

## Practice Guide #29

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# *Growing a Farmers' Market in Your Neighborhood: Recommendations for Success*

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## Introduction

Farmers' markets are a vital link in connecting urban consumers directly to local farms. These markets allow consumers to obtain locally grown fresh produce and also help create personal relationships between farmers and consumers. As of mid-2011, there were 7,175 such markets in the United States, an increase of 17 percent since 2010 (United States Department of Agriculture Marketing Services, 2012). In this Practice Guide, the reader is introduced to the *why, what, and how* of markets. *What* are their benefits? *How* is a farmers' market created? *How* can market managers create market environments which are successful, profitable, and sustainable? *What* benefits do farmers' markets have for local communities and farmers? *Why* should consumers, farmers, and others be interested in the economic and social benefits that these markets facilitate?

What follows are tips and advice for prospective market managers on how to start a market, where to locate it, what should be sold, and how to connect with both farmers and customers. This guide should also prove useful to municipalities interested in developing programs to support the development of farmer's markets. Appendices are provided that list state-by-state internet resources for the eight states that comprise the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Region 4: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee. These resources include relevant local, regional, state, and federal government websites, and academic centers.

### Why farmers markets?

Farmers' markets and related forms of direct marketing models for food invoke four ethical concerns: environmental sustainability, economic viability, promoting social justice, and reconnecting the local with civic life (Alkon, 2008; Kloppenberg et al., 1996). Taken together, these four concepts undergird what are popularly termed sustainable agriculture and sustainable food systems. Supporters of sustainable agriculture argue that as an industry and as a social movement, it balances the four concepts listed above.

How we eat is a major determinant of how natural resources and human labor are used. Farmers' markets in this context represent alternative systems of food production and consumption that challenge unsustainable practices typically involved in large agricultural commodity chains. Environmentally sustainable food systems can be defined as food systems in which "the health of the environment is sustained and enhanced for use by all beings and by future generations" and entails "working with nature to replenish soil and other resources through recycling, composting, and the use of animal nutrients" (Kloppenburg et al., 2001). For instance, farms which strive towards sustainability focus on self-sustenance in the sense of productive activity which increases soil and water quality, using the local environment (e.g. local crops). The underlying principle is that farmers and farms have a relationship with the land that is at once non-exploitative and regenerative.

Sustainability as a concept also involves economic aspects of food systems. Economic viability is present in food systems in which local farmers and area businesses are profitable and capable of providing decent standards of living for employees. Economic viability, then, is intimately linked to the local economy. By virtue of enhanced profitability, farms and businesses have increased ability to pay workers at wage levels which are high relative to industry averages. Workers in turn are able to spend more money in their local economies.

Critics of big-box consumption argue that firms such as Wal-Mart have negative effects on local economies. The economies of scale that firms the size of Wal-Mart are able to command provides them with the ability to price goods at levels lower than smaller firms can offer. As local firms find they cannot compete with big-box stores, they close their doors and lay off their employees. A second detrimental economic effect stems from the international nature of most big-box firms: profits which are absorbed from local communities are not wholly recirculated in their economies, resulting in the loss of investment in those areas.

While concerns for local economic viability and sustainable food systems are often found together, the notion of farmers' markets as a means of social justice is a recent addition to the movement and ideology of the local food system movement. Farmers markets have the potential to provide a platform for social justice by challenging existing unequal distribution of access to food (Alkson 2008; Beaulac et al. 2009; Kloppenburg et al. 2000); and a concomitant effort to provide workers with ethical working conditions and treatment (Jones and Bhatia 2011; Macias 2008).

Areas which have low levels of access to healthy, affordable food are referred to as "food deserts" (Jones and Bhatia 2011). Although the term may be used to indicate a literal absence of retail food in an area, it is also used to refer to uneven access to affordable and healthy food across socioeconomically advantaged and disadvantaged areas. Beaulac et al. (2009) has shown that Americans living in low-income areas and areas with a majority of the population classified as racial minorities tend to have poor access to healthy food. In general, individuals in these neighborhoods have less access to supermarkets and chain stores. This is compounded by lack of transportation for low-income individuals: in 2001, for example, 26.5 percent of Americans with annual incomes of less than \$20,000 did not own a car (Beaulac et al., 2009). These same areas also had a higher preponderance of convenience stores (Beaulac et al., 2009). Convenience stores typically have a poor selection of healthy food and a wider, more varied, selection of unhealthy food. The same study also found that higher levels of access to supermarkets are associated with lower rates of obesity and weight problems and improved fruit and vegetable consumption. In contrast, lower levels of access to supermarkets are associated with a higher risk of obesity.

