

# The economic benefits of farmers' markets

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# **1 Summary**

Farmers' markets are springing up all over the UK. They are good for local economies, farmers, consumers and the environment. Local Authorities, Regional Development Agencies and national Government all have a role to play in ensuring that these fast-growing enterprises expand and prosper. This briefing sets out

- C Why farmers' markets are so good;
- C Why local, regional and national authorities should support them;
- C What these authorities should do to support them.

It focuses on farmers' markets, but the arguments are very similar in support of other "local food initiatives" such as Community Supported Agriculture, farm shops, farm co-operatives, veggie boxes and other initiatives selling food direct from farmers to consumers - these will be briefly mentioned also. Farmers' markets are:

## **Good for farmers**

- they're a different source of revenue, often crucial in today's difficult farming climate.
- they give farmers greater control over their economic lives.
- farmers can get higher prices - as the middle man is cut out.
- farmers diversify their skills - gaining marketing and business expertise.
- farmers get increased networking and learning opportunities with other farmers.

## **Good for the local economy**

- more money is spent in the local economy, and it circulates in the locality for longer.
- there is high knock-on spending in other shops on market days.
- they provide an outlet for local produce, helping to start new local businesses and expand existing ones.
- they reinforce local job and business networks, maintaining local employment.

## **Good for consumers**

- consumers enjoy the atmosphere and experience of farmers' markets.
- consumers get fresh, healthy produce usually at competitive prices.
- they offer increased choice, and can offer extra fresh, affordable produce in areas with few such options.
- they strengthen community - a key factor in the quality of life in the UK.

## **Good for the environment**

- food travels less far; there are less "food miles".
- food has less packaging.
- they are an important outlet for farmers selling organic and less intensively-produced food.

## **2 Farmers' markets and local food initiatives - what are they?**

Farmers' markets are food markets where farmers and producers bring their produce for sale direct to the public. There are usually rules for farmers markets. The main ones are that bought-in food cannot be sold, and that food should be from "local" producers - where "local" is determined by individual markets. The National Association of Farmers Markets in the UK exists in part to accredit these markets and ensure standards are maintained.

There are other types of "local food initiatives". Many, like farmers' markets, also involve the selling of food direct from farmers to consumers - like farm shops and farming co-operatives. Another example with rapidly increasing interest is "Community Supported Agriculture" - where people band together and pay farmers a yearly sum, in return for regular weekly or monthly deliveries of food and a say in how the farm is managed and what produce is grown.

Veggie boxes are slightly different local food initiatives which can often involve a middleman - a co-operative or commercial body which delivers local food to consumers usually on a weekly or monthly basis. Over 50,000 families<sup>1</sup> receive a veggie box each week in the UK. Some are co-ordinated nationally (even by supermarkets) but the majority are small, independent ventures.

## **3 The potential**

In 1999, three days of farmers' markets in Winchester, Hampshire generated total sales for farmers between £70,000 and £85,000. An average of 10,000 visitors attended each market. Visitor and farmer numbers increased by 50% each time. 97% of people attending wanted to go to more farmer's markets, and all local stores reported major increases in takings.

In 1997 there were no farmers markets in the UK. Now there are 240. Turnover at UK farmers' markets is currently £65 million a year<sup>2</sup>.

But there is even greater potential. In the USA, annual sales from farmers markets are over \$1 billion. There is major support from national and state Government for these initiatives in the USA.

UK authorities - at local, regional and national levels - are starting to see the benefits and starting to support farmers' markets. If UK authorities help these booming initiatives in similar ways as in the USA, then we can expect to see thriving, diverse and competitive local food economies all over the country.

## **4 Advantages of farmers markets**

This section present arguments backed up mainly with evidence from the USA, where farmers' markets have been flourishing for 15 years. The comparative lack of UK evidence is merely because farmers markets are so new here.

### **4.1 The local economy**

Farmers' markets make economic sense. In the USA they are seen as a sound business proposition. For example, 90% of Illinois' 147 farmers markets are sponsored by a Chamber of Commerce or merchants' association<sup>3</sup>, and the US Department of Agriculture report that 85% of

farmers markets are economically self-sustaining<sup>4</sup>.

They can also command considerable turnover. The 26<sup>th</sup> September 1999 farmers' market in Winchester, Hampshire had sales of £30-35,000. The Stour Valley farmers' market injected between £60,000 and £100,000 into the rural economy in 1999<sup>5</sup>. Combined annual sales from 19 farmers' markets in Ontario in 1998 was \$73 million dollars<sup>6</sup>.

A survey of Rural Economic Development in New York State found that: *"Though they are not an economic development panacea, farmers' markets should be considered an important component of a comprehensive local economic development strategy"*<sup>7</sup>. The rest of this section sets out the local economic benefits of farmers' markets:

### **C Spending in farmers' markets has a high multiplier effect in the local economy**

The multiplier is a measure of the number of times money circulates in the local economy before leaving. A high multiplier means that money circulates more times in the local area before leaving - money stays locally if it is spent on wages for local people or buying local produce; a low multiplier means money leaves the local economy quickly on things like utility bills, profits to investors based outside the area, insurance premiums, etc.

The effect of low multiplier effects - haemorrhaging of the local economy - has long been acknowledged in the USA, particularly regarding food -

*"Iowans spend nearly \$8 billion annually on food. Most of these food dollars leave our economy. Expanding local markets offers an opportunity to reverse this "value subtracted" economy and invest a significant portion of the food dollars in Iowa"*<sup>8</sup>.

The potential benefits of increasing the multiplier is just as great in the UK. Roger Thompson, from Business in the Community in Cornwall says: *"In Cornwall, £500 million per year is spent on food. 75 per cent of that is imported from outside Cornwall. If we reduce that by just 1 per cent, we have invested £5 million in our local economy"*<sup>9</sup>.

The economic benefits of buying local have just been highlighted by the Social Exclusion Unit. In the best practice section of their Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy they cite a case in Oregon where: *"a community development corporation..asked ten local business each to list 40 items purchased outside of the State. They then contacted other local businesses that might be interested in bidding on items from the list. In its first year, this initiative generated \$2.5 million in new local contracts and 100 new jobs."*<sup>10</sup>

A strong local economy is particularly important in rural areas. The Government says that *"without a strong local economic base, many rural communities risk becoming little more than dormitory facilities for urban commuters"*<sup>11</sup>.

