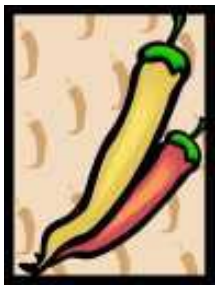
Top Trends in Farmers' Markets

Market Growth.

The USDA reported that there were 2,863 farmers' markets operating in 2000, up 63% from the 1,755 markets just six years earlier. The farmers' market renaissance over the last 30 years has revived a rich tradition of vibrant, entrepreneurial culture. It is happening as communities seek to reconnect with their roots, revitalize the local farm scene, provide fresh produce to urban populations, gain access to organic products, and create vibrant communities. Farmers' markets are bringing a farm and quality food consciousness into the minds of millions of people.

Larger Growers Entering the Markets.



With the flood of produce imports coming into the country from overseas, even larger commercial growers are taking a second look at high-return marketing outlets like farmers' markets. Felix Fly, manager with the West Tennessee Farmers' Market in Jackson, Tennessee, says the number of farmers applying to sell in their farmers' market blossomed in 1999. "Normally we have 12 or 14 new vendor applicants each year, but this year we've had 51 by August," he said. "Due to the low prices this year in cattle, cotton, soybeans, hogs, and corn, we've found a lot of growers trying something new. I just got a call from someone growing pumpkins who had never grown them before." Similarly, a Louisiana citrus grower who formerly had been selling all his produce wholesale finally came to the Crescent City Farmers' Market after repeated requests from the manager. Selling out within an hour, he called his wife to bring more fruit, "Oh my God, I've been doing it all wrong!"

Meeting the Demand for Pesticide- & GMO- Free Food.

The growth in farmers' markets is fueled by public awareness on how to eat better. Customers want to know where their food is grown and who grew it. More and more customers are becoming aware of genetically-engineered crops ("genetically-modified organisms," or "GMOs"), and they are willing to spend extra for pesticide- and GMO- free food. According to by Jeff Cole, Executive Director, Massachusetts Federation of Farmers' Markets: "We're hearing more questions and concerns from customers regarding GMOs. They don't know where the products are coming from in the supermarkets, or what's been used in producing them, and they have difficulty getting answers to those questions in supermarkets. At the farmers' markets they're dealing directly with the producer and they can get answers to their questions and see the face of the person who grew it."

Ethnic Foods Are Hot!

According to Steve Salts, truck farmer and author of the upcoming book, "Around the World at Farmers' Market," ethnic foods can be a profitable item for growers who take the time to educate themselves about the native foods and cultural backgrounds of their ethnic customers.

Ethnic groups have generally been considered a lower-priced market compared to Anglo-American customers, because they are accustomed to buying at open-air markets at comparatively low prices. Yet Salts says that customer loyalty, volume, and consistency can make up for this. The coveted "yuppie" market, Salts points out, rarely buy in appreciable quantity. "We find that so-called ethnic customers buy and use fresh veggies greatly in excess of their percentage of the total farmers' market customers, and patronize farmers' markets more than do Anglo-Americans." The proportion of ethnics in the population is growing rapidly, Salts points out, and if present trends continue, the Census Bureau projects that non-His-

panic European Americans will be a minority by the year 2050, with the nation 25% Hispanic, 10-12% Asian-Pacific Islander and 16% black.

Farmers' Markets Go Online.

An increasing number of markets are establishing internet web sites where they can post news about upcoming events at the market, feature up and coming crops, and post seasonal recipes for their customers. Many of them also send out a weekly e-mail newsletter to their internet-savvy customers, and even establish links on their web sites to individual farmer/vendors' web pages.

Some growers who sell at the markets are also finding that internet e-mail is a quick and inexpensive way to keep in regular contact with their farmers' market customers. Regular customers send weekly e-mail orders to the farm and then find it pre-bagged and waiting for them at the market — this saves them from having to come early to purchase items that usually sell out. In addition, customers can e-mail special requests for the farmer to bring to the market.

Community Rejuvenation and Economic Revitalization.

Farmers' markets transform cities. City planners nationwide now recognize the value of the farmers' market. They have evidence that it revitalizes a downtown area like nothing else, by creating an active meeting place and income-producing community. More and more cities are viewing farmers' markets as a positive addition to their cities. The National Main Street Program has incorporated markets as a vehicle to rejuvenate declining downtown areas.

The "New" Farmers' Market: Educating the Public about Local Food and Agriculture.

"The New Farmers' Market" takes its title from the last section in the book which talks about how the vibrancy of urban centers goes hand-in-hand with the vitality of the surrounding rural areas — with farmers' markets as their meeting place.

At the U.S. Conference of Mayors Annual meeting in June, 2001, the policy "Promoting the Preservation of Urban Influenced Farmland" was adopted. This policy recognizes that the preservation of nearby farmland helps provide food supply stability while contributing to the overall quality of life in metropolitan areas.

Co-author Vance Corum states: "The farmers' market renaissance over the last 30 years has revived a rich tradition of vibrant, entrepreneurial culture. It is happening as communities seek to reconnect with their roots, revitalize the local farm scene, provide fresh produce to urban populations, gain access to organic products, and create vibrant communities.

Amongst the public education programs featured in "The New Farmers' Market" are Taste Festivals, Shop with the Chef, Meet the Producer, Cooking With Kids, the Farmers' Market Salad Bar Program, and the Senior Nutrition Program.

As Pam Roy, executive director of the Friends of the Farmers' Markets in Santa Fe, New Mexico, says: "We want people to be conscious about where they buy their food and why. We want to let people know they can be involved in their local food system, and that by buying a tomato that is grown locally in the community instead of the supermarket variety, they're supporting the local economy."

Excerpted with permission from "The New Farmers Market: Farm-Fresh Ideas for Producers, Managers & Communities," by Vance Corum, Marcie Rosenzweig, and Eric Gibson. To order, send $24.95 + $4.50 shipping to: "QP Distribution," 22260 "C" St.,Winfield, KS 67156. Credit card orders call 888-281-5170. California residents add $1.75 tax. 8 X 10, 272 pps.

Benefits of Farmers' Markets for Vendors, Consumers & Communities

Why Farmers Markets Are Growing

Food imports

With the flood of produce imports coming into the country from overseas, even larger commercial growers are taking a second look at high-return marketing outlets like farmers' markets. Felix Fly, manager with the West Tennessee Farmers' Market in Jackson, Tennessee, says the number of farmers applying to sell in their farmers' market blossomed in 1999. "Normally we have 12 or 14 new vendor applicants each year, but this year we've had 51 by August," he said. "Due to the low prices this year in cattle, cotton, soybeans, hogs, and corn, we've found a lot of growers trying something new. I just got a call from someone growing pumpkins who had never grown them before."

Urban growth

According to Rose Koenig, Mgr., Haile Village Farmers Market, Gainesville, FL, "The agricultural economy is changing drastically in the U.S. What was profitable 50 years ago may not be profitable tomorrow. As land gets more expensive because of urban growth, small farms of 100 acres or less will get more and popular. This leaves growers with the choice of selling the land to developers or getting into higher value farming such as direct marketing. Some growers will sell out, and some will reduce acreage and start growing for a local market."

Health, taste & local food

The growth in farmers' markets is fueled by public awareness on how to eat better. Customers want to know where their food is grown and who grew it.

"People are following a healthy lifestyle, and are putting more attention into what they're eating.

—Charlie Haney, Mgr., Olympia Farmers' Market, WA

Farmer Benefits

Sellers at farmers' markets often get a larger cash return for their product than through wholesale marketing and get paid cash-in-hand, instead of waiting 30-90 days or longer. There is also the pride and fun in selling to the people who enjoy eating your produce.

[See also Chapter One, "Advantages, Disadvantages"]

Consumer Benefits

Most farmers' market customers come to the markets for the superior quality and freshness, unusual varieties, and a chance to support local agriculture and meet the farmers who grow their food. And if these shoppers can get much higher quality at a competitive price, they're getting a lot better value for their money!

"American consumers want several qualities in their food baskets beyond those provided by factory farming with its stress on volume, uniformity and price. They want local or regional, and hence fresher, food. They want varied food—no iceberg lettuce but more heirloom tomatoes. They want food with fewer health risks from chemicals. They want food produced with methods less likely to harm the environment. And they want to restore contact with the actual producer of the food."

—Susan Planck, Wheatland Vegetable Farms, Purcellville, VA

Taste and freshness

Farmers' markets offer shoppers the opportunity to purchase fresh-picked, good-tasting, seasonal produce from the farmers who grow it. Direct-from-the-farm products are often picked at the peak of maturity only a day or even hours before they are sold at farmers' markets. Once people taste what's available at the farmers' market they don't want to go back to the taste they get from the supermarket. Nothing substitutes for a vine-ripened, fresh-picked tomato, or a peach, corn or baby bok choy.

"Commercial fresh tomatoes epitomize the shortcomings of modern produce, but many fruits and vegetables also suffer from reduced flavor. One study showed that the typical peach is 2 1/2 weeks old by the time it gets to the grocery store. By con-

trast, that same peach found at a farmers' market was probably picked in the past two days."

