have read and understand the City Farmers' Markets Policies and Guidelines and Agree to abide by them.

Vendor Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

I also agree to indemnify and hold harmless the City Farmers Market Association, its representatives and agents from and against all liability, claims, demands, losses, damages, levies, and causes of action or suits on any nature whatsoever, arising out of or related to my activities at the market.

Vendor Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Submit your application with the annual fee no later than April 15<sup>th</sup> to:

Market Manager  
P.O. XXX  
City, Idaho 55555

Contact the Market Manager at (208)555-5555 with any questions.