Farmers' markets can play a part in the economic development of areas. The US experience finds that *"Whether in the form of weekly outdoor markets that convene only in the warmer months, indoor market halls that operate every day year round, or entire market districts, a number of American cities are finding that public markets are providing an effective strategy for revitalising urban communities"*<sup>12</sup>. This is in part because they have high multiplier effects:

- The multiplier for farmers' markets in Georgia is 2.66<sup>13</sup>
- A Canadian study of farmers' markets found that \$500 million sales at farmers' markets in Ontario generated \$1000 million in spin-off activity<sup>14</sup>.

In contrast, spending at supermarkets for example greatly reduces the local multiplier, as most revenue leaves the local area immediately.

Increasing the multiplier is an effective way of strengthening local economies - but is of particular benefit in poorer areas. Economically depressed communities are invariably net exporters of financial capital. Keeping money within an area is an important aspect of regeneration, which tends to be overlooked in comparison with the traditional regeneration technique of bringing money into an area. The Government's Social Exclusion Unit says: *"The problem is not necessarily that too little money flows into a neighbourhood. Rather it is what consumers, public services and business do with that money. Too often, it is spent on goods and services with no local presence, and therefore immediately leaves the neighbourhood"*<sup>15</sup>. West and McCormick argue that *"Regeneration programmes should have a core target of radically ring-fencing the local economy to stop the haemorrhage of the little money residents have"*<sup>16</sup>.

The need for strategies to keep money in neighbourhoods is now acknowledged by Government - it is one of the key recommendations from the Social Exclusion Unit's National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal<sup>17</sup>.

### **C Farmers' markets strengthen links between local businesses,**

The National Farmers Union quotes the success of Duncan Penny, a Lancashire pig farmer<sup>18</sup>:

*"I would have gone out of business last autumn had it not been for farmers' markets. I had no expertise but using a local butcher developed a range of pork products including sausages, bacon and cured hams as well as fresh pork. The ultimate compliment is that many of my customers are now regulars"*.

A study of local food "webs" in Sussex<sup>19</sup> found that retail shops were dependent on local producers, and producers and wholesalers in turn depend on their rural outlets in the market towns and villages. It found that *"one of the most important findings was the extent to which local shops sell locally produced food"*. Farmers' markets will help sustain and build up these local food webs - because they are by nature outlets for local produce and because they keep money within the local economy. The networks that farmers' markets foster can, as the Government says: *"underpin economic dynamism by creating opportunities for trading, collaborating and learning"*<sup>20</sup>.

The Sussex study cited above found that nearly all food producers started on a small-scale and could not have done so without the outlets small shops provided. Many continue to depend on local shops to sell their produce - a relationship which allows them to gain the business expertise needed to develop new products and expand into wider markets<sup>21</sup>.

### **C Farmers' markets safeguard local jobs**

The above study was commissioned because of the perceived negative local impacts of a proposed superstore. The superstores' own organisation - the National Retail Planning Forum - found that

there was a net loss of 270 local jobs on average each time a superstore opens. A trend towards farmers' markets, strengthening local links, can be expected to have net job gains.

Farmers' markets have major potential for safeguarding jobs: a study in Ontario found that *“a total of 24,000 people are directly involved in preparing and selling the goods we find in [the province's 127] farmers' markets”*<sup>22</sup>.

Local food initiatives can also safeguard processing jobs in small businesses. The sale of “directly marketed” livestock in Minnesota generates revenue of \$43 million a year - \$33m of farmer income, and \$10 million in processing fees/revenues<sup>23</sup>. This direct marketing is keeping small processors afloat, and could help to safeguard equivalent jobs in the UK.

### **C Farmers' markets increase the diversity of the local economy**

The Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR) reports that *“large food stores can and have had an adverse impact on market towns and district centres. It is vital that those responsible for the future of market towns and district centres take positive steps to improve the range and quality of food shopping in those centres”*<sup>24</sup>. Farmers' markets offer additional choice and help strengthen other small outlets.

### **C Farmers' markets facilitate business expansion**

As farmers markets grow, there will be more opportunities for these rich local business links to grow, creating more local businesses.

Farmers' markets also act as spurs for business start-ups and growth for producers, as well as retailers. The US Department of Agriculture says that farmers' markets *“play a vital role in enabling small to medium sized growers to gain access to consumers. Without this access the existence of many small-sized growers would be threatened”*<sup>25</sup>

US experience shows that selling at a farmers' market can also provide an opportunity for a part-time grower to make the transition to a larger operation.<sup>26</sup>

Farmers' markets facilitate product development and diversification. 81% of farmers surveyed at 9 farmers' markets in the USA said that the ability to test-market new products at their farmers' market was beneficial<sup>27</sup>.

## **Farmers' markets as ways of revitalising market towns**

The Government reports that *“Market towns have been under pressure from:*

- C economic restructuring*
- C a loss of traditional activities such as livestock markets*
- C the shift of services to larger towns*
- C the growth in out-of-town retailing*

*It is important for rural communities that market towns retain their vitality”<sup>28</sup>*

Farmers' markets are a key way to increase the economic vitality of market towns, for the reasons cited above. North West Regional Development Agency say that *“the vitality of market towns is important to local residents, and to those in surrounding rural areas who rely on them for shopping, employment and a range of specialist services. Many towns have suffered a decline in fortunes in recent years - very few, for example, still have a market. This has resulted from increasing centralisation of services, competition from out of town shopping centres, the loss of traditional sources of employment and a lack of investment. Market towns provide some scope for sustainable solutions to rural diversification and can help to reduce inappropriate pressure on rural land from expansion and larger scale developments. The NWDA will work with all relevant partners to identify those in need of support and attention.”*

### **C Farmers' markets create large quantities of knock-on trade for local stores**

Nick Brown, UK Agriculture Minister says that: *“Farmers' markets bring together town and country in a beneficial way. They can help in delivering town and city centre revival”*.

- On farmers' market days in Winchester, Hampshire, local stores reported 30% increases in takings over the same day in previous years<sup>29</sup>.
- A US study of Albany and Corvallis farmers' markets in Oregon shows that knock-on customer spending at local stores is high. The authors say: *“The hypothesis that farmers' markets bring additional dollars downtown is strongly supported by this data”<sup>30</sup>*.
- ASDA in the UK note increased takings from farmers' markets in their car-parks: *“when there's a farmers' market our takings go up too, by five or ten per cent”<sup>31</sup>*
- A study of 19 farmers' markets in Ontario found that 50% of customers shopped at other businesses on their way to or from the farmers' market<sup>32</sup>.

In areas where there is already a strong retail sector selling local food produce, there needs to be a careful balance to ensure that farmers' markets are beneficial to the whole local food economy. Here, partnership across the local food sector is important.