—"Taking It To the Streets," *Farmer to Farmer*

Variety

At farmers' markets customers are able to sample new products and varieties not ordinarily found in supermarkets. While supermarkets usually offer only one or a few varieties of a product, direct markets may sell many different varieties of one product, such as apples, peaches, peppers or tomatoes, as well as exotic and heirloom products, organically grown produce, and ethnic foods.

Value

Many markets have been established to provide customers with fresh produce at lower prices than local supermarkets. In other cases the goal has been to provide fresher, superior product at competitive prices. Either way, the customer finds better value, which is defined by the relationship between product and price.

Social

Farmers markets are fun! Farmers markets are important social events. People run into friends and talk, or meet new ones including farmers to exchange recipes. In fact, some markets have adopted the slogan: "Come for the freshness; stay for the fun!"

Some say that the attraction of farmers' markets is fundamentally a human one. Shoppers at farmers' markets have seven times as many social interactions in a farmers' market as they do in a grocery store! Certainly, they are a return to a form of business and social interaction common for thousands of years, where consumers purchased goods more directly from those who produced them.

Customers come to trust farmers. Other customers intuitively follow that trust. The relationship one has with a produce clerk who doesn't know what country the tomatoes come from simply can't compare with a friendship with a farmer who can tell you what his soil tastes like, why she doesn't irrigate, how the Ace compares with a Zebra, the recipe for her best sauce, or how many weeks before he says so-long for the season.

Urban/Rural Connection

Many farmers as well as consumers report that the farmer-consumer bond is the heart and soul of the markets. An article in *NW Health* (May/June 1995) noted: "These stalls of sustenance may be the last place where many people can reconnect with food and its sources. The growers' offerings, which vary week to week, remind us that there is a season for everything."

Community Benefits

A successful farmers' market can be a tremendous resource for a community, large or small. Fresh food is available at a reasonable price, the local agricultural economy as well as the marketplace area receives an economic boost, and a festive and community-enhancing social center draws people together. Farmers' markets, in addition, help fight hunger through their participation in food recovery programs and federally funded subsidy programs.

Gathering place

When Shakespeare comes to the Ithaca Farmers' Market alongside central New York's Cayuga Lake, people are reminded of the market's role in integrating economic, social and cultural activities in one place.

"To visit a Greenmarket is to realize the power that a farmers' market can wield in transforming an urban space into an exciting and vibrant community. The more that Greenmarkets become fixtures in city neighborhoods, the more they resemble the proverbial backyard fence where neighbors meet to exchange recipes and gossip and concerns about their streets."

— *Barriers & Opportunities for Direct Marketing*, Farmers' Market Trust

Barriers bridged

Whenever people from various walks of life cross paths, there is an opportunity for learning. Stereotypes are broken. Voters no longer look dispassionately at rural issues when farming friends may be affected.

In many communities a politician cannot be elected without campaigning at the farmers' market. In San Luis Obispo, California, every candidate is given three minutes on a flatbed trailer festooned with red, white and blue bunting. "Thursday Night" is about more than simply food transactions; it is a community event.

"At first farmers' markets sales were viewed by town fathers as inconsequential. But now they're really beginning to understand the vital camaraderie that exists between the farmers' market seller and city folk."

—Jim Jones, FM Representative, Texas Dept. of Agriculture

Economic revitalization

Farmers' markets transform cities. City planners nationwide now recognize the value of the farmers' market. They have evidence that it revitalizes a downtown area like nothing else, by creating an active meeting place and income-producing community. More and more cities are viewing farmers' markets as a positive addition to their cities. The National Main Street Program has incorporated markets as a vehicle to rejuvenate declining downtown areas.

"Most managers felt that farmers' markets and the farmers who attend them are viewed positively by their host communities. The majority of market managers (78%) felt that their markets positively affect local businesses, primarily by bringing customers from both inside and outside the community. Several managers gave examples of businesses located in the vicinity of their markets that had expanded their hours to benefit from the increased customer traffic. This revitalization function is commonly used by downtown merchant associations and redevelopment agencies as a rationale for starting a farmers' market."

— Farmers' Markets and Rural Development Project

"The downtown merchants are behind the markets because restaurant owners realize that people don't buy produce at the markets to eat, but to take home. Having the markets nearby gives people more reasons to come downtown. As an inducement to sell at the market, many restaurants guarantee that farmers will sell out—if they don't sell out by 3 p.m., the restaurant will buy the remaining produce for their next few days' needs. They encourage the farmers to bring a wide variety. There also has been a shift in the make-up of downtown businesses. They don't have a lot of grocery stores, so in the downtown there is not a lot of competition. The merchants perceive the markets as complementary rather than directly competitive."

—Donald Coker, Florida Dept. of Ag and Consumer Services

Grocery impact

Ken Meyer, produce buyer for three Alfalfa's Markets in Colorado, says his chain has been a loyal customer to many of the growers doing business in the open-air market. "The markets get people excited about organics, and having them just down the street does mean some cross-over business."

"Farmers' markets probably affect grocery stores to the tune of less than one percent of their produce sales," says Jim Anderson of the Missouri Department of Agriculture. "Our markets - 55 statewide, most in rural communities - are only open between two and six days a week, six months a year, and they don't seem to have any impact on the grocery store's produce section."

For many years the family-owned Williams Brothers supermarkets in San Luis Obispo County, CA, allowed farmers' markets in their parking lots. It gave them a leg over their competitors and showed their support for local farmers.

"We're about a block from Alfalfa's Market and they were concerned about competition. Now 13 years later, they discovered produce sales went up 30% on Saturday when we were open."

— John Ellis, Boulder FM, CO

Improved identity

"According to Richard McCarthy, executive director of the Economics Institute, "The Market makes downtown safer because there are people on the street. It changes the feel of the neighborhood from that of a cold, impersonal urban environment to that of a community. Even vendors who once moved away from New Orleans now have a completely different experience of the city when they come to town for Market."

— Economics Institute, *1999 Report to the Community*

"Downtown businesses have also benefited from the Market's presence on Saturday mornings—which, otherwise, is not a busy time of the week for most of them. The AB Freeman study estimated that downtown businesses gain additional income of $450,000 a year as a result of the Market, and a 30%-70% increase in Saturday-morning traffic as a result of the Market."

— Economics Institute, *1999 Report to the Community*

Access

"Ironically, farmers' need for more and diverse markets occurs at a time when supermarket relocation to the suburbs has left many Philadelphians underserved. Inner city residents in particular have little choice but to rely on convenience stores that provide very limited access to fresh fruits and vegetables. The diets of

lower-income residents offer poor nutrition, affecting the health and well being of individuals and their communities. Establishing farmers' markets in these low-income communities can serve the dual objectives of increased access to fresh produce for city residents and improved farm profitability."

— *Barriers & Opportunities for Direct Marketing*, Farmers' Market Trust, 1999.

The impetus for farmers' markets in southern California came from the Interfaith Hunger Coalition of the Southern California Ecumenical Council. Concerned about supermarket flight and inner-city residents' access to fresh produce at reasonable prices, they spearheaded a three-year, seven-market development program which exceeded its goals.

Donna Bryan vocalized similar concerns through Seeds of Hope when starting numerous markets in South Carolina. The faith community has been critical in developing countless markets by providing church lots as market locations, giving financial support and leading many organizing efforts.

Local food and greenspace

Lindsey Ketchel, horticultural marketing specialist with the Vermont Department of Agriculture, Food and Markets, reported on a recent department study of Vermont consumers. More than 60 percent were interested in buying local products and said they'd spend up to 10 percent more just to support local family farms. "Consumers are looking for ways to support the local greenspace," Ketchel said. "At the same time, it's a challenge for consumers is to find local products. They can't go to a Grand Union supermarket and find local produce. Farmers' markets are not just about buying food," she continued. "They bring farmers and consumers together in a community way. It's all about celebrating food grown in our own regions."

"From an ecological standpoint, shopping at farmers' markets helps support the greenbelt by enabling local farmers to become economically sustainable. It supports locally-based food production and distribution, thus reducing energy consumed on transportation. It also reduces solid wastes, by eliminating overpackaging of foods and supports environmentally sound and sustainable farming practices because family farmers tend to use fewer synthetic chemicals."

— Lynn Bagley, with the Golden Gate FM Assoc. in Novato, CA, quoted in *To Market! To Market!* University of Mass. Cooperative Extension System

"When you shop at a supermarket only 21% of every dollar spent goes toward actual food production whereas at the market more than four times that goes back to the growers."

—Ann Harvey Yonkers, Mgr., FRESHFARM Market, Washington, DC

Selling to Ethnic Groups

An interview with Steve Salts, truck farmer and author of *Around the World at Farmers' Market: A Handbook for Small-scale Grower-Marketers of Ethnic and Heirloom Vegetables, Fruits, and Herbs.* [See Resources, Chapter 2]

Q: Aren't ethnic groups generally a lower-priced market compared to the Anglo-American customer? Aren't they used to buying at open-air markets at comparatively low prices?

Salts: Yes and no. It's certainly not a top dollar market like selling to trendy yuppies, but it's definitely not bottom either. You've just got to be prepared to haggle. Most American farmers don't like haggling — it runs against most Americans' grain. Yet most ethnic groups just don't like having a set price. I usually set a price at high-middle, and I'm willing to dicker down to middle or low-middle.