Perhaps most fundamentally, sustainable food systems are systems in which farmers, consumers, food processors, and other participants have concrete and relatively substantial relationships with one another, either through direct contact or local social networks. While the dominant form of agribusiness is one of anonymous relationships, farmers markets by their nature encourage direct face-to-face contact between producers and consumers. Such

relationships are worthwhile in their own right, but also have additional benefits. This interaction reinforces a sense of community and a sense of place for participants.

Having established some of the fundamental objectives that farmers' markets embody, we now turn to a discussion of starting and managing farmers' markets. Common ways are organizing markets are presented, as are common reasons why farmers' markets may fail. Finally, a list of resources is furnished at the end of this practice guide.

## **Market management**

One of the first steps in opening a farmers' market is to establish a governing body that determines the market rules (Thilmany, 2005). This body may include farmers, community members, and local business representatives. The governing body is responsible for determining vendor types, i.e. producer-only vs. carrying (vendors selling products produced by someone else; whether or not crafts or other non-food items are allowed, etc.); vendor stall fees; and hiring a market manager/master. In addition, the governing body should establish a mission statement that includes the reason for opening the market; such reasons might include providing an outlet for local farmers; providing a source of fresh, local produce to consumers; addressing the issue of food deserts; or building a sense of community (Meier, 2009). Having a well-defined mission statement also keeps the project and the people involved focused on the same goal. The governing body should also consider the eventual tax status of the market. For example, should the market be incorporated? ... a non-profit? ... a cooperative? Each of these statuses has different benefits and liabilities, which must be taken into consideration as the market grows.

The governing body also institutes the vendor agreement, which includes the rules and regulations of the farmers' market. These rules should address fees for stalls; occupation, vacancy and subleasing issues; the participation of minors; dispute resolution; penalties; and liability insurance (Speier and Krueger, 2006). Organizations such as Farmers' Legal Action Group, Inc. ([www.flaginc.org](http://www.flaginc.org)) provide resources such as discussions of common farmers' market rules (<http://www.flaginc.org/topics/pubs/arts/FarmersMarket.pdf>) that can help develop a template for markets just getting starting. In addition, Thilmany (2005) lists 20 common aspects of farmers' market rules and vendor agreements (see Appendix).

A market manager/master is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the market. These duties include:

- collecting vendor fees
- establishing a site plan
- settling disputes between vendors or between vendors and customers
- advertising the market
- enforcing market rules, and
- collaborating with the local business community

The market manager is also the primary recruiter of farmers and other producers.

## **Market location and hours of operation**

Several issues must be considered when establishing a location and time for a market. First, thought must be given to the distance farmers need to travel to the market and their time investment. This includes not only the commute to the market, but also harvesting produce to ensure the freshest products.

Second, the convenience for the patrons must be addressed. If the market is too out of the way, inconveniently located, or at an inconvenient time, business may be lost. Lastly, if the market is not located in a densely populated, walkable neighborhood, ample and accessible parking is needed for customers. Other considerations are the availability of shelter, restrooms and hand-washing facilities, which add to the convenience and attractiveness of the market.

Some location options include a public parking lot, vacant lot, church or schoolyard, hospital plaza, commercial parking lot, or public park. In some instances, communities secured funding to establish a permanent open-air market with appropriate facilities for both vendors and customers. The choice of location may dictate the time your market is open. Most often, markets are open on Saturday morning but opting for weekday evenings might attract customers who can incorporate their shopping with their daily commute.

The layout of the vendor stalls should focus on the flow of foot traffic through the market. The market should be arranged so that visitors pass all vendors and do not encounter dead ends.

## **Locating farmers and establishing a customer base**

Locating and identifying farmers and producers for the farmers' market should not be a daunting task. County extension offices are a good resource. Operating farm establishments can be found listed on the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture's website (<http://www.csrees.usda.gov/Extension/index.html>), through farmers' cooperatives, and local 4-H groups.

Some markets are outlets for hobby farmers or residents engaged in urban agriculture. The farmers' market governing body should consider whether the market is a producer-only enterprise or if vendors who carry items produced by others are allowed. Vendors selling value-added products (such as jams, salsa, or preserves) and crafts might also be included. To keep a balance of products, some markets limit the ratio of craft vendors to produce vendors (Stephenson, 2008).