## **Public markets - even bigger potential?**

Public markets in the USA expand upon a traditional farmers' market by making fresh food available throughout the year and typically operating several days a week. Local farmers selling one or two days a week is an important component of a public market, but the emphasis is on local independent merchants - not franchises - selling fresh food. In addition, prepared and speciality foods are also for sale. In all product lines, the market gives emphasis to local and regional food.

Public markets achieve a variety of public goals - providing affordable retailing opportunities to small businesses, preserving farming or farmland in the region or creating an inviting, safe and lively public place that attracts a wide range of people.

The key element of a public market that differentiates it from a supermarket is internal competition. A public market needs vendors to compete within similar product lines. Such a market can be a very powerful draw if properly merchandised.

In their most evolved state, public markets become the centers of districts where related businesses choose to locate, creating a highly synergistic and dynamic economic zone.

Over its 20 year history, Greenmarket in New York City has not only saved scores of family farms and provided economic opportunity in the region, but it has been a major catalyst for the estimated \$20 billion economic revival of the Union Square area, where its main market is located.

Many of today's large, successful public markets evolved from modest beginnings. The Greenmarket program in New York City got its start with one location in 1975.

*(Excerpts taken from Massachusetts Department of Agriculture, 1998. Boston Public Market, facility and business development plan.)*

## **C Farmers' markets and tourism**

Farmers' markets make a local area or region more attractive for tourism.

A study of 9 farmers' markets in New York State found that "*Farmers' markets tend to have a unique blend of farm, food and craft businesses. Farmers' markets showcase the sights, smells and sounds of a community - all of which draw tourists who bring new dollars from outside the community*"<sup>33</sup>.

### **4.2 Farmers**

Farmers are struggling, in part because big supermarkets use competition to drive down prices paid to producers- often competition between farmers in different countries. A recent grower survey, by the British Independent Fruit Growers Association, found that 85% of apple and pear growers said that multiple retailers were not giving them a fair deal<sup>34</sup>. Realistically, it will not be possible for UK farmers to compete on price in a global market - living standards and costs are much higher in the UK - a highly developed country<sup>35</sup>.

The future for farming in the UK is to sell produce based on quality and reputation, and by making strong links with local and regional economies and consumers. Farmers' markets are an excellent way to reclaim economic space for farmers to live in - they help farmers become less dependent on the whims of big supermarkets, highly fluctuating global commodity prices, and ruthless competition in a global economy.

Farmers' markets can be an essential survival route for farmers - providing extra and alternative revenue sources, as well as developing new skills.

### **C Farmers can get higher prices**

A USA Department of Agriculture marketing leaflet aimed at farmers says: "*Direct marketing, niche markets and value-added processing offer you a share of the 50 percent of the food dollar that now goes to middlemen - and strengthens communities, too*"<sup>36</sup>.

Farmers can get higher prices for their produce than by selling through wholesale outlets, by taking on some of the marketing functions usually carried out by middlemen - like packing and transportation. Cutting out the middleman means that the consumers do not lose out for the higher prices farmers are receiving.

In the USA, gross returns to producers from farmers' market sales are generally 200% to 250% higher than sales to wholesalers/distributors<sup>37</sup>.

### **C Farmers' markets help small farmers, and can be a major alternative revenue source**

The average taking at the Winchester, Hampshire farmers' market was £500 per farmer.

A Bath farmer says: "*I have been taking part in the Bath Farmers' Market from the start, three years ago. I sell pork and sausages, and I can only say that it - and the other 20 markets I now attend each month - has enabled me to stay in business*"<sup>38</sup>.

Farmers' markets help small farmers stay in business. The National Farmers Union says that "*With the crash in farm incomes it is no surprise that 97% of respondents to the survey said that the main reason producers attend farmers' markets is to secure vital extra income*"<sup>39</sup>.

This has been the experience in the USA also. The 1996 USDA survey found that more than one third of 20,000 farmers surveyed obtained all of their farm income from the farmers' market<sup>40</sup>. 37% of full-time growers in the USA selling at markets said they would be "*out-of-business or hurt considerably if their current market closed*"<sup>41</sup>. In the USA, farmers' markets are keeping small farmers going.

Farmers' markets can also offer an easier outlet for farmers than conventional channels. For example: "*small farms often turn to direct sales because they may be snubbed by wholesalers who deal only with high volume producers*"<sup>42</sup>. Small farms also struggle to deal with exacting specifications on size, shape and appearance, dictated by the supermarkets, not the consumer.

The Council for the Protection of Rural England say that: "*Supermarkets are increasingly obtaining food from very large farmers, importers, wholesalers and packing stations. They*

are unlikely to be able to source food from the number of producers the local area supports. Some do sell a small amount of local produce, while others fund village stores. However, these are isolated incidences and cannot replace the complex inter-dependent web of food production and retailing that fuels the local food industry”<sup>43</sup>.

The US Department of Agriculture reports that “Direct-sales markets provide many small and medium sized farmers their only access to consumers. Smaller farmers have been closed out of mass markets by their inability to invest in systems to get products ‘market ready’. Many medium sized farmers use farmers’ markets to supplement their income and increase cash flow. Research shows the additional income from sales at farmers’ markets is sometimes the factor that enables medium-sized growers to farm profitably”<sup>44</sup>.

In this difficult commercial context, farmers’ markets are a real alternative. Nick Brown, UK Agriculture Minister says: “Farmers are finding that selling direct to the consumer can bring them an alternative income”. Andrew McTurk, President of the UK Farm Retailing Association also sees farmers’ markets as an extension of farm retailing and a way to generate extra sales.

### **C Farmers’ markets offer new skills for farmers**

In the USA, 40% of farmers’ markets offer farmers information on better marketing. Selling at farmers’ markets helps farmers develop marketing and business skills.

#### **Other benefits for farmers -**

##### **Results of survey of farmers selling at New Mexico farmers’ markets<sup>45</sup>.**

At your market have you benefited from new:

	% agree or strongly agree
Information about production methods	62
Information about food processing	46
New business opportunities through networking	59
Educational opportunities	77

##### **Results of survey of skills improved by farmers selling at New York Farmers’ markets<sup>46</sup>.**

	% saying “some” or “great deal” of improvement
Advertising and customer relations	76
Understanding consumer needs	83
Competing effectively	75
Self-confidence in business	81

## **C Farmers' markets bring additional outlets for farmer's produce**

A survey of US farmers' markets found that almost all offer market promotional activities that highlight farmers' seasonal produce. Market managers often write to local restaurants encouraging them to buy direct from market vendors. Market managers build networks with local schools, hospitals, and senior citizens' centres to explore institutional food purchases from the market<sup>47</sup>.