I tried an experiment at a farmers' market once. I set a price ridiculously low on some cucumbers and yard-long beans, almost giving them away. Some ethnic customers still wouldn't buy it, because I wouldn't dicker! The next week I set the price high, and they dickered down and ended up paying twice what they would have gotten it for the week before! It's not so much the price they get it for, it just runs against their cultural grain to pay the asking price.

Q: What are some of the advantages of selling to ethnic customers?

Salts: Customer loyalty, volume, and consistency. Once ethnic customers find that you've got what they want, and that you are nice to them and cater to their culture, they will come back week after week, and year after year. Selling to ethnic folks may not be for everyone. You have to enjoy dealing with peoples from other cultures.

I've found ethnic groups to be a great niche market for me because there's very little competition. I may not be getting the price that some other sellers are getting selling to the yuppies, but my ethnic customers are a lot more stable. Yuppies can be very trendy, but the Chinese, the Indians, the Arabs and the Vietnamese have been buying the same vegetables for thousands of years. Ethnic customers aren't so much into food preservation, like canning — but many do make preserves such as kimchee or pesto or chutneys or pickles that take large quantities of produce and herbs. They also eat a lot more fruits and vegetables and they're a lot more accustomed to cooking from scratch. Even college students from other countries cook from scratch, believe it or not — it's not all phoned-in pizza. And then there are traditional banquets for holidays and weddings and the like that take LOTS of traditional veggies. The tradition in their countries is shopping at open-air markets. They don't want their produce all wrapped up in plastic.

Q: What's most important in selling to ethnic groups?

Salts: You not only need to grow the crops the peoples are used to, but to cater to their cultures. The social part is VERY important. You're selling a service and experience — not just veggies. It's the ultimate relationship marketing. We try to offer a social experience to our ethnic customers — greeting them in their native languages, asking their advice on ethnic cuisine, learning something of the geography and customs of their homelands, etc. I try to find out what their holidays are and have special items in stock when their holidays are coming.

Basically, just talk with them: "Are you from India? What part of India?" They're usually surprised anyone is asking them such a question, but they might say, "Andhra Pradesh." And I say, "Hyderabad?" And they just about fall on the ground: "Oh, you used to live in India?" Well no … but it all boils down to showing an interest in their culture.

A supermarket COULD try to compete with us on the product front — but can you see them doing it better on the social front? We have such an advantage! Small market grower-marketers can stop grip-

ing about unfair competition from factory farms. We just have to connect with customers who want to buy the "goods" in which we have a great comparative advantage. And those goods are not only great products but service and relationships.

Q: Yuppies are getting to be a difficult market to sell to. They purchase small amounts, and they want everything prepared. I've heard that ethnic peoples are the future of farmers' markets.

Salts: Well, we do sell to so-called yuppies also, and value their patronage, though it's true that they rarely buy much quantity. They like exotic produce but usually buy one of this and can you give me just a pinch of that. We find that so-called ethnic customers buy and use fresh veggies greatly in excess of their percentage of the total farmers' market customers — and patronize farmers' markets more than do Anglo-Americans. Perhaps 50-60% of our current farmers' market customers are ethnic, and the proportion of ethnics in the population is growing rapidly. If present trends continue, the Census Bureau projects that non-Hispanic European Americans will be a minority by the year 2050, with the nation 25% Hispanic, 10-12% Asian-Pacific Islander and 16% black.

Q: So your book gets into some of the basic ethnic languages a farmers' market seller might learn?

Vance Corum

Customers are 80% Asian and 10% Indian in Milpitas, CA.

Salts: Yes. I will have a glossary in about 20 languages for elementary farmers' market terms such as greetings, "yes," "no," numbers, etc. It doesn't include all 2500 languages of the world, but some of the basic ones like Arabic, Spanish, Portuguese, Korean, Chinese and Vietnamese.

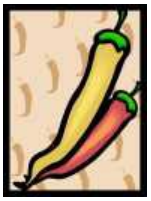
Q: Could you tell us a little about your own market mix?

Salts: Our marketing is approximately 50-60% farmers' markets, 20-25% ethnic and vegetarian restaurants, 15-20% CSA, 5-10% on-farm sales, booths at festivals, etc. Our product mix is perhaps 25-30% "standard" veggies (even Chinese like sweet corn); 25-35% "heirloom" old-fashioned varieties (tomatoes, sweet sorghum, wild blackberries, etc.), and 50% ethnic veggies, mostly Oriental but with generous and increasing dashes of Middle Eastern, Italian, East European, Asian Indian, Southeast Asian, Mexican, etc.

We try to offer both products and services that the Super Megamarkets and Fast Food International can't. We offer very fresh, carefully harvested, great-tasting, old-fashioned or ethnic produce, often with "weird" appearance or short shelf lives, served up with a generous side-dish of advice, multicultural socializing, and just plain old personal friendship.

Our heirloom veggies tend to draw a lot of vegetarians, gourmet hobby cooks, older people ("Why my grandma used to grow that in her garden! I haven't seen that in years!"), and curious passers-by ("What IS that!?"). Actually, heirloom veggies could be considered just another sort of "ethnic" veggies — the veggies of our own fast-vanishing traditional American culture.

People are often loathe to buy "weird" veggies at first, so we give away a lot of free samples, plus recipes or suggestions for use. We are building a steadily growing clientele of "addicts." "Why you WERE right! That crazy fuzzy tomato / red okra / guinea bean / (or whatever!) tasted great! Can I get three pounds this week?" ✿



Hot products: Fresh and Value-Added.

Over the past five years, Eric has had an unusual hobby, asking dozens of growers or market managers: "What are the hottest fresh products being sold in your market?"

Fresh products

"Tree- or vine-ripened is the reason people come to the markets."

"Fresh-from-the-farm, in-season, mainstay fruits and vegetables."

"Whatever is in season! From rhubarb in the spring to cauliflower in the fall."

"The strongest items consistently are 'early'… sweet corn, cuc's, zucchini, tomatoes, peppers and melons."

"Staples are still the big item here. Specialties are just starting to emerge. Our market traditionally serves older customers — it's really a 'beans and 'taters' audience."

Specialty items not found in supermarkets.

"Anything unusual sells here."

"We offer eight different varieties of cherries here, not just a Bing!"

"Growing different varieties of sweet and hot peppers is a great niche, since they are an important ingredient in salsa, an expanding product line."

Heirloom varieties

" 'Old' is 'in.' Old fashioned, heirloom varieties of roses, for example, like your grandmother grew. We have one grower who grows over 80 varieties of roses, with their names all on labels. We have other rose growers in the market, but there's always people in line for hers. Most of the other roses are bred for long stems and visual appearance, not smell. The old heirlooms look fantastic, and they also smell great."

— Mark Sheridan, Mgr., Santa Barbara FM, CA

"Some of the specialty organic heirloom varieties are showing up in the Austin and Dallas-Fort Worth areas."

"Some of the old apple varieties, like Winesap, Arkansas Black or Northern Spy that you won't find in the supermarkets."

Salad mix

"The mesclun craze just doesn't seem to bottom out. The more farmers are getting into it, the more customers, and each farmer seems to have a different mix with each one tasting different."

"One interesting variation on mesclun mixes is a farmer here selling mixed bunches of vegetables, rainbow mixes of radishes or chiogga beets."

"Due to the competition, we give our mixes names and we offer different 'flavors' with different ingredients."

"My salad mix has large leaves instead of baby leaves and I can sell my product for 50 percent cheaper. I found a niche of people willing to pay $3 a pound for salad mix instead of $6 a pound."

"We sell head lettuce with roots on (washed) as 'live.'"

Herbs

Herbs are a great farmers' market niche item, and also lend themselves to great value-added items like herbal vinegars.

Ethnic

"It's a combination of more ethnic buyers coming to the market and other people liking the ethnic foods."

Organic items

"There's a trend toward organic here (New York) at the markets. People are still shopping primarily for price on the East Coast, though, and only a certain percentage of people will pay extra for organics."

"The consumers are more educated now. People are starting to take care of themselves a lot better and they're searching for organic."

Fresh flowers

"There's a lot of competition in the market for flowers. You have to stay ahead of the competition. This means reading a lot of flower and gardening magazines

and being a member of the Association of Specialty Cut Flower Growers."

Also mentioned:

Products for canning, vegetable seedlings, bedding plants, maple syrup, nuts, baby vegetables and greenhouse tomatoes.

"We sell compost, which we make from leaves and grass clippings (green waste) from the city of Boulder, and sell it in 40-pound bags at the market to home gardeners. Another good draw is our tomato plants. We grow 20 different varieties, which are purchased by home gardeners to plant themselves. With each plant, we hand out an information sheet on how to grow tomatoes."

—John Ellis, Farmer John's, Boulder, CO

Value-added products

Here are some comments we heard about value-added products at farmers' markets:

"Garlic sells for $1 a bunch, but sell it with dried herb flowers and two cayenne peppers and it sells for $10 a bunch!"

"Make your product attractive! Dress up your product by tying it with ribbon, or bundling different items together! If you are selling items in jars, cover the lid with a small circle of fabric, etc."

"Value-added is little more work out on the farm but gets premium prices. A few years ago you could bring sunflowers and sell them, but now they have to be put in with other flowers in an arrangement. You can't just bring things, put them on the table and expect them to sell. It takes a better job of presentation."