Locating and attracting customers requires a concerted effort to get the word out to the community. Word-of-mouth is one of the most cited ways of hearing about a farmers' market (Lloyd et al., 1995). In addition, establishing a consistent logo can help with recognition. Visible signage at the market location is also an effective marketing tool. While traditional modes of advertising such as television or radio ads require at least six exposures for a consumer to act on it and can be costly (Jost and Taylor-Puckett, n.d.), advertising on local radio or in print can



be more cost-effective. However, personal recommendations and word-of-mouth are very effective, particularly social networking sites such as Facebook. Community engagement can be achieved by scheduling events and promotions that involve local businesses, civic organizations, and schools.

To address the needs of all customers, as well as expand the customer base, markets can work with the state to accept Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards and Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) program vouchers at the market (Jones and Bhatia, 2011). While this requires power and a phone line, some markets have established a central point-of-sale (POS) station that accepts EBT and WIC and provides the customers with a voucher or coupon (sometimes referred to as a *scrip*) to give to the vendor which can then be redeemed. Other forms of low-income assistance through state departments of agriculture include Seniors Farmers' Market Nutrition Programs which assist seniors in accessing fresh fruits and vegetables. Farm-to-Table programs, which encourage schools and restaurants to use locally grown food and CSAs (community supported agriculture) provide a stable demand for goods. These programs rely on a regular supply of produce which is paid for in advance. Farmers then provide the goods throughout the growing season either by delivery or a mutually convenient pick-up point. This ensures that the farmer knows the demand for goods before planting and harvesting and provides regular supplies of produce to participants.

### **What should be sold in a farmers' market?**

According to a study by Stephenson et al. (2008b), the nine most commonly sold items at farmers' markets are:

- Fruit
- Vegetables
- Fish
- Meat
- Value-added products (such as salsa, jams, or preserves)
- Cheese
- Bakery products
- Cut flowers, dried flower arrangements
- Nursery products

As mentioned previously, the governing body needs to decide what products are allowed for sale, such as whether the market offers producer-only products or if carrying is permitted. It may also be important to maintain a designated ratio of food vendors to craft vendors to ensure product availability. In general, a wider variety of products does attract more customers. A study of two Alabama farmers' markets investigated what patrons of the markets wanted. Visitors primarily expressed a desire for product variety, an extended growing season, and more vendors (Alonso and O'Neill, 2011).

Product seasonality or availability determines how long your market is open during the year. Therefore it's important that customers know and understand product seasonality so they

know when to expect certain products. Farmers may also want to grow early crops or use season extension technology (Conner et al., 2009), so that demand can be met and the growing season can be expanded. Adding more exotic produce helps farmers diversify and widens the appeal of the market.

### **Licensing, permits, taxes, and food safety**

The vendors are responsible for having the appropriate licenses and permits to sell food. In addition, they are responsible for collecting tax on items sold. Some unprocessed items (such as tomatoes) may be exempt from taxes but any processed product (such as tomato salsa) may be subject to state sales tax. Even though each vendor is responsible for collecting taxes, it is important that the market manager understands local and state government laws and policies and procedures to ensure compliance. In addition, periodic educational programs that include presentations by state or local officials or a representative from the Department of Revenue could be helpful for both the market manager and the vendors.

Issues of food safety must be evaluated by the market manager to ensure that all vendors are in compliance with local laws. This includes food handling, raw meat requirements (although there may be federal and state exemptions for small farms), refrigeration of eggs and other perishables, and the distribution of samples.

### **Common reasons why markets fail**

While the overall number of new farmers' markets is increasing nationally, this does not reflect the number of markets that open and then fail. For example, in a study of Oregon farmers' markets from 1998 to 2005, 62 new markets opened but 32 did not reopen, leaving a net gain of 30 markets. A few studies have determined the primary reasons that markets shut down (Stephenson et al., 2008a, Stephenson et al., 2008b). These reasons are:

- 1) *Manager turnover.* High levels of market manager turnover lead to instability and inconsistency. There are several factors that lead to high turnover. New, small markets may employ a manager with little or no experience. A study of Oregon farmers' markets found that 37 percent of managers had only one year of experience (Stephenson, 2008) while a study of New Jersey farmers' markets found that 58 percent of managers had less than two years' experience (in Stephenson, 2008). Also contributing to this issue is whether the market manager is a volunteer or a paid employee. Stephenson (2008) found that many of the markets in Oregon that failed were those that had a volunteer manager or a manager paid a low salary. Small markets typically start with a volunteer manager who may also be a vendor. As long as the market is small and the workload is minimal, such volunteer positions may be sufficient. However, once the market starts to grow, more hours may be required both in-season and off-season. As these hours increase, volunteers often feel overwhelmed. Having a plan for transitioning from a volunteer manager to a paid manager when the market reaches a certain size (for example, when 20 vendors are reached) can help avoid this problem. Markets may set a

goal for the size they wish to attain that not only provides product diversity but also provides enough administrative revenue to pay a market manager and eventually other market assistants (see reason 2 below).

- 2) *Revenue “have-nots.”* Many small markets lack the administrative revenue (revenue from stall fees) to meet costs associated with the market (paying a manager or other assistants, lot rental fees, costs of advertising, etc.). Since nearly all market revenue comes from stall fees, small markets are more susceptible to this problem than larger markets that not only have more vendors but also charge higher stall fees. In the early stages of market development, community or state grants can help offset these costs to allow the market to grow enough to be self-sustaining (see the Resources section in this guide). This may include providing a salary for a market manager (see reason 1 above).
- 3) *Life span.* Most, but not all, markets that fail have been in operation less than four years. Newer markets may lack a customer base or enough vendors to be viable. This is complicated by the fact that in order to get vendors, you need customers and in order to get customers, you need vendors, which is also known as the *circular condition* (Stephenson, 2008). Having outside funding to help subsidize your market as it grows can help make the market worthwhile for vendors until a strong customer base is established.
- 4) *Small size.* Small markets often have less diversity of products and also may not have enough goods to meet demands. Many farmers are reluctant to invest their time and effort in a market with a small customer base. Again, subsidizing farmers through community grants or state/federal programs until your market grows may counteract this effect. Incorporating community supported agriculture (CSA) can guarantee farmers a certain level of income and excess produce can still be sold at the market.
- 5) *Lack of product diversity.* Certain types of produce are very common to farmers markets and customers expect these to be available (corn, tomatoes, peppers, peaches, and apples; Govindasamy, 1998). Encouraging farmers to expand their product base can help attract new customers and even retain current ones. More exotic products can be offered along with recipes and instructions on how to prepare them. Products other than produce can help with your market’s diversity as well. For example, value-added products such as jams and salsas are popular as well as fresh cut flowers and nursery products. Some markets allow or even encourage craft vendors in order to enhance the diversity of the market. Maintaining a diversity of products ensures customer loyalty and encourages word-of-mouth advertising.
- 6) *Opposition from local businesses.* Some markets have faced opposition from local business owners who fear that the added competition could decrease their revenue. Working with these businesses from the onset of organizing the farmers’ market can help alleviate these concerns. While markets may in fact compete with some businesses, they draw a much larger customer base to the area thus “offer[ing]

everyone a proportionally smaller piece of a significantly larger pie” (Spitzer, 1995). Farmers’ markets that are located in downtown and urban areas can help revitalize these neighborhoods and bring more traffic to all the businesses.

### **Additional ideas to enhance your farmers’ market**

Stephenson’s (2008) study of Oregon farmers’ markets found three key traits of successful markets: *atmosphere*, *product*, and *community*.

#### *Atmosphere*

Use the market layout to control the flow of foot traffic in order to encourage interaction between customers and also between customers and vendors. By positioning vendors of specific products in particular places, patrons are naturally drawn through the market. Ample walkways allow for personal interaction without causing traffic jams. A study of New Jersey farmers’ market patrons found that 90 percent cited not only fresh produce but also direct contact with farmers as the reason they chose to visit the market (Govindasamy, 1998).

Some markets may be located in noisy areas. Having live music can mask outside noise and create a convivial atmosphere where people like to linger. In addition, vendors should be encouraged to make their stalls attractive through displays and signs. Patrons in the Oregon study of farmers’ markets mentioned the smells and colors as part of the positive atmosphere they enjoyed (Stephenson, 2008). Vendors should be friendly and inviting, as should their stalls. The Wallace Center’s Farmers’ Market Handbooks (<http://www.wallacecenter.org/our-work/Resource-Library/wallace-publications/handbooks/>) provide direction on how to make the most of space provided for vendors. Their advice includes arranging eye-catching displays of products, making use of vertical space with tiered displays, featuring a variety of products that are easily accessible, and arranging products by color, shape, and size.