### **4.3 Consumers**

Of the 13,000 visitors to the September 1999 Winchester farmers' market, 99% said they wanted to attend more farmers markets.

Nick Brown, UK Agriculture Minister says that "*the consumer benefits from products that are fresh, traceable and competitively priced*"<sup>48</sup>

A customer survey of three English farmers' markets<sup>49</sup> in Summer 1999 found these reasons why people support farmers' markets:

Reasons for shopping at the Farmers' market - unprompted responses:

Support small farmers	79 per cent of respondents
Curiosity/it's different	68 per cent
Freshly harvested/made	62 per cent
Organic produce	57 per cent
Good quality	45 per cent

The same survey asked about customer attitudes to supermarkets. The only positive attribute cited was convenience (70%), whereas there were many unprompted negative attributes - such as the lack of quality and freshness (25%). This suggests that farmers' markets offer more of what people actually want, and there should be more of them to make them more convenient.

In the USA the main reasons people give are the atmosphere, the fresh, quality food at competitive prices, and re-connecting with food.

## **C Farmers' markets can be cheaper**

*"A Connecticut consumer attitude survey revealed that 80% of buyers at farmers' markets believe that the price of fresh produce is the same or lower than grocery store prices. Price survey data supports this perception"*<sup>50</sup>.

This is generally because farmers' markets cut out the middle man, which can offer significant savings due to the enormous mark-ups of supermarkets. The National Farmers Union for example says that farmers are forced to accept low prices when selling their produce to supermarkets and this is not reflected in the prices that supermarket customers have to pay<sup>51</sup>. For example, even the cheapest organic milk on the supermarket shelf is sold at more than double the price the farmer

gets, but some supermarkets charge nearly three times the farm gate price<sup>52</sup>, which suggests overpricing at least at the higher end of the price scale. The mark-up on non-organic milk can also be three times the farm gate price - and the farmers are getting such a poor return (only about 9p a pint) that many are going out of business. The Competition Commission is currently investigating supermarkets' pricing policies.

US studies find that farmers' market prices for the consumer are competitive and often lower than at supermarkets - 18% lower<sup>53</sup> and 10-12%<sup>54</sup> according to two studies comparing similar quality food.

UK evidence so far suggests that for organic food, farmers' markets are considerably cheaper than supermarkets. A survey at the University of the West of England has recently found that prices of organic meat and poultry were 37% higher at supermarkets, with organic vegetables being 33% cheaper at farmers' markets<sup>55</sup>.

### **C People can re-connect with food and farmers, and they strengthen community**

The US Department of Agriculture report that "*Consumers shop in a pleasant environment and get the chance to meet the people who grow their food. Documented growth in farmers' markets over the last decade seems to indicate that this symbiotic relationship fills a marketing void*"<sup>56</sup>.

This is also good for farmers. One Ohio farmer says "*We want our customers to be more sensitive to the farm situation. The more they understand the connection of family farms to healthy communities, the better for us and farmers everywhere*"<sup>57</sup>.

They have strong educative value in putting people in touch with where their food comes from, who grows it, and how it is grown. They strengthen the links between rural areas and town and cities. They also create the potential to link local consumers with local farms in a longer partnership - for example through a farm shop or community supported agriculture.

Invariably, one of the main attractions of shopping at a farmers' market is that they are vibrant social occasions. It is the atmosphere as much as the food quality which brings people back. A study of farmers' markets in Ontario found that: "*Customers suggest that the market is a key community icon that can serve to reinforce and help retain community identity ... customers pointed out that farmers' markets represent an excellent alternative to mainstream supermarket shopping with a friendly, relaxed atmosphere that can not be duplicated anywhere else*"<sup>58</sup>.

### **C The food quality is better**

Tony Blair, speaking at the National Farmers Union conference in February 2000 said: "*we must market on quality*".

In the US, "*at least six taste test studies cited by Hughes and Mattson (1995) have shown that consumers typically prefer produce sold at farmers' markets to that from other sources. Consumers cite freshness, taste, appearance, and nutritive value as reasons for preferring farmers' market produce*"<sup>59</sup>.

### **C Farmers' markets widen choice**

Farmers' markets allow consumers access to more local produce. Supermarkets rarely stock locally sourced produce and even if they do it will have travelled round the country to be processed and packaged before it returns to be sold in its area of origin. Most supermarkets prevent store managers from sourcing food locally.

Nick Brown, Agriculture minister has stated that *"the wider goal we are all working towards is to ensure that British people have access to the top quality foods our countryside produces, restoring regional distinctiveness and variety"*<sup>60</sup>.

Yet most supermarkets offer very little variety of fresh produce. For example, three varieties account for 94% of eating pears grown in the UK. In a survey of UK fruit growers, 66% said that the practices of supermarkets has led them to grub up otherwise productive varieties of fruit<sup>61</sup>. Consumers are missing out - there are over 550 varieties of eating and cooking pears in the National Fruit Collection at Brogdale in Kent. When farmers sell locally, they grow more varieties because customers want them, and they don't have to accommodate big distributors and retailers who claim that size and appearance are what consumers want most<sup>62</sup>.

In America, farmers' markets offer wide ranges of fruit and vegetables<sup>63</sup>. Farmers' markets here can resurrect traditional varieties which we are rapidly losing.

## **C Consumers want more British food**

In 1999, research by the National Farmers Union found that British people want to support British farmers and eat home grown and reared food - but it needs to be made more visible and available<sup>64</sup>.

### **4.4 Social benefits**

## **C Farmers' markets can help reduce inequalities**

The US Department of Agriculture reports that *"Direct markets provide access to fresh fruit and vegetables for consumers - especially minority consumers in the inner city - who would otherwise not be able to get fresh produce"*<sup>65</sup>.

Farmers' markets are not a solely middle-class pursuit - even if that is the impression given in the Sunday supplements. US evidence suggests that rich and poor communities both have a strong interest in buying local agricultural produce. A study comparing farmers' markets in a rich university town with a poorer blue-collar town found *"the attractiveness of these products transcends the educational, income and subcultural difference represented by these two communities"*<sup>66</sup>.

Analysis in Philadelphia shows that even very low income areas would be able to support a farmers' market - their analysis also shows that these markets either make fresh fruit and vegetables available where they weren't before, or make them available at much lower prices.