"The market for dehydrated vegetables is really taking off! The 'country kitchen' look is really in. The key is to use down-home, pretty packaging."

"Items for fast preparation. People are uneducated in cooking and in prepping food or produce."

"Value-added takes us away from the concept of fresh and direct! We have to differentiate as much as possible from grocery stores."

Here are some of the many value-added items growers are selling in farmers' markets:

- Baby food (organic)
- Bakery items, including bread, cookies, scones, fruit cobblers, apple dumplings, fruit pies
- Baskets, including fruit baskets
- Canned items, including roasted garlic, vegetables
- Corn shocks
- Crafts
- Dog biscuits (vegetarian)
- Dried fruit, including exotic dried fruit like dried persimmons, fruit squares
- Dried vegetables, including tomatoes
- Flowers, including cut flower arrangements, dried flowers
- Garlic braids
- Gourds
- Greenhouse items
- Herbal products, including braids, crafts, lotions, balms, soaps, oils, teas, bath herbs, dried herbs, lip gloss, salve, massage oils
- Hickory chips
- Honey, including flavored
- Jams, jellies and preserves, including low- or no-sugar, cactus apple, fig jam jelly, pomegranate jelly, rhubarb preserves
- Juices, including fresh, exotic juices like pomegranate
- Lettuce, mixed 6-pack as veggie starts
- Marinated fruits and vegetables and syrups (wild cherry)
- Molasses
- Nursery stock
- Nuts, salted and flavored
- Oil, including jojoba, olive, organic
- Pastas
- Pepper braids
- Pesto, all kinds
- Pickled vegetables
- Popcorn
- Posole (corn soaked in lime and dried) from colored corn
- Potpourri
- Prepared foods, including bagels, pizza relish, onion rhubarb salsa, including tomato, salsa verde mix with tomatilloes, onion, garlic, chilies, cilantro
- Soaps, generally handmade
- Spices
- "Squirrel corn" (field corn put in packages with a feeder stand)
- Vinegar, including gourmet, with fancy labeling and special ingredients like meyer lemons, habanero peppers, berries or edible flowers. ✿

Getting Top Dollar For What You Sell at Farmers' Markets

Offer something special.

The key to getting higher-than-supermarket prices is to offer something special — such as freshness, higher quality or uniqueness in variety — that customers can't buy in the supermarket, then communicate this quality difference to your customers!

Stress quality and uniqueness.

Perhaps your sweet corn is raised without chemicals or spray, for example, or you grow unique varieties like "Wonderful," "Sweet Sue" or "Gold Cup." The fact that people are coming to the farmers' markets means that they're looking for a reason not to go to the supermarket, so give it to them!

> "Best ideas for getting top prices at the market? Signs on tables that say 'FARM FRESH' or 'PICKED LAST NIGHT' Folks are usually willing to pay a little more for fresh."
>
> — Diane Green, Greentree Naturals Farm, Sandpoint, ID

> "You just can't get cheaper than the supermarkets. You can't compete on prices, so consumer trust becomes all important. Consumers are looking for fewer pesticides, for example. It's expensive to get certified organic in New York, so the growers bring photos to market to show customers their growing methods."
>
> — Jane Desotelle, Mgr., Adirondack FM Co-op, NY

Guarantee satisfaction.

Guarantee that your crop is better than what customers will find in the supermarket: "I guarantee each melon I sell, and if you don't like it, you can bring it back!"

As Ronald Smolowitz, Coonamessett Farm, East Falmouth, MA, says: "If products are not top quality, toss it; take only your best to the market. I give my customers my best quality products, and those customers are there no matter what my prices are, and they bring their friends and relatives. They tell me: 'I know your berries are really good; I don't find any mold in them. So I keep buying from you even though I know your prices are higher.'"

Use small-unit pricing.

For expensive specialty items, price in small units. Instead of $5 a pound, make it $3 a half-pound or even $2 a quarter pound! Smaller-unit pricing makes it easier for the customer to buy and try out a new or expensive product. Similarly, try selling expensive items like strawberries, blueberries and raspberries by the pint rather than the quart. Snow peas, for example, may be as high as $4 per pound. This will make customers reluctant to buy. It is better to offer such items in more manageable units, such as a quarter pound for $1. Customers will pay more for two individual pints than they will for one quart.

The strawberries Smolowitz sells at the markets are prepackaged in pints, not quarts, and raspberries likewise come in a one-half pint size rather than pints. "People tend to buy in smaller quantities," Smolowitz says. "We get a lot of retired couples or single households and people don't can as much as they used to."

When an item isn't selling well in bulk, repackage it into quart boxes. Visually, a quart box looks like a lot. Little tomatoes amidst a bunch of big tomatoes won't sell, but little tomatoes in a quart box sell well.

Sell smaller packages for more.

Diane Green, Greentree Naturals Farm, in Sandpoint, Idaho, explains this strategy: "If I ask $2.50 for a pint of raspberries, people think I'm nuts and refuse to buy at that price when they can buy them for a $1.00 at the next stand. I package them in 1/2 pint containers, and sell them for $1.25 and sell out EVERY TIME. I have no idea why a smaller package for more

money will sell better, but it works!"

Price hard-to-find items above the market. Do this for unusual products or where competition is less intense, especially where there are quality differences. Even when yields are great, maintain your price. You will not stimulate additional purchases with a lower price. People will only buy what they need.

Give samples.

Let customers taste your quality! Cut slices: "Here, try one!" Especially with a new or unusual product, give out educational literature or recipes to show how to use it.

"Showcase" your product with great merchandising.

Why do you think expensive jewelry is back-dropped by velvet or other fancy fabric? Make dynamic displays using attractive packaging. Market manager Dana Plummer of the Downtown Waterloo Farmers' Market in Iowa says, "Consumers will pay twice as much if they're at a good-looking stall that's pleasing to the eye, where samples are provided, and where the vendors are customer-friendly."

Provide service.

This is what customers don't get in the supermarkets or "big box" stores. Be friendly with customers; ask your market to provide carry-out service for large purchases or for seniors; provide nutrition information and storage tips; and suggest ways to use the product (recipes, etc.) to increase demand.

Maintain your base pricing.

Try not to lower your prices even when your competitors are dropping theirs. If competing farmers drop prices, keep your original price even late in season, but give something extra. As one grower said: "If special sales and lower prices are appropriate due to overabundance of supply or promotional activities, we find that retaining the base price and then adding extra value is much better than simply getting a lower price. For example, when corn is over-supplied and other farmers are down around $2.75 per dozen, we keep our base price of 35¢ an ear, 6 ears for $2.00, and $3.75 per dozen. To attract the customer we offer 6 for $2.00 and then get a 7th ear free, or buy a dozen at $3.75 and get 2 ears free. We find people often buy a dozen at $3.75 to get two free. We get 27¢ per ear and keep our base price for future marketing. Our competition gets 23¢ an ear and will have difficulty raising the price in the future should the corn supply change. Again, quality is critical."

Raising prices.

Finally, if and when you do make upward price adjustments, make them as little as needed rather than all at once.

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Researching & Getting Grants

It's great to educate your community about farmers' markets and local agriculture, but how do you fund the programs to do this? One answer is through grants. To finance the ambitious and far-reaching educational projects of the Friends of the Farmers' Markets, executive director Pam Roy spends an appreciable amount of time writing grant proposals, developing business sponsorships, and spearheading an annual fund-raising campaign. FFM is set up as a nonprofit 501(c)(3) and acts as an umbrella for several organizations to help fund and develop their educational outreach programs.

"You really need to research who you are applying to, what they want, and what their purposes are," Roy says. To find out who's giving grants, go to a library and look for a CD-ROM from the National Foundation Center; this listing is also available on their website at fdncenter.org. "On their website you can find all kinds of information about foundations that may be interested in your organization's mission and programs," Roy says. On both the CD and the website you can do searches under specific key words such as "sustainable agriculture," "organic," "local agriculture" or "farmers' markets." Try to let your initial search be as broad as possible. Then you might narrow your search by state or by more specific categories.

Also consider what the foundations' major interests are. Sometimes you may think they are not interested in your proposed projects when in fact they may be, and sometimes the opposite may be true. "Simply calling them will let you know for sure," Roy says. Usually their phone numbers and e-mail addresses are listed as well as their mailing addresses. Often the listings will give information about what kinds of projects they have funded in the last year and of course this is a good tip-off about their interests and potential for funding your project.

Did they fund large projects or small, locally oriented agricultural projects? How much have they given in the past and how much do they now have available to give? Be realistic about their potential to fund your project. Look at how much money they gave last year. Often they will list both the total and a minimum and maximum range of money per project. Also take a look at which regions they target. They may only donate to a city or state that doesn't include your area, so don't waste your time applying where there's no possibility.

Take a look at who their executive directors are and consider if you know anyone in that community. Check with them to see if you know any of the board members. "This research often takes a lot of time and can be grueling," Roy says. "In order to maximize your efforts, you need to be realistic not only about who to go to, but in how much you can do as an individual or an organization."