#### *Consumer Expectations: A study of a North Carolina Farmers’ Market.*

A study of the Piedmont Triad Farmers’ Market in North Carolina was undertaken to learn more about the expectations consumers have when they visit a farmers’ market. While many visitors cited the availability of fresh produce of high nutritional quality as the reason for their visit, 62 percent of respondents to the survey said they came equally for products and the atmosphere of the market. The vast majority (89 percent) purchased from more than three vendors during their visit, leading the researchers to conclude that part of the markets’ attraction was the opportunity to meet and visit with farmers. Consumers were also allowed to make additional comments and approximately 15 percent commented that coming to the market was a fun Saturday morning outing (Andreatta and Wickliffe, 2002).

## *Product*

Having a diversity of vendors and products can play a key role in the success of a farmers' market. But in addition to variety, products must also be of high quality. Surveys of farmers' market patrons reveal that many of them come to the market because of the freshness and high quality of the products offered compared to conventional outlets, such as grocery stores. Most farmers harvest produce just before coming to the market, thus providing the freshest possible goods (California Farmers' Market Association, 2011; Andreatta and Wickliffe, 2002).

As suggested previously, farmers may expand their production to more exotic products in order to enhance product diversity and set themselves apart from other vendors. Providing samples and recipe ideas to accompany new products can help familiarize patrons with new items. Some markets employ a "Chef at Market" to do cooking demonstrations using products from the market (Podoll, 2000). This allows patrons to see the products being used and taste samples before buying. Be sure to check local ordinances on providing samples and prepared foods at the market.

### *What visitors want: A case study from Alabama.*

Researchers undertook a study of visitors to two farmers' markets in Alabama – one newly opened market in a rural community and one established market located on the campus of Auburn University. Despite the differences in visitor income and frequency of visits to farmers' markets, when asked what would improve the market, respondents from both markets suggested the need for more product variety, a longer season (not just summer), and the need for more vendors (Alonso and O'Neill, 2011).

## *Community*

Many patrons of farmers' markets state that they enjoy the sense of community the market provides. Patrons can interact with the people that grow their food and know that the money they spend stays in their community. This concept of civic agriculture has grown in popularity and supports not only the economic development of communities but also social cohesion. Markets provide time for interaction with vendors and neighbors in a welcoming environment (see Atmosphere section above). This is an opportunity for vendors to inform customers of their power to support local agriculture and how this affects the community.

Markets can encourage local civic and social organizations to participate and help spread the word.

Markets can also invite schools to have field trips to the farms and the market to instill an appreciation for local food in children. The market can be an event for the whole family by offering music, but also face painting and balloons for the youngest patrons. Some markets even include a petting zoo, though this may require additional permitting.

Lastly, leftover perishable items can be donated to a local food bank or shelter. A market in Richmond, California donates \$100 every month to a local food pantry, which in turn uses the money to make purchases at the market which are then distributed to the needy (Fisher, 1999).

### **Farmers' markets in low-income communities**

The purpose of a market may be to provide healthy food to areas lacking access to fresh produce. Such lack of access is common in low-income communities where the problem is exacerbated by low vehicle ownership rates and the difficulty of carrying a large number of purchases on public transportation. In such communities, commonly referred to as "food deserts," farmers' markets can provide not only an outlet for local farmers but can also be the only source of fresh fruits and vegetables for miles. However, farmers' markets in low-income communities face special challenges that may not arise in middle- or higher-income neighborhoods, such as lack of awareness about the market, the markets' ability to accept EBT and other nutritional supplement programs administered electronically, and the perceived safety of the area where the market is located.

Fisher (1999) provides recommendations from his study of farmers' markets in low-income neighborhoods. One of the primary issues deals with the approach taken to start the market. Traditional modes of advertising are not as effective as community organizing. By using community organizing techniques, the residents gain a sense of ownership in the market, which makes it more likely that they will patronize it. Neighborhood associations, churches, civic groups, and schools all provide an opportunity to involve the community in the development and success of a farmers' market.