US evidence shows that it is harder for farmers' markets to succeed in poorer areas, but that many do and are very successful<sup>67</sup>. There is much literature available from the US on the best ways to ensure the success of farmers markets in poorer areas<sup>68</sup>. The box below summarises a review of

the issues determining the success of farmers' markets in lower income areas in the USA.

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

US experience shows that the challenges of organising a market in a low-income area are greater than in wealthy communities. But many successful markets do exist - and these markets have major additional health and community benefits by making fresh, affordable food available where there was previously none. Not all of the US experience can be translated to the UK - many problems in the US relate to the use of food coupons for example - but there are many guidelines which will help here in the UK.

- C Low-income areas may not have the financial clout to support a fully-blown farmers market - smaller markets may be more appropriate.
- C Market managers need to ensure that the product-mix is geared more towards affordable basic foods, rather than value-added processed foods.
- C Markets need to be community-owned and community organised.
- C Markets need more financial support at the outset. To keep prices down, market managers can agree lower stall costs for farmers. Alternatively, markets can be linked - for example in a network of 15 farmers markets, a market in a lower-income area can be subsidised by other markets to ensure lower prices.

Source: Community Food Security Coalition, 1999. Evaluating farmers' markets in low income communities. [www.foodsecurity.org/](http://www.foodsecurity.org/)

This US experience suggests that farmers' markets have strong potential in the UK to help deal with the problem of "food deserts" - caused by the exodus of the supermarkets to out-of-town sites. A study in Sussex found that Lewes farmers' market can make locally grown fresh produce available and affordable for families on low incomes, and that farmers' markets in general have the potential to improve access to food for people on low incomes<sup>69</sup>. This is also happening in other areas (see box on Merseyside), and needs to be replicated across the country.

## **Local Food for Local People**

*Local Food for Local People* is a Merseyside-wide initiative to help Merseyside farmers and growers directly market their produce to local people, particularly in areas of low income and poor access to good quality fresh produce. The project is funded by MAFF and the European Union and is managed by Groundwork St Helens, Knowsley and Sefton in partnership with ADAS.

The project offers capital and marketing grants to farmers and growers and puts local food producers and communities in touch, helping them to develop food co-operatives, box delivery schemes and Farmers' Markets. In addition to improving the accessibility of high quality local produce for Merseyside residents, there are the added benefits of reduced food miles, less packaging and a stronger local economy.

The project launched the first Merseyside Farmers' Market on the 26<sup>th</sup> May 2000 and is proving very successful with farmers, growers and local consumers. A wide range of produce is on offer at the market, which runs on the last Friday of every month, ranging from organic vegetables and Southport Honey to Wild Boar and Guernsey Herd ice-cream.

For more information contact Groundwork on 01744 739396.

Farmers' markets can also help reduce food deserts in richer areas. One example is the thriving farmers' market in Wanborough - a village with no local shops. It reduces the distance people have to travel and it is particularly good for people without access to a car, as the local bus service is poor.

The US Department of Agriculture has a major voucher scheme - aimed at those considered 'nutritionally at risk', to be spent only at farmers' markets, which are redeemed by the farmers for cash. This scheme tackles food poverty and social exclusion problems. Currently, discussions are underway between London Farmers' Markets, Bow Healthy Living Centre in Tower Hamlets and Action Acton, about a possible similar pilot scheme in London, where vouchers might be funded by Single Regeneration Budget money. For further details contact Nina Planck on 020 7704 9659.

### **4.5 Environment**

There are also many environmental benefits from farmers' markets:

#### **C Reduced wastage**

Farmers in the USA report that an average of 22% of their crop could not be marketed if farmers' markets were not available<sup>70</sup>.

There is less wastage because good food is not discarded because it doesn't fit supermarkets' packaging requirements, or because the supermarket changes its order at the last minute. There is also less packaging waste - the Independent Fruit Growers Survey found that 67% of growers said they had been obliged to throw-away packaging during the last 12 months as a direct result of supermarkets changing their specifications.

#### **C Less food miles**



First, food is not transported hundreds of miles to distant warehouses and distribution centres and then shunted back in big lorries to supermarkets. This reduces the environmental (as well as economic and social) costs from transport.

Less food miles also means other reduced environmental impacts. Food needs less processing, packaging and preserving, because it doesn't have to survive long journeys. A study of apples sold in Iowa found that Iowan grown apples needed much lower use of "controlled atmosphere" storage, and wax used to keep them fresh than apples imported from Washington State<sup>71</sup>.

## **C      Good for promoting organic practices**

Farmers' markets enable consumers to find out more about the way food is produced. In the USA, there is evidence that when consumers learn about the benefits of different farming practices from the farmers themselves, rather than from posters or fliers, they are more likely to seek out that produce<sup>72</sup>.

They are also outlets for organic and less intensively grown food. Farmers' Markets tend to sell a high proportion of organic or less intensively grown produce. Farmers' markets help small farmers and organic growers, who find it difficult to sell produce to the big retailers. Food is sold based on its quality so there is less emphasis on high-volume production methods.

## **5      Why should authorities help?**

### **5.1      Local Authorities**

There are big returns for local authorities in local economic development

A survey of Rural Economic Development in New York State found that "*Though they are not an economic development panacea, farmers' markets should be considered an important component of a comprehensive local economic development strategy*"<sup>73</sup>. For every dollar invested in a "Jersey Fresh" marketing program, \$46.90 was returned to the local agricultural economy, and \$15.20 was generated in net farm income for local growers<sup>74</sup>.

There is also support from national Government for them. Nick Brown, Agriculture Minister, has written to all council leaders, 31/3/2000, urging them to get involved with and promote farmers' markets.

Several councils are already supporting local food initiatives. Liverpool City Council has backed the Merseyside Local Food for Local People project and has part funded it. Kirklees and Calderdale Councils are backing a project to promote local Yorkshire food. Mira Kubula from Kirklees Environment Unit said "*The popularity of the Holmfirth Farmers' Market shows that local people want to be able to purchase local, fresh, affordable produce. The demand is there; we need to encourage our farmers, voluntary groups and individuals to satisfy this demand*".

### **5.2      Regional Development Agencies (RDAs)**

Farmers' markets help deliver on three of the central aims of RDAs - securing regeneration, encouraging enterprise and integrating economic, social and environmental goals.

Securing regeneration: Farmers' markets strengthen local economies and safeguard local jobs - by keeping money within the local area. The increased turnover of other businesses on farmers' market days and the re-forging of an economic link between towns and farms are also key ways to increase the economic vitality of market towns, as a focal point of healthy rural economies.