Local community foundations often provide either workshops or services on how to write grant proposals — look under "Foundations" in the yellow pages. Often City Hall will have directories of local nonprofit community foundations and services. Community colleges, farm conferences and Cooperative Extension often have courses or workshops on how to write grant proposals. ✿

Exerpted from The New Farmers' Market, by Vance Corum, Marcie Rosenzweig and Eric Gibson. To order The New Farmers' Market, call (888) 281-5170 or contact New World Publishing, 11543 Quartz Dr. #1, Auburn CA 95602; (ph.) (530) 823-3886 , (fax) (810) 279-1959; www.nwpub.net.

How One Manager Makes Issues Look Easy: The Dane County Farmers' Market Story

The Dane County Farmers' Market (DCFM) is the largest farmers' market in the U.S. with over 300 vendors stretching all around the two-block, state capitol square in Madison, Wisconsin. About 25,000 people come to the market each Saturday in a city of 200,000, and recently-retired market manager Mary Carpenter attributes the market's phenomenal attendance to several factors. Its customer base is "middle class to affluent," and the market is close to the University of Wisconsin at Madison, one of the largest universities in the country. "It's a very health conscious city," Carpenter says. "The university was one of the most radical campuses in cities in the 60s, and I think the market has bloomed into a great farmers' market."

Another factor in the market's success is that its customers include a wide variety of ethnic groups. For example, about 10% of the market vendors at the market are Hmong. Carpenter says she feels the market's vendor base should reflect people who are growing and producing crops and reflect local agriculture.

There is a two-year waiting list for qualified persons wishing to join the market. After about ten years as "daily vendors" members may graduate to "season stall" status which allows them to have the same assigned spot each week. Only about 40% of vendors have "season stalls"; thus, more than half the vendors must arrive by 6 a.m. to line up by seniority. At 6:30 these "daily vendors" drive onto the square in an orderly manner and claim any open space, including any "season stalls" vacant that day. "We have 20 to 30 new vendors coming in each year from the waiting list," Carpenter adds. "They help bring fresh ideas to the market."

The DCFM is strictly foods, flowers and fibers; no crafts are allowed at the market. Even flowers can be sold only as flowers, not with bows or ribbons. "Variety is what brings customers to the market," Carpenter says. "One vendor brings 200 different kinds of herbs."

The market is run on a free-market basis, rather than having a lot of rules and regulations about product quality. Carpenter feels market competition encourages and even demands that growers bring their best, what customers want. "You don't get away with bringing seconds or poor produce because so many growers have great produce at the market."

One market rule that is enforced firmly is the strict "farmer-grown" policy. Resellers are strictly forbidden at the market; everything sold has to be raised by the vendor, and they can be booted out of the market for violations. Each vendor is required to sign a contract that allows the market to do a drop-in inspection at any time, for any reason. If the vendor refuses to allow an inspection, they are automatically expelled. "If a person is selling eggplant and they don't show me the eggplant in the field, they're out," Carpenter says. "It has been years, however, since a grower refused an on-farm inspection. In fact, they are always very proud of what they grow and are anxious to show off their operations. We've had only one or two expulsions a year of people reselling product."

When asked if such a strict to farmer-grown policy could work in a small-town, start-up market where some managers claim the need to relax the farmer-grown rules in order to diversify the market, Carpenter has an interesting answer: "Personally I wouldn't manage any other type of market. We started with 11 vendors. They would get demands and they would do whatever it took to grow it. They could not depend on bring-

ing it in from somewhere else. And the market just grew naturally."

The DCFM has developed a unique solution to the "big vs. small farmer" issue when small growers feel outgunned by big growers renting multiple booth spaces. Each vendor is given a 16-foot maximum frontage, which levels the playing field. "It also encourages vendors to be very creative in their marketing," Carpenter says. "We don't want someone's bank account dictating how much space they have — 16 feet is the absolute limit."

Another factor that contributes to the market success, Carpenter feels, is that the organization has a board of entirely vendor members. "We're an independent, self-governing, nonprofit organization. When it's a self-governing body, you listen to people. We're dealing with our own problems and we don't have to explain them to people who don't understand what we're doing. The board is very independent and responsive to vendor needs, and active people tend to attend board meetings."

Bounty from bounty, the market supplies 11 food banks every Saturday. "At 11:30 a.m. the food bank people come by with carts, and a lot of growers say 'take the table' and some even bring some extra for that purpose," Carpenter says. In addition, every fall a large charity dinner is held to support the food bank. The market donates the raw goods, top Madison chefs cook the food, food bank volunteers serve, and all the proceeds from a $14 dinner go to the food banks.

Does Carpenter have any management tips to pass along? "Only that you deal with things with a sense of humor," Carpenter laughs. "And it doesn't hurt that I was a teacher." ✿

The Farmers' Market Salad Bar Program

"We never thought we would see the day when kids are clamoring for kohlrabi or daikon, but after they've tasted it at the salad bar programs, they want more and more," says Laura Avery, manager of the Santa Monica Farmers' Market. She is referring to a new program whereby local farmers' markets supply farm-fresh fruits and vegetables to school cafeterias. At district schools children are offered a fresh farmers' market salad bar as an alternative to the traditional hot lunch five days a week. "I can tell you," one sixth grader exclaimed, "that we are very happy!"

The farmers' market salad bar program is run by the Santa Monica Malibu Unified School District (SMMUSD) Food and Nutrition Services Department and the City of Santa Monica Farmers' Market. Many of the children affected are from low-income families where access to fresh produce may be limited. The school district has seen more than a 500% increase in kids selecting the salad bar choice once the district began buying fresh fruits and vegetables at the farmers' market rather than through local produce dealers. The program has evolved from a pilot program in one elementary school to a district-wide success story being implemented in all 14 schools, thanks to a strong lunchtime demand from students for fresh fruit and vegetables.

In 1997, Occidental College researchers launched a pilot program to encourage students to eat more fresh produce while simultaneously supporting local farmers. The high-fat, high-salt food school age children often eat have created a paradox: many children are overweight and/or undernourished and school food is often the only daily meal available to them. In the past, school food menus may not have emphasized sound nutrition. Food insecurity is a condition that far too many low-income children confront daily, both inside and outside the schools.

The salad bar is a particularly compelling idea, given indications that nutritional deficiencies may have a significant impact on learning capacity. School food services often have become a political football between shrinking budgets, a reliance on low quality, commodity-based food, and the new shift toward privatized food services, which often emphasize fast-food type items.

According to Avery, "Kids pile their plates high with bright crunchy, juicy produce and often return for a second plateful. Nutritionally, the salad bar exceeds the USDA minimum requirements."

Rodney Taylor, SMMUSD food services director, says, "Serving nutritious meals that are also appealing to students encourages them to make healthy choices at an early age. Observing these good nutritional habits can help prevent a lifetime of serious health problems including obesity, diabetes, heart disease and cancer."

The items for the salad bar consist of what's in season, with many of the items picked the previous day. A typical week's menu will include two different kinds of fruit daily as well as four to six different kinds of vegetables. Since the program purchases directly from local farmers, items vary by season. There is an educational benefit as students become aware that certain foods only grow in the region during particular seasons. Students also learn about growing issues in a school garden and through farmers' market tours.

Taylor believes the salad bar program has paid for itself thus far. It costs the district just pennies per serving as compared to the hot lunch. The district's food budget pays for the market produce, but volunteers or others funded by federal grants bring the produce daily to the students at the salad bar.

Because of good volume, growers give bulk discounts. "We're supplying the district with organic strawberries at $8 a flat which might sell at the market for $12 a flat. It's a guaranteed volume and at a price the farmers are comfortable with," says Avery.

The Santa Monica School District spent $23,400 on the salad bar program in the 1999-2000 school year. One of the 20 farmers sold $4,260 worth of produce to the district, a new customer that had never shopped at the farmers' market. Sales are beneficial to the farmers even at or below wholesale price be-

cause they don't make an extra stop, don't have to make a hard sell and it's a standing order each week. "The farmers also enjoy knowing that they are nourishing and educating a new generation of consumers," Avery adds. "They figure that kids that start out eating good food will continue to eat good food."

Santa Monica Malibu Unified School District

The Santa Monica school district has seen more than a 500% increase in kids selecting the salad bar choice once the district began buying fresh fruits and vegetables at the farmers' market rather than through local produce dealers.

How do you start a salad bar program?

The Santa Monica Farmers' Market was fortunate to have several supportive people to get it started: the director of Food and Nutrition Services for the district, the market manager, and SMMUSD food nutrition coordinator Tracie Thomas, who pulled it all together.

"The food services director for your school district is the first person to approach," Avery says. "In our case the director happened to have a son in the schools whom he was anxious to get on this program." Another requirement is access to a large volume and good variety of fresh produce — it takes a lot of produce to supply a salad bar daily for a school district.

With the help of grant funds, the market also sponsors a Chef in the Classroom program to partner with teachers interested in incorporating nutrition into their curriculums, even in elementary school.

USDA grant. Having helped to demonstrate the feasibility of the concept, Occidental College is now heading a national consortium of universities, school districts and non-profit groups to develop new "farm-to-school" programs in California, New Jersey, and New York and expanding nationally.

Funded by a $2 million grant from the federal agriculture department, the farm-to-school project is an innovative effort to improve children's health and give small and medium-sized farms access to part of the $16 billion school food services market. "This will enable us to provide the kind of outreach and training needed to help others create and institutionalize their own programs across the country," said Robert Gottlieb, director of Occidental's Urban and Environmental Policy Institute (UEPI).