Matching farmers to consumers can help provide the right mix of goods that are appropriate and in demand for that particular neighborhood. The primary concern for most consumers in low-income neighborhoods is price. Thus, organic produce may not be economically viable for the patrons or the farmers. Many low-income communities are also predominantly minority neighborhoods. Finding farmers who can grow ethnically-appropriate food can help make the market more appealing to local residents. Also, locating minority farmers can increase community participation. Farmers from outside the community might consider hiring local residents, particularly if the farmer does not speak the predominant language of the neighborhood. This not only makes the market more inviting to residents but stimulates the local economy by providing jobs.

Maintaining enough revenue to make the market viable can be an issue. Many markets in low-income neighborhoods are subsidized through grants to help keep them open. Federal, state, and local governments have programs that can provide support to keep the market operating. However, grants and subsidies can disappear in economically hard times. Thus, some communities place the farmers' market on the fringe of low-income neighborhoods making them accessible to people from higher-income areas as well. These patrons can often provide enough revenue to support the market so that lower-income neighborhood residents can still benefit from the availability of fresh produce. This solution, however, does not address food deserts in core areas. Also, transportation can be an issue if the market is not centrally located.

Linking the location of the market to public transportation routes can help keep the market more accessible.

Finally, many residents of low-income neighborhoods rely on EBT, WIC, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), or other nutritional programs. In 1999, before the implementation of EBT (which was completed in 2004), some markets reported that food stamps made up a majority of their total sales (Fisher, 1999). Since the transition to EBT, accepting government benefits has been more problematic for farmers' markets which often lack the infrastructure required to process the payments (power, phone line, etc.). So far, the most successful resolution has been the use of central POS equipment to process EBT. Patrons are then issued tokens which can be used to make purchases within the market. The USDA Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP) Fund offers grants of up to \$100,000 to help markets afford POS devices and wireless service and waives transaction fees for markets located in low-income areas.

## **Conclusion**

This practice guide outlines some of the issues that should be addressed by any group attempting to open a new farmers' market or to enhance an existing market. Establishing a governing body, employing a market manager, and finding the best day and time for the market are some of the first steps required to run a successful market. Locating vendors and attracting customers can be facilitated by working with the local county extension office and the USDA. Advance planning and a focus on the markets' goal(s) (such as supporting local agriculture, providing access to fresh, healthy food and/or building a sense of community) can help to overcome the obstacles that can hinder a markets' growth. Involvement of the local community through schools, religious or civic associations, and neighborhood groups can not only grow the customer base but make the market a part of the community. Governing bodies need to determine and establish the policies regarding farmers' markets that ensure the success of such a venture within their community. This practice guide represents only a small portion of the literature and information on opening and maintaining successful farmers' markets and is intended as a basic framework of issues to be considered and further investigated by those interested in providing their community with fresh produce while supporting an ethic of civic agriculture. While each situation will be unique, the guidelines and suggestions within this practice guide are beneficial to those trying to establish a new market or enhance an existing one.

## Appendix

### Twenty Provisions Commonly Found in Farmers' Market Rules:

1. Organizer or sponsor – identifies who runs the market and sets out the philosophy and purpose of the market.
2. Market manager - identifies who makes the decisions on day-to-day operation.
3. Statement of the rules – makes the rules part of the agreement between the vendor and the market.
4. Defining key terms – explains what key phrases, such as vendor, allowable goods, categories of products, etc., will mean in context.
5. Approval of vendors and products - defines who can sell (farmer/non-farmer distinction), and what can be sold (produce-craft-food distinctions).
6. A criterion for selecting vendors – establishes any priorities or preferences, and the basis for them, and allocates market spaces.
7. Categories of products – rules for items such as baked goods, nursery plants, eggs, cheeses, meat, and processed foods, commonly related to inspections and handling.
8. Changes in ownership and vendors' rights – addresses issues such as transfer or change of business and seniority for market spaces.
9. Carrying rules – may allow farm vendors to sell products raised by other farmers.
10. Application process and fees – provides for the timing of application, selection and notification of vendors, sets the amount and payment of fees, and allocates market spaces and locations.
11. Types of vendors and length of market – creates categories of seasonal and daily vendors and may include the actual contract or application to participate.
12. Membership and market organization – creates operational structure for market and may require a separate payment for membership in sponsoring organization.
13. Necessary documents and permits – lists the various documents and licenses required to participate, including proof of insurance, tax permits, health inspection and other licenses. A market may require information such as farm plan, load lists for products raised, and organic certification.
14. Market operation – detailed guidelines on issues such as set-up, clean-up, selling times, notification for non-attendance, pets, parking, samples, sanitation, signage, hawking, smoking, and food safety and handling. Many provisions may be very detailed, making the operational rules the main part of a market's regulations.
15. Enforcement process – sets the procedures for rule enforcement, including reporting violations, notice, penalties, suspension or removal, and appeals.
16. Rule and law compliance - incorporates applicable state and local requirements into market rules, with agreement that it is vendor's responsibility to comply.
17. Hold harmless and indemnification – vendor agrees to protect market organizers from any legal or financial liability in case of accidents or incidents at market.
18. Food safety and sampling – specific rules for handling and storing different types of foods, with guidelines for sampling if allowed.