Encouraging enterprise: Farmers' markets act as a spur for business start-ups and the growth of Small and Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs). Farmers improve and learn new entrepreneurial skills - in product development, marketing and retailing.

Integrating goals: Farmers' markets strengthen the economy in ways that increase quality of life, reduce environmental damage, and can reduce social exclusion.

## **RDA support for strengthening the local and agricultural economy:**

**Yorkshire Forward:** “We believe that the sustainable answer to developing rural business lies in the great potential of market towns as centres of rural enterprise to act as hubs of sustainable growth....Yorkshire Forward will be looking for early proposals from market towns as part of the regeneration of town centres”

**South West RDA:** “The South West is building on regional branding through initiatives such as the Taste of the West”; “The trickle-down effect has been disappointing and partners should be more pro-active in promoting locally sourced labour, training, supplies, investment and capacity building”

**South East England RDA:** “Objective: support initiatives relating to up-skilling, re-skilling and or new skills for farmers and farm diversification, ensuring that training is easily accessible and affordable”; “Objective: Foster the recognition that rural businesses support critical local key services”; “Objective: Small market towns (<15,000 population) should be revitalised as delivery points for rural services and as the focal points for the economy in rural areas

**North East RDA:** “local and regional niche markets are important particularly for the food industry”; “Vision: to create a more robust diverse prosperous and self sustaining economy for County Durham”; “to promote the continued diversification of the economy”

**East Midlands RDA:** “[we will] make the agricultural sector a focus for special attention, ensuring that it is linked into the wider rural economy, with the support for farm based enterprises, encouragement for diversification and access to the expertise of all relevant agencies’ resources to add value and improve income generation

**East of England RDA:** “we must support diversification of the agricultural sector...innovative crops and high quality food products identifiable with (part of ) the East of England will need to be developed”; “we must revive market towns. We need to build on existing initiatives to revive our rural market towns and coastal settlements as centres for business, retail and community life. We also need to facilitate links between rural market towns and their rural hinterland”.

**North West RDA:** “...adding value to farm products. There is a range of possibilities related to market demand, some of which are being exploited by creative entrepreneurs. This must be built on but it will require strong intervention. For two generations, entrepreneurial activity, especially in the farming community, has been undermined by direct subsidised support with a single minded concentration on production. All this presents the greatest rural challenge since the revival of agriculture in the last war and the responsibility for leading and inspiring this task lies squarely with the NWDA, which will take account of the forthcoming rural white paper including the emphasis on markets towns, rural diversification and the integration as far as possible of urban and rural policies”

### **5.3 Government**

In March 2000 the Agriculture Minister Nick Brown wrote to all Local Authority Council Leaders advising them of the multiple benefits of farmers’ markets. And in May 2000, Nick Brown, speaking at the launch of the National Association of Farmers’ Markets, said that farmers’ markets

are “a significant development for the whole food industry” and offered the continued support of the Government for the movement.

Farmers’ markets help to meet the aims of policies in three sections of Government:

C The **Cabinet Office’s** Policy and Innovation Unit’s 1999 report on Rural Economies took a very positive stance on farmers’ markets:

*“The Government should reform domestic policy on agriculture to encourage a diversity of competitive strategies in the industry, giving farmers the chance to operate other than simply as low-cost, high-volume commodity producers. Through a combination of measures the Government can assist...the spread of farmers’ markets...and the expansion of locally differentiated and branded produce”.*

This report identified several benefits of farmers’ markets:

- adding value to products
- developing more direct links with consumers
- collaborative efforts with other producers, suppliers, processors and retailers”

C The **Social Exclusion Unit’s** Strategy on Neighbourhood Renewal says that:

*“Key idea 5: keeping money in the neighbourhood...Too often, it [money] is spent on goods and services with no local presence, and therefore immediately leaves the neighbourhood”*

Farmers’ markets help keep money in the neighbourhood.

C Farmers’ markets also fit into the core aims of **MAFF**, whose 1999 Rural White Paper consultation document sets out five principles for the countryside:

- a belief in a working countryside
- a belief in a living countryside
- a recognition of the interdependence of town and country
- a commitment to protect the rural environment and enhance its qualities
- a belief that the countryside should be accessible to all

## **6 Action being taken:**

*“US farmers markets have developed during a 25 year evolution, in the UK they are experiencing a one year revolution”<sup>75</sup>*

The US experience has shown that farmers' markets bring major benefits - but that they need support, particularly in the early stages. This is particularly important in the UK because there is such very rapid growth, much faster than in the USA. They need support on regulations, marketing (both to consumers and farmers), start-up, and information exchange and networking.

The National Association of Farmers' Markets has been set up to provide many of these functions and more. It is working to

**C      Protect the authenticity of farmers' markets**

by establishing legally binding standards, and providing a vitally needed accreditation scheme.

**C      Support and encourage the development of farmers' markets**

by providing training, networking and promotional support for emerging markets, by supplying information material, and promoting them to the public.

**C      Represent the interests of producers and consumers to local and national Government**

It does excellent work, with only two staff, but it needs help from other agencies and authorities.

**What makes a successful Farmers' Market?**

- Good management
- Good planning
- Community support
- Adequate funding - particularly start-up costs
- Regional groups to coordinate days of operation and avoid competing
- Getting a critical mass of farmers so that a variety of products can be offered throughout the season
- Strong community partnerships
- High quality, competitively priced produce marketed in a "local-oriented" environment.
- Local authority co-ordination
- Strong publicity and marketing

Farmers' markets have the following main support needs:

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| Networking | One-stop information service for farmers, information exchange |
| Marketing  | Local food guides, advertising                                 |
| Training   | Manuals, training, workshops                                   |
|            | -for farmers on marketing                                      |
|            | - for market managers on promotion and developing partnerships |
| Costs      | Start-up costs, initial marketing                              |

The following section sets out the different roles authorities have in ensuring the continued success of farmers' markets.

## **7     Actions needed by authorities**

### **7.1     Local Authorities**

There are several actions Local Authorities need to take to support farmers' market development.

Local authority support is needed particularly to deal with:

- Start-up costs
- Publicity, promotion and information exchange
- Helping to ensure a permanent farmers' market location
- Ensuring that farmers' markets also set up in poorer areas
- Market charter issues
- Co-ordination of local markets - eg no clash of dates

Farmers' market managers will have to deal with a range of departments - for example dealing with planning, LA21, market charters, advertising/publicity, local economic development, trading standards, health and safety, and licensing. Lack of co-operation of just one of these departments can stymie the development of markets. So,

**- a strong steer from the chief executive's office is needed.**

Action specific to particular local authority departments includes:

#### **C     Through the Local Economic Development Office:**

The Local Economic Development Office can have a significant role in supporting farmers' markets including:

- Co-ordinating farmers' markets, especially in setting-up, networking and marketing.
- Explaining the economic benefits to other departments and elected members.
- Liaising with Local Chambers of Commerce to elicit their support and minimise potential for conflict between farmers' markets and local food retailers.
- Highlighting potential benefits to all local traders.