"We can envision farm-fresh food and gardens integrated into literally every school district in the country," added project co-director Michelle Mascarenhas. By expanding the market for local farm produce, farm-to-school programs can create a major new sales opportunity for family farmers as well as provide healthier food for school lunches and an effective means of educating children about nutrition, said Gottlieb.

For more information, see Occidental College's Pollution Prevention Education Research Training website at:

http://www.oxy.edu/oxy/news/articles/farms.and.schools.html.

[See also Resources, Chapter 12]

Similar salad bar programs have been operating in Berkeley and Santa Barbara schools. The Santa Barbara Farmers' Market approached a local school to establish a garden, applied for a grant, and the kids now grow food and come to the market. They also sell to the cafeteria which meets the rest of their needs at the market.

Kids notice fresh. This wave of the future may only be limited by the variety of products available locally. When highlighting the 5-A-Day program or simply hosting a school tour, notify farmers to have at least one item "on special" for kids. An apple or

Asian pear for a quarter starts the habit and gets an idea home. Fullerton, CA, has hosted children's tours where everyone receives 50 cents of coupons to redeem with farmers. Make sure they go home with a brochure. Work with the school nutritionist to incorporate farmers' market items and education into their program.

Vance Corum

Kids love to leave their mark through a mural or tile project which can be incorporated into a market building or nearby wall.

Launching a Fresh Foods School Education Program

An Interview with Dr. Antonia Demas, author of "Food is Elementary"

Many of us would like to improve the school lunch program, but I believe it has to be done through educating the kids in the classroom first. If you are concerned about the quality of food served in schools, you need to get a group of people together who are also interested in this issue. Make sure there is public support. Look for parents, farmers and farmers' market people who are interested in the school lunch programs and having healthier and more nutritious foods for their children. Get a core group of people together and come up with a proposal.

Your proposal needs to be carefully thought out and well organized. Schools are stretched to the max. You need to offer a program that you can provide initially. If the school perceives the project as more work or another program that they have to incorporate, they will reject it. There should also be no expense involved for the school. Once the school has seen the value of the program they may be willing to buy into it.

Your proposed program should address both education and health issues related to fresh foods. The nutritional advantages of fresh foods should be emphasized along with introducing foods that are available at the farmers' market and teaching the students about the cultures of the countries where these foods are indigenous.

A school education program about fresh foods is a natural for farmers' market programs because farmers' market products are so much healthier than what the kids are being fed in the schools. If more people saw the quality of foods served to children in many of the schools in this country, they would perhaps mobilize into action.

When children are enthusiastic about eating more nutritious food, the school lunch program will have a reason to change. Kids will eat healthy foods when they know what they are through positive, sensory-based education. If you put food from the garden in front of children without educating them about what it is, it's unlikely that they will want to eat it. If you tell them: "If you eat this, then 20 years from now you might not get cancer," it's not a compelling argument for children.

Food education should be an enjoyable experience for the kids, where they also learn about math, science, and the cultures of the world. If possible, bring in food-related artifacts along with music from various cultures to allow the children to have a rich exposure to different cultures. Have the children keep a journal of what they've learned so they can record their food-based experiences.

Use food as a vehicle to teach the academic disciplines. Let the kids cook the food and then eat it. They will be so proud of what they've created and that they've created something beautiful. If that same food is then served in the cafeteria, because the children have had such a positive experience with that food, they will be eager to eat it. Children will eat up to 20 times as much of a new food item if they have had prior positive exposure to the new food.

Some adults in food education programs have tried cooking food in front of the kids and expected the children would eat it. This generally is not effective. The children need to do the cooking and have the direct experience themselves.

School food education programs should focus on getting kids excited about cooking and eating fruits, vegetables and grains. School meals are often a child's best meal or the only meal they will eat that day. We must educate our children about nutrition so that they can protect their health through diet as they grow. We have a moral obligation to see that this happens.

— Contact info: Antonia Demas, Ph.D., Director, Food Studies Institute, 60 Cayuga St. Trumansburg, NY 14886 (607)387-6884, antoniad8@yahoo.com.

[See Resources, Chapter 12 to order Dr. Demas' book, *Food is Elementary*] ✿

Special Events at Your Market

by Lynn Bagley

— Lynn Bagley is founder of the Marin County Farmers' Market, director of the Golden Gate Farmers' Market Association and a consultant with Bagley & Associates, Novato, CA

Events can hurt sales if they draw people who are not coming to buy. Events should promote the farmers' market concept which is to re-establish communications between rural and urban culture. Lots of people are looking for their rural roots again. We celebrate the seasons, for example, and in grocery stores there is no season.

Keep the focus on food! The purpose of special events is to promote the market. You want the attendees to come back, so before having special events, make sure your producers are providing high-quality products and services to build customer loyalty and bonding. Help keep customers coming back with constant new excitement, educational, food-related events and thematic entertainment, but don't get too far from "who you are" such that special events detract from food sales. Events that have nothing to do with food or agriculture may promote sales for that one day, but in the long run they attract a different customer base and hurt sales.

When you have a glut of one thing (cherries, peaches, etc.) have a tasting! This turns a not-so-good-situation into a better situation. With each tasting event that you do, emphasize the quality and variety of produce to be found at the market. Studies show this is what draws the people to the farmers' markets. Whatever products you have that the supermarkets don't have, e.g., heirloom varieties of apples, a tasting helps show them off and highlights your competitive edge over the supermarkets.

In April or May flower-glut time, bring in the nurseries to talk about flower care, the local water district to talk about water-saving techniques, or chefs to do a demo on cooking with flowers.

Plan special events around what your target customer may want. Synergy begins to build and expands with diversity. With seniors, for example, you can do a "Senior Health Fair," including a range of senior health services and nutrition counseling. Involve local businesses; get employees out at lunchtime by serving some special lunches. Each person you hook may tell 10 people.

You want your market to serve as many different types of the population as possible. Target special events to attract population segments, e.g. certain ethnic groups or a wealthy clientele. If your demographics allow it, go after the "green consumer," and you'll have a repeat customer. At the markets they can find foods grown without pesticides and a chance to help farmers preserve farmland and the greenbelt around the city. Green consumers tend to be very loyal and often have more money and tend to better educated — they are a "natural" for the farmers' markets.

One way to attract the the "green consumer" is with Earth Day and organic events. Help celebrate Earth Day with a festival and also have a year-round sign describing how farmers' markets are ecological and thus a celebration of every day as earth day. An Organic Tasting Event allows you to educate people on what is "No Spray," what is "transitional," what is actually organic, and to show people how good organic products really are.

Another way to plan great special events at your markets is to look for businesses or community groups you can network with. Look at a Calendar of Events in the newspaper for upcoming events and call the organizations to see if they'd like to come to the market to promote their organization. Read the paper and look for food, garden or agriculture-related events or experts to find people who may contribute to the market. You might find someone who can provide a gardening or cooking demo or even teach a series of classes at the market.

Take advantage of the schools. They love coming out to the markets for Farm Day. Invite teachers and classes, and invite school boards to participate in planning. Invite the Farm Bureau and Cooperative Extension. Have a mural contest, an essay contest, a photo contest. Have a live story: "Where does lunch come from?"

Prepare a teacher packet that explains where food comes from and talks about the diversity of fruits and vegetables, etc. Have agriculture exhibits about food, where clothes come from, a recycling center, and Peter Rabbit's garden. When we get children thinking about where their food comes from, we create our future.

In conjunction with the Marin Community Food Bank around Valentine's Day, for example, the Marin County Farmers' Market held a "Have a Heart Day." A big red heart with lace around it was placed on a table, suggesting that people buy food at the market and donate for the Food Bank. To promote heart-healthy fruits and vegetables, market volunteers put little hearts on all the fruits and vegetables that are beneficial for the heart. A xeroxed list was passed out of "Heart Healthy Fruits and Vegetables."

Start out small and simple with special events, and build on it more and more. Don't plan so many events at once that you can't do them right. Don't try to do it all yourself. Have a special event coordinator and develop volunteers, partnerships and collaborators to help. Don't call it a special event unless you're really doing something special.

Don't do the same "special events" over and over. Build on them! Build fund-raisers in conjunction with special events to promote the market in general. In the beginning when you have little or no money to spend on advertising, spend money on special events instead of large paid ads and promote these with press releases, PSAs, signs at the markets, etc.

Plan for getting maximum coverage from media. Get last year's photos to print prior to the event and shoot new photos to send the newspapers for printing after the event as well. Send out press packets early and repeat releases two weeks before the event. ✿

EDUCATING THE PUBLIC ABOUT LOCAL AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS' MARKETS

Friends of the Farmers' Markets – Santa Fe

New Mexico has a fascinating state model Friends of the Farmers' Markets (FFM) program, directed by Pamela Roy in Santa Fe. Its purposes are to solicit broader recognition of the state's farmers' markets, foster increased support among consumers and institutions for sustainably grown agricultural products, enhance marketing opportunities for the farmers, and encourage family farming and the preservation of indigenous agricultural traditions.

Friends of the Farmers' Markets seeks to achieve these goals through on-farm research, workshops and conferences, and "Farm Connection." This bimonthly newsletter uses both contributed articles and farmer-to-farmer dialogue to cover national and regional policy issues, direct farm marketing and local sustainable topics.