19. Other provisions – labeling, posting farm name, using legal scales, accepting nutrition checks and food stamps, pricing guidelines, farm visits, and gleaning excess food.
20. Signature line – creates a binding agreement between vendor and market (Thilmany, 2005)

## Internet Resources available from Government and Academic Sources

### *Federal Resources*

USDA Farmers Market Promotion Program <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/FMPP>

USDA Federal State Marketing Improvement Program  
<http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/FSMIP>

USDA Agricultural Marketing Service <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/>

- Searchable Index of Farmers' Markets in the US:  
<http://search.ams.usda.gov/farmersmarkets/>

National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition  
<http://sustainableagriculture.net/publications/grassrootsguide/local-food-systems-rural-development/community-food-project-grants/>

### *State Resources*

**Alabama:** Alabama Farmers Market Authority <http://www.fma.state.al.us/> , Alabama Farmers Market <http://alabamafarmersmarket.org/>,

**Florida:** Florida Association of Community Farmers' Markets <https://sites.google.com/a/facfm.org/facfm/> , University of Florida Small Farms and Alternative Enterprises [http://smallfarms.ifas.ufl.edu/planning\\_and\\_management/farmers\\_markets.html](http://smallfarms.ifas.ufl.edu/planning_and_management/farmers_markets.html) , Bureau of State Farmers Markets <http://www.florida-agriculture.com/markets.htm>

**Georgia:** State Farmers Markets <http://agr.georgia.gov/state-farmers-market.aspx> , Univ. Georgia Sustainable Agriculture: <http://www.caes.uga.edu/topics/sustainag/resources.html>

**Kentucky:** Kentucky Agricultural Finance Corporation: <http://kafc.ky.gov/>  
County Agricultural Investment Program: <http://agpolicy.ky.gov/funds/caip.shtml>  
Farmers Market Infrastructure Competitive Grant Program:  
[http://agpolicy.ky.gov/funds/award\\_programs\\_farmersmarkets.shtml](http://agpolicy.ky.gov/funds/award_programs_farmersmarkets.shtml)  
Kentucky Department of Agriculture Farmers' Market Program:  
<http://www.kyagr.com/marketing/farmmarket/index.htm>  
2010-2011 Kentucky Farmers' Market Guide:  
<http://www.kyagr.com/marketing/farmmarket/documents/20102011KyFarmersMarketManualwCover.pdf>

**Mississippi:** Farmers Market Nutrition Program:  
<http://www.mdac.state.ms.us/programs/mf mnp/mississippi-farmers-market-nutrition-program.htm>, Mississippi State University: <http://msucares.com/crops/market/>

**North Carolina:** North Carolina Farm Fresh <http://www.ncfarmfresh.com/index.asp> , Farmers Market Association of North Carolina <http://ncfarmersmarkets.org/default.aspx>

**South Carolina:** South Carolina State Farmers Markets <http://agriculture.sc.gov/statefarmersmarkets> , Community Based Farmers Market <http://agriculture.sc.gov/content.aspx?ContentID=773> , Community Development Block Grant Program <http://scommerce.com/about-south-carolina/community-development-block-grant-program>

**TN:** Farmers Market Promotion and Retail Grant Program <http://www.tn.gov/agriculture/enhancement/fmpromo.shtml>  
Market Development Grants <http://www.tn.gov/agriculture/marketing/index.shtml>  
Center for Profitable Agriculture at the University Tennessee-Knoxville: <http://cpa.utk.edu/>

#### *Other Resources*

The National Farmers' Market Network at [www.wallacecenter.org](http://www.wallacecenter.org).

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