Help will often be needed with set-up costs, eg a rent-free period, or grants for equipment such as refrigeration units can enable a farmers' market to get off the ground.

#### **C     Local Agenda 21 team**

The roles of setting up, co-ordination and networking can also be taken through the Local Agenda

21 office. LA21 officers also have a key role in promotion both to producers and to the local community.

### **C Environmental health and trading standards**

Giving guidance on health and safety issues to potential stall holders at an early stage, and provide training to those wishing to set up stalls.

### **C Through the Chief Executive's Office**

Ensuring that the different departments within the local authorities are working together to promote farmers' markets.

Ensuring that the legal department allows a flexible approach to the interpretation of Charter rights laws - allowing for example farmers' markets to operate on different days to conventional markets.

### **C Planning**

Positive treatment of planning applications for farmers' markets in recognition of the multiple benefits they bring. Help in identifying suitable sites, and issuing guidance to those wanting to set up a market.

### **C Licensing**

Take a positive stance on trading licenses for farmers' markets.

### **C Local retailing strategies**

Ensuring that farmers' markets and other local food initiatives - as providers of multiple economic, environmental and social advantages - are integral parts of local retail strategies.

#### **Urban Local Authorities**

Sometimes it may not be possible or necessary for the local authority to co-ordinate farmers' markets - if for example there is already a strong co-ordinator, or if the local authority lacks the additional resources to set up and manage a farmers' market. The latter could well be an issue in London, but London and urban authorities with strong competing demands on financial resources still have a major role to play.

For example, the biggest barrier to farmers' markets in urban areas is sites - which can be expensive. Local authorities should offer sites such as council office car parks, where a market can be organised by a third party - such as a local community group or farmers' co-operative. In the US markets pay no or peppercorn rent for sites on federal and local government property.

Even if the local authority is not managing the market, the market co-ordinator will have dealings with many local authority departments. Putting one person in charge of co-ordinating the authority's response to farmers' markets is crucial.

## **7.2 Regional Development Agencies**

Each RDA has the opportunity to secure the benefits of farmers market set out above by integrating measures to promote and support them in its Action Plans. How each RDA can do this best will be defined by regional circumstances, but five broad areas of action can be taken by all RDAs.

**Provide support for regional networks of farmers' markets.** One of the most effective cost-effective ways of supporting and encouraging farmers' markets is through establishing regional networks. These can provide a one-stop information service for farmers and can facilitate information exchange between farmers and the managers of individual farmers' markets. Training for both farmers and market managers on promotion, developing partnerships and business strategy can be provided through manuals and workshops. Regional networks can also play an important role in ensuring the authenticity of markets, promoting markets to the public and co-ordinating days of operation within the network.

If RDAs provided £25,000 over a three year period for supporting such a network in its region matched funding could be found - for example from sources such as the National Farmers Union, Local Authorities or elements of the Rural Development Regulation, like the Rural Enterprise Scheme. This would enable a regional network to employ a co-ordinator. Such funding should continue until the networks are self-supporting as they have become in the US.

**Promote farmers' markets through regional branding initiatives.** The Government aims to *"ensure that British people have access to the top quality foods our countryside produces, restoring regional distinctiveness and variety"*. Most RDAs have programmes or strategies to increase and improve regional branding. These programmes should recognise the role to be played by farmers' markets and integrate it into the relevant section of the Action Plans.

**Encourage and support the inclusion of farmers' markets in regeneration proposals.** Farmers' markets help deliver on all the five key national priorities for regeneration. RDAs in their regeneration strategies for both SRB and rural regeneration should seek out and encourage proposals that will develop farmers' markets.

**Install the promotion of farmers' markets within rural economy programmes, including the revitalisation of market towns.** Beyond specific rural regeneration projects most RDAs have a wider rural development strategy and farmers' markets should be integrated within these. Actions that can be taken are: addressing farmers' markets within programmes for advice and training aimed at rural businesses; including farmers' markets in targets for delivering projects through the Rural Development Programme; include the number of farmers' markets in any set of rural indicators; and place farmers' markets within the core of any strategy to revitalise market towns.

**Set a target for the development of farmers' markets within the region of the next five years.** In order to provide a goal for these actions to achieve each RDA can set a target for the development of farmers' markets.



## **Regional networks**

Regional networks of farmers' markets are starting to set up, for example in the South West and East Anglia. These networks need support from RDAs, particularly financial support in the early stages.

The recently established South West Association of Farmers' Markets is seeking £24,000 spread over three years from the South West RDA - to employ a co-ordinator for the network. This funding will be matched by the NFU, Taste of the West, county councils and the markets' membership fees. This funding will be crucial in developing farmers' markets in the region - the Association aims to link and promote 40 farmers' markets, ensure the best training, expand the network and make it self-sustaining.

Aims of the South West Association of Farmer's Markets:

- To represent members at regional and national level
- To source funding and advise members on funding
- To promote farmers' markets in the South West
- To be a central collector and disseminator of information, and network of information
- To co-ordinate development and management of farmers' markets in the regions
- To identify and facilitate training for producers and organises

*Contact: Jonathan Smye, 01392 382 831*

## **7.3 Government departments**

If farmers' markets are to realise their full potential, some further Government actions are also now needed:

### **Ten actions for Government:**

#### **i) Legislative and regulatory review**

As the Government has suggested<sup>76</sup>, there should be a review of legislative and regulatory barriers to farmers' markets, with one aim to ensure positive planning guidance - for example, to ensure sufficient flexibility in the planning system to allow farmers to add value on the farm and sell produce directly to consumers either on the farm or from a separate site. Planning Guidance should be amended to encourage local authorities to identify suitable sites for farmers' markets.

#### **ii) Funding for the NAFM**

Agriculture Minister Nick Brown has been very positive about the National Association of Farmers' Markets (NAFM) and the Government has committed funding to it. The Government should continue its commitment by ensuring increased and guaranteed financial support for the Association

until it is financially self-sustaining - to enable NAFM to deal with the explosion of interest.

**iii) Farmers' Market development**

MAFF can also support other aspects of farmers' market development - such as management and marketing training for market organisers and the setting up of an accreditation scheme - by funding through the Agricultural Development Scheme (ADS).