FFM also provides conference scholarships for farmers, sponsors farm improvement clubs to give seed money for farmer group projects, and funds farmers' market projects like customer surveys and farmer education workshops.

Roy says, "Farmers need to think about their farmers' market venture as a business. Especially as markets grow and there's more a competitive environment, farmers need to learn business skills like writing a business plan and utilizing long-range cash-flow planning instead of operating out-of-pocket from day to day." Teachers from local Small Business Development Centers or other nonprofit organizations are perfect for Friends workshops.

FFM also educates the community, especially children, through programs such as: a Farm Tour throughout northern New Mexico; hands-on activities in the Farmers' Market Garden; Shop with the Chefs and food demonstrations; festivals such as Stone Soup and Corn Grinding & Tortilla-Making Day; as well as Taste, Touch and Smell days.

Kids' Education. The "Farm to School" fall program reaches 2000 students at 20 Santa Fe public grade schools, fairly extensive outreach in a town of 60,000. "The kids come to the farmers' market and participate in our programs; the teachers' love it," Roy says. "It makes such a great field trip, and one of the things that we are aiming at in our grant proposals is to institutionalize the farmers' market in the school system through our Farm to School Program."

The FFM helps teachers enrich their curriculum on food topics by offering presentations in the schools prior to the market tours. Farmers are provided stipends to give the presentations and host field trips on their farms. The program thus offers introductory presentations about the farmers' market, visits to the market and on-site education, farmer visits to the classroom and farm field trips.

The "Kids in the Garden" program involves hands-on activities in a small community garden, about 70-yards long by 8-feet wide, at the farmers' market. "Kids of all ages" are invited to: "Come dig the soil, plant seeds, identify common garden plants, construct trellises, harvest the bounty and taste the fresh tomatoes."

"We use the garden as an alive, hands-on experience," Roy says. On Seed Planting Day, kids plant in the garden. When they come back to the farmers' market week after week, they can actually see and tend their plants. They also take home six-packs of planted seeds to cultivate at home.

Compost Critters Day allows kids to use microscopes and eyeglasses to inspect all the beneficial insects in the garden. They also prepare soil and make compost.

Farm Tours. In 1999 there were 600 people from New Mexico and out-of-state who visited 20 participating farms. "The farm tour is a great opportunity for experiential learning," Roy says. "People learn how the food is grown and how to connect with their local farmer." They saw wool spinning, compost making, and bread making by a local bakery. The bakery handed out their brochures about encouraging the revitalization of local wheat production in New

Mexico. The demonstrations were all done at farms; similar exhibitions are done at farmers' markets.

Taste Festivals. "Fresh tastings enable you to expand your palate by sampling the many varieties of super-fresh fruits, vegetables and herbs available at the market," Roy says. "You get to know those small, sweet, yellow tomatoes perfect for salads, kids or salsa; which roasted chili variety has just the right amount of heat for you; and whose sweet apricots and peaches you will stuff yourself on this summer!"

Taste, Touch and Smell days are seasonal events to celebrate locally grown, regional specialties. There are at least 40 varieties of tomatoes at the market, so a tomato tasting is a natural. Similarly, at the Chile Festival market visitors can sample 20 to 30 varieties of chili and sweet peppers, roasted and raw. With the Apple Tasting they can sample a dozen or more varieties and pick up literature that describes which apples are tart and sweet, which are good for apple pie, and which make a better applesauce. Sometimes farmers are paid for their produce or flour from grant funds while others make contributions.

Stone Soup Day revolves around a sweet children's fable. A pauper arrived in a community and went door-to-door asking for food. Unsuccessful, he decided to ask people for help in making a community stone soup. He asked each household if they could contribute some carrots or some tomatoes and each one was willing. The soup project snowballed. Just by saying "I have a stone" and "I'm contributing," he got the community to contribute to a pot of soup. At the market the fable is told and kids learn to make soup, starting with a vegetable broth base. Adults love it, too.

On the same day they teach corn grinding and tortilla making. Market corn growers contribute cobs of corn. Kids shuck and grind it and make tortillas, a great source of pride, from the cob right to the tortilla.

"We want people to be conscious about where they buy their food and why, and we want people to know that they have options," Roy says, explaining FFM's considerable efforts in educating the public

Vance Corum

A farmer becomes one with her dried flower arrangements which will make perfect gifts or home accents, paying for those long hours of design work by the fireplace. Some growers offer classes on arranging to spur flower sales.

about local agriculture. "This is important because the young people growing up now are at least one if not two generations removed from family farms. They no longer have a grandparent or an uncle or aunt who operate a farm. So a lot of these kids, along with many adults, really don't know much about farm life and they have no idea where their food comes from.

"We recognize that convenience is one of the number-one things people are looking for now in the 21st century — consumers lead very busy, active lives, so we're recognizing that farmers' markets need to make some transition to a certain extent.

"Yet we feel we're also here to help people make decisions about their food, learn where their food comes from, how it can be prepared, how they can be involved in their local food system if they want to be, and that they can make a conscious choice. That supermarket tomato may not be the only tomato in town — the local grocer or farmers' market may provide a tomato that is grown locally in the community, and by buying that instead of the supermarket variety, they're supporting the local economy.

"That's why we feel the educational aspect of the farmers' markets is so important. I always expect that people look for the higher good, but I'm also realistic in recognizing that our world provides us with so much information overload that sometimes people

have to make the simplest choices for themselves. If we can touch even ten percent of the community, we feel we are making an impact."

Shop with the Chef. This program especially highlights local, indigenous foods such as chili, squash, corn posole and frijoles (beans) and also focuses on seasonal varieties of fruits and vegetables. "There's a lot of local indigenous foods around here that customers might see at the market, but they don't know how to use," Roy says. "These are culturally traditional or ethnic foods that customers ordinarily wouldn't see in other parts of the country."

"The chef will talk about the goat cheese or rhubarb that she's using in a demonstration, and why it's important to buy seasonally — why you don't see oranges or bananas in the farmers' market in Santa Fe, for example, and why you'll find greens and peas early in the year in the market and not apples," says Roy.

Ferry Plaza — San Francisco

Sibella Kraus, who founded the Tasting of Summer Produce in the early 1980s, created a non-profit Center for Urban Education About Sustainable Agriculture (CUESA) to run the market, a favorite site for premier organic growers and specialty food producers. Now Frankie Whitman acts as the consultant, developing innovative, educational programs at the market.

Ferry Plaza does a "Shop with the Chef Program" in which a local chef is given a budget to shop the market for what's fresh that day. Then the chef does a demonstration about what they've bought and why, what the people can do with it, and recipes and samples are handed out. "We don't have any problem getting chefs to come to the market," Whitman says, "because it's a rather high-end market and many of the chef's restaurant customers are also shoppers at the market."

Meet the Producer. A recent tie-in to the chef program is a weekly half-hour presentation in which a producer or a panel speaks about why they grow certain varieties and what it takes to get their product to market. While incredibly informative with a loyal following, attendance is less than a third that of the chef program. "People want to be entertained by celebrity chefs and learn how to cook," Whitman says.

Ferry Plaza, too, has added its own wrinkle to the idea of festivals centered around what's in season. "Tasting festivals are a great way to move products that are in glut," Whitman says, "but we feel it behooves the market to come up with something a little more creative than just comparing one grower's products against another's. Some growers don't like comparative tastings because they feel it pits one grower against another. We feel that the Meet the Producer program accomplishes a little bit more than just having a product out on the table. It helps consumers understand why farmers' market products are different than supermarket products.

To close their season, the market held "a discussion around the production of olive oil, different harvesting schedules, and a tasting of the different olive oil products." Peggy Knickerbocker, author of a book on California olive oils, facilitated the panel discussion. "Selling books is a good trade-off for authors and it gives the people at the market something nice to bring home." Check with a local bookstore, library or publisher to find local food authors.

"There are incredible resource people in any community who are willing to participate in these kinds of events and you need to draw on these kinds of resources," Whitman emphasizes. If not professionally organized, these events reflect badly on presenters and the market. Have a working loudspeaker, chairs, cooking equipment and a chef's assistant who can run it on time, introduce the program, thank people afterwards and distribute samples.

"With panel discussions make sure the panel knows in advance the questions so they can be prepared. In the Meet the Producer programs, we ask the presenters to bring in things to make it attractive, such as photographs of their farms, and set up some kind of display on the table. The programs shouldn't go on too long, about a half-hour or 45 minutes maximum.

"Look for nonprofit groups who are doing educational work around such issues as food, nutrition or gardening. It's an opportunity for them to get exposure."

With weekly events, it's hard to do extra publicity outside market signs, but with other special events, extra efforts are called for.

Cooking with Kids

Cooking with Kids is a multicultural food education program in New Mexico, currently operating in the Santa Fe and Cimarron public elementary schools. The program seeks to improve child nutrition through hands-on preparation of foods from many cultures in the classroom. Trained food educators work with students to prepare foods that are healthy and appealing. According to CWK program coordinator Lynn Walters, "If you're trying to convince kids to eat flavorful, healthy foods, ask them to prepare it themselves. The experience of eating and enjoying good foods, rather than just hearing the message of what's good for us, is really important. Cooking is a fun and creative process. And when children eat well, they are prepared to learn. And as they become educated about different foods, they are more likely to make positive food choices."

