



Market Matters

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Farmers Market Coalition Helps Markets Prepare for National Farmers Market Week

Offers free tools for planning and promoting events

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The Farmers Market Coalition (FMC), a national nonprofit committed to strengthening farmers markets, announces today the launch of its annual campaign to help farmers markets nationwide prepare for 17th annual National Farmers Market Week (NFMW, August 7-13), a yearly celebration sponsored by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) that highlights the important role farmers markets play in the nation's food system. The campaign provides more than 8,500 farmers markets across the country with promotional tools, guides and materials they can use to promote events happening at their markets during the weeklong celebration.



“National Farmers Market Week allows farmers markets to take center stage on a national level and is an opportunity for all markets to showcase the impacts they make in their communities. We want to make it easy for all market managers, regardless of funds or capacity, to

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Reaching Those Who Don't Yet Shop At Our Market

From FMC Market Manager FAQ

Expanding beyond ‘the choir’ to second-tier shoppers is essential to increasing your producers’ sales and to anchoring the market more deeply into the community. Ways to expand your reach might include offering more products that your consumers want; adding activities, services or special events to your market; or making your market more accessible to community members of all income levels. Understanding customer motivations is key: take a look at the extensive research conducted by the Greenbelt (Ontario) Farmers Market Network in [two reports from 2010 and 2012](#).

Step back and ask yourself if there is anything missing from your market. Should you offer different varieties of the same product, baked goods, flowers, meat, or value-added products? Try and find farmers who sell

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“Remember that the beauty of farmers markets is the unique experience customers have that they can't get at the grocery store.”

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spread the word by providing them with these easy-to-use, customizable tools,” said FMC’s executive director, Jen Cheek.

FMC’s resources are free and available online. The toolkit includes templates for creating newsletters and press releases, sample social media posts and graphics, farmers market facts and talking points, as well as information on how to invite local officials to market events. Farmers market-themed merchandise is also available for purchase to hand out at events, give away as prizes and more.

“As farmers markets continue to grow across America, they’re also becoming critical community assets and public spaces....”

This year, USDA Agricultural Market Service (AMS) also released new NFMW branding materials markets can download free of charge to create marketing materials such as posters, emails and buttons. “We’re thrilled USDA AMS is providing this easy, cost-effective way for managers to develop beautiful marketing materials for their market,” said Cheek. “We hope the combination of USDA and FMC resources streamlines promotional efforts for markets nationwide.” In addition, FMC is also hosting a poster contest designed to highlight the creativity and hard work farmers markets already put into promoting their venue. Markets of the winning posters are eligible for \$1500 in cash prizes and will be featured at events in Washington D.C. during NFMW. Contest deadline is July 24.

As demand for local food continues to swell, farmers markets in the United States have nearly doubled in number over the past ten years, increasing from 4,384 to 8,562, according to the USDA. This year, FMC celebrates its tenth anniversary and is heartened by the progress farmers markets have made in the past decade, as well as the impacts they continue to make in both rural and urban communities.

Research indicates farmers markets are not only economic drivers and food access hubs for communities across the country, but play a vital role to support rural livelihoods, preserve farmland, and protect the environment.

“As farmers markets continue to grow across America, they’re also becoming critical community assets and public spaces that bring families from all backgrounds together to socialize, purchase healthy, affordable food and support their local farmer,” said Cheek. “FMC is proud to be a voice for our nation’s farmers markets and support their efforts toward continued growth. We’re excited for what the next decade will bring.”

The Farmers Market Coalition (FMC) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to strengthening farmers markets for the benefit of farmers, consumers, and communities. For more information about the Farmers Market Coalition, visit www.farmersmarketcoalition.org



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products familiar to a variety of ethnic backgrounds and bring vendors and farmers from the same ethnic groups to show that your market is reflective of the community it serves. Consider advertising in another language, too. If you surveyed your community before starting the market, look at what products they hoped to find at the market. You can also take a look at the Vendor Recruitment section of the Farmers' Market Federation of New York's [Farmers Market Manager Training Manual](#) for resources on conducting a product inventory that can help you decide if anything is missing from your market.

Remember that the beauty of farmers markets is the unique experience customers have that they can't get at the grocery store. Reach out in the community and bring community organizations that offer a wide variety of services and educational activities for all ages into your markets. Many markets designate a vendor stall that rotates organizations each week. You could bring in the local county extension service to offer information about food preservation or Master Gardeners to provide gardening expertise.

Are you reaching out to community members of a wide range of income levels? You can do this by accepting nutrition assistance program benefits such as SNAP (formally known as food stamps) or Senior and WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program benefits at your market to make your producers more accessible. Take a look at the Market Management FAQ Category [Increasing Market Access](#) for more information about expanding your reach through nutrition assistance programs.

Other customers who may not be able to access your market include those who have a physical disability, senior citizens who are homebound, or individuals with conflicting work schedules. Some farmers markets are establishing Direct Delivery programs to reach these customers, where customers can order online from the market and have products delivered by volunteers. Check out the *Building a Farmers Market Community* section in the Farmers' Market Federation of New York's [Farmers Market Manager Training Manual](#) for examples of these programs.

Overall, the more you expand your market to reach more community members, the bigger impact your market will have on your vendors, your customers, your community, and ultimately your local food system.



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Upcoming Penn State Extension Events

[Are You Crazy: Retail Farm Market Bus Tour](#)

When: September 13, 2016 7:00 AM to September 14, 2016 6:00 PM

Where: Allentown, PA

Join us for our 20th Annual Are You Crazy? Retail Farm Market Bus Tour to explore some of the premier farm markets in Northern Pennsylvania and the Finger Lakes region of New York.

<http://www.cvent.com/events/are-you-crazy-retail-farm-market-bus-tour/event-summary-cd388ee6b7224bc5825d48ed24bb499f.aspx>