**iv) Farmers' markets in poorer areas**

MAFF should also provide more start-up grants to deliver markets and local food projects in poorer areas, and to ensure that successful projects receive adequate funding until such time as they are self sufficient. For example the Groundwork Liverpool project was set up partly with MAFF funding. This project has been very successful in getting producers involved and in generating interest in the community. It has the potential to ensure a market for quality local produce and at the same time tackle access to healthy food among the local population. But such projects need continued support while they grow as they cannot be self sufficient from the outset.

**v) Farmers' markets in health strategies**

Promotion of farmers' markets as a means of increasing access to healthy food will also help to deliver on the objectives of the Department of Health (DoH) - through its Health Action Zones and Health Improvement Programmes (HImPs), to meet Our Healthier Nation targets. Farmers' markets and other local food projects which provide affordable fresh fruit and vegetables should be supported in local health improvement programmes which are required to address inequalities in health. This should be encouraged by DoH through HImP guidance.

**vi) Farmers' markets in social exclusion strategies**

Farmers' markets should also be of interest to the Social Exclusion Unit in its strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal - in regeneration terms - keeping money within local economies, and in meeting the objectives set by Policy Action Team 13 on tackling food poverty. Promotion of farmers' markets should be part of a national strategy to eradicate food poverty.

**vii) Rural Development Plans**

The Government should also promote farmers' markets through the Rural Development Plans. Local food initiatives of this sort help farmers to add value to their produce and maintain and increase agricultural employment. The Government has taken the first step by recognising farmers' markets as a specific measure within one of the key priority areas for the Rural Enterprise Scheme<sup>1</sup>. It should follow this through by also giving priority to related initiatives under the processing and marketing grants scheme and within training expenditure. To be effective though, these rural development plans need to be properly funded by diverting the maximum amount of money allowed

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<sup>1</sup> Marketing of quality agricultural products.

under European rules away from production subsidies through modulation<sup>2</sup>. At present the Government plans to redirect only 4.5% of conventional production payments by 2005 when it can legally divert 20%. By contrast the French Government is applying a varied rate of modulation so that larger farms will have a 20% cut in production subsidies but some smaller farms will be exempt. There, priority for support will be given to small and medium sized holdings entering into a collective initiative, including direct marketing of local produce.

#### **viii) One-stop shop for micro-funding information**

The rural enterprise scheme should help individual farmers get the micro grants they need to improve their direct marketing operations - for example for better stalls, scales, signs, battery operated tills or chiller cabinets for meat and cheese producers. The Government should ensure that information on micro-funding - from the Rural Enterprise Scheme and other sources - be brought together in one information package for small farmers - perhaps through the Small Business Service.

#### **ix) Regional branding initiatives**

The Government, as recommended in the Cabinet Office Policy and Innovation Unit's recent report<sup>77</sup>, should also support local branding initiatives. The Government has listed regional/local branding as an example of the sort of activity which might be eligible for funding under the Rural Enterprise Scheme. It should make this a priority as an effective way to support small producers wishing to improve the marketing of quality local produce.

#### **x) Protecting "farmers' markets"**

Finally, the Government - with the National Association of Farmers' Markets - should ensure that legal protection is given to the name of "Farmers' Markets" so that any market using that name follows agreed rules.

## **8 Conclusion**

If the authorities took these actions, then we could expect to see a network of thriving, dynamic farmers' markets, helping to revitalise local economies, protect farmers' livelihoods, and bring consumer and community benefits.

### **Local Authorities:**

- C Set up and co-ordinate farmers' markets, through the Local Economic Development Office, or help with start-up costs
- C Chief Executive's office to ensure co-ordinated approach to farmers' markets across different departments

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<sup>2</sup> Modulation gives EU member states authority to reduce direct production payments to farmers by up to 20% and to use the savings to fund measures under a new Rural Development Regulation which will incorporate agri-environment schemes (including support for organic farming) and new measures to help the rural economy .

- C Provide a site for markets, as well as planning and licensing help
- C Ensure farmers' markets are an integral part of local retail strategies
- C Provide marketing and publicity support

### **Regional Development Agencies:**

- C Fund regional farmers' market associations until they are financially self sustaining
- C Promote farmers' markets through regional branding initiatives
- C Promote farmers' markets as part of regeneration strategies, to strengthen the local economy, and as ways to revitalise market towns.

### **Government:**

- C Continued and increased financial support for the National Association of Farmers' markets
- C Grants for farmers selling at farmers' markets, through the Rural Enterprise Scheme
- C Start-up grants for farmers' markets in poorer areas
- C Review planning guidance to remove barriers to farmers' markets
- C Ensure legal protection for genuine farmers' markets

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[www.ams.usda.gov/directmarketing/roth.htm](http://www.ams.usda.gov/directmarketing/roth.htm)
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Rural economies report by Policy and Innovation Unit, Cabinet Office, December 1999.
- 77 Section 9.51: *"Adding value to products: The Government can ... support local branding initiatives...Second it could help farmers to take advantage of the considerable scope for innovation in the development of new markers and the development and application of new or improved products and processing techniques through the provision of grant aid"*

## **Contacts**

### **Friends of the Earth**

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Electronic copy of this briefing available on:

[www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/food\\_and\\_biotechnology/pdf/farmers\\_markets.pdf](http://www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/food_and_biotechnology/pdf/farmers_markets.pdf)

### **National Association of Farmers' Markets (NAFM)**

South Vaults, Green Park Station, Bath, BA1 1JB

[nafm@farmersmarkets.net](mailto:nafm@farmersmarkets.net)

[www.farmersmarkets.net](http://www.farmersmarkets.net)

tel 01225 787914

Contact: Charlotte Bullock or Jenny Hey

For a list of London farmers' markets, please send an SAE to LFM, 6 St Paul Street, London N1 7AB, email [lfm@planck.demon.co.uk](mailto:lfm@planck.demon.co.uk), or visit [www.londonfarmersmarkets.com](http://www.londonfarmersmarkets.com).

### **Soil Association**

Bristol House, 40-56 Victoria Street, Bristol, BS1 6BY

Contact: Lucy Gillie, local food links officer, 0117 914 2426

The Soil Association are also running a seminar *"How to run a Farmers' Market"* in Bath, 20

September 2000.

**USA resources**

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

[www.manyfoldfarm.com/comfoosys](http://www.manyfoldfarm.com/comfoosys)

[www.sare.org/csa/index.htm](http://www.sare.org/csa/index.htm)

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