In addition to helping children learn healthy food habits, CWK classes provide opportunities for children to learn math, social studies, language arts, agriculture, art and music. By studying and experiencing food from around the world, the children also learn about people of other cultures.

During the 2000-2001 school year, CWK is working in seven Santa Fe elementary schools and one school in Cimarron, providing over 1,000 food education classes to students from kindergarten through sixth grade.

Cooking Classes are taught by a CWK food educator with teacher and volunteer help. Each class lasts about 1 3/4 hours. The food educator provides a cultural context for each class, hands-on cooking instruction, age appropriate curriculum activities, discussion questions, and all materials, ingredients and supplies necessary for each meal.

One student commented on the recipe for Green & White Fettuccine with Tomato Basil Sauce: "It's great; it's not coming out of a package." After cooking and eating Greek Pastitsio with Mediterranean Salad, another child said, "There is joy in my mouth now." The same meals are prepared and served by the cafeteria staff several times a month as lunch choices in the school cafeterias.

The Integrated Nutrition Project

The Integrated Nutrition Project (INP) is a 5-A-Day program that is currently reaching 750 Hispanic children in elementary schools in Denver, Colorado. According to Cathy Romaniello, an instructor with the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, INP consists of 26 weekly nutrition lessons focused on fruits and vegetables and how they fit into the Food Guide pyramid. The lessons are linked to school district academic standards and are integrated into literacy, science, and math. They are designed to be hands-on and include food preparation and eating fruits and/or vegetables at each lesson.

Evaluation of this program from prior years found that the INP achieved significant behavior changes in children. Compared to control schools, INP children consumed 0.4 servings more fruits/vegetables at school lunch than did control children at the year-end post test. INP children significantly improved knowledge and improved attitudes toward the school lunch program.

— For information, contact Cathy Romaniello, Instructor, Dept. of Pediatrics, University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, Denver, CO, 80262. 303-315-5401 or cathy.romaniello@uchsc.edu.

Tasting classes, taught by classroom teachers, alternate with cooking classes and are devoted to having kids explore the diverse varieties of particular foods such as tomatoes or apples.

"Forty-five percent of the children in the Santa Fe Public Schools receive free or reduced-price meals," Walters continues. "Studies show that school lunch is the only complete meal many children eat each day. Many children are no longer learning from their parents and grandparents how to make tamales or strudel. One student even thought that food originated in the refrigerator."

To further the students' food education CWK developed a Farmer in the Schools program, which is now coordinated by Friends of the Farmers' Markets. The program brings local farmers into the classroom to talk about what they do and how they do it. Some farmers bring slides to show during the 30- to 40-minute presentations as well as the fruits of their labor to share with the kids.

"The parents of children who are in the CWK program frequently talk about how enthusiastic their children are after cooking in the classroom and that they like to cook more at home. We're encouraged about the possibility of getting children excited about cooking. If they don't cook, they're definitely not going to know what to do with all of the beautiful produce at the farmers' market!"

An Integrated Curriculum Guide is being developed by CWK and may be ready by fall 2001. Write to Lynn Walters at Cooking with Kids, 3508 Camino Jalisco, Santa Fe, NM 87505.

Senior Nutrition Program

In Decorah, Iowa, the Farmers' Market Senior Nutrition Program provides senior citizens with coupons that can be redeemed at their local market for fresh produce. According to director Connie Burns, it is similar to the WIC Farmers' Market Program and is funded through a local United Way. "The farmers love it, as do the seniors!"

Burns coordinates the program as a dietitian at a local hospital which gives "in kind" support through secretarial time, supplies, and printing of pamphlets. Public health nurses are also involved in the distribution of coupons to their senior clients.

"There is a significant percentage of senior citizens in Winneshiek County that have limited incomes," Burns says, "and the opportunity to include fresh produce in their nutrition plan may not have occurred without the program's encouragement. The social and physical interactions with producers and consumers, who are advocates of healthy eating, further promotes these healthy habits. The interaction and instruction provided by the clinical dietitian, both at the meal site and the farmers' market, also reinforces the value of having a greater intake of fruits and vegetables as part of the senior participant's diet."

The Decorah Farmers' Market has 21 vendors who served an average of 280 senior citizens in 1998. Besides providing seniors with a healthy diet of fresh fruits and vegetables, the program provides seniors an opportunity to socialize, get fresh air and exercise by walking the market.

The clinical dietitian from the hospital provides nutrition presentations at the Decorah meal sites to promote the inclusion of fresh produce in the senior citizens' diet plan and distributes coupons to encourage seniors to register for participation in the program. They are exchanged for fresh produce from farmers who provide product information including recipes, food preparation and storage ideas. The dietitian also is available at the market to monitor the program activities and to provide further education.

A participant survey indicated that 92% of the seniors increased their intake of fruits and vegetables as a result of the program, 72% used all of their coupons during the season, and 67% visited the farmers' market six or more times in the season.

"The acceptance of the program and its utilization by the senior citizens in Decorah has been excellent," Burns says. "The program has become popular even though we can only allocate two to four one-dollar coupons at a time to each participant. The education provided by the clinical dietitian at the meal site is a key to the success of the program in having

the produce available from farmers in a local community."

According to Burns, "Any farmers' market could probably set up a similar program. In fact, I've been trying to get a 'how to' manual together. I've done this program for seven seasons so far and have worked out the major bugs." Contact info: Connie Burns, 903 Walnut Street, Decorah, IA, 52101, 319-382-0173.

[For other senior nutrition resources, see Resources, Chapter 12]

Resources & Networking

Networking, supply sources, publications, law and policy updates, crop pricing, workshops, internships, forums, associations. Resources may combine several categories, such as organic growing associations that also offer magazines and networking.

Sustainable Organizations and Associations

Abundant Life Seed Foundation
Open-pollinated seeds, education and networking.
P.O. Box 772, Port Townsend, WA 98368, 360-385-5660
abundant@olypen.com
www.abundantlifeseed.org

Association Kokopelli
Seed saving society from France.
contactus@organicseedsonline.com
www.terredesemences.com

ATTRA (Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas)
Technical assistance, free of charge, to current and aspiring sustainable farmers in all 50 states.
P.O. Box 3657, Fayetteville, AR 72702, 800-346-9140
www.attra.ncat.org

Biodynamic Farming and Gardening Association, Inc.
25844 Butler Road , Junction City, OR 97448 , 888-516-7797 or 541-998-0105 , fax: 541-998-0106
biodynamic@aol.com

Bioneers
Solutions for restoring the earth with sustainable farm networks and workshops.
Collective Heritage Institute, 901 West San Mateo Rd., Suite L, Santa Fe, NM 87505, 877-246-6337
info@bioneers.org
www.bioneers.org

Diet For a Small Planet and Hope's Edge Organization
Frances Moore Lappe and Anna Lappe, Small Planet Fund at the Funding Exchange, 666 Broadway, Suite 500, New York, NY 10012
www.dietforasmallplanet.com

Ecology Action
Biointensive growing method.
18001 Shafer Ranch Road, Willits, CA 95490-9626, 707-459-6410
bountiful@sonic.net
www.growbiointensive.org
www.bountifulgardens.org

Homestead.org
Rural living information, networking, resources.
www.homestead.org

N.O.R.M.
National Organization for Raw Materials, Randy Cook, President, 680 E. 5 Point Highway, Charlotte, MI 48813, 517-543-0111
rccook@voyager.net
www.normeconomics.org

Organic Trade Association
P.O. Box 547, Greenfield, MA 01301, 413-774-7511
llutz@ota.com
www.ota.com

Remineralize the Earth, Inc.
Foundation dedicated to restoring all of the earth's lost minerals in original balance.
152 South St., Northampton, MA 01060-4021, 413-586-4429
reminearth@aol.com
www.remineralize-the-earth.org

Seed Savers Exchange
3076 North Winn Rd., Decorah, Iowa 52101, 319-382-5990
arllys@seedsavers.org
www.seedsavers.org

Slow Food Movement
international@slowfood.org
www.slowfood.com

The Campaign to Label Genetically Engineered Foods
P.O. Box 55699, Seattle, WA 98155, 425-771-4049
label@thecampaign.org
www.thecampaign.org

The Square Foot Gardening Foundation
info@squarefootgardening.com
www.squarefootgardening.com

Supply or Seed Sources

Acadian Seaplants Limited
Kelp meal for soil and animal rations.
30 Brown Avenue, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, Canada B3B 1X8, 800-575-9100
info@acadian.ca
www.acadianseaplants.com

Baker Creek Heirloom Seeds
2278 Baker Creek Road, Mansfield, MO 65704, 417-924-1222
magazine@rareseeds.com
www.rareseeds.com

Caprine Supply
Products for goats, including small, rarer breeds: milk, cheese, soap, packing, more.
P. O. Box Y, De Soto, KS 66018, 913-585-1191, Fax: 913-585-1140
info@caprinesupply.com
www.caprinesupply.com

Forestfarm
A huge variety of high quality trees and shrubs from wild lilacs to native maples.
990 Tetherow Rd., Williams, OR 97544-9599, 541-846-7269
forestfarm@rvi.net
www.forestfarm.com

Garden State Heirloom Seed Society
P.O. Box 15, Delaware, NJ 07833
www.historyyoucaneat.org

Gardens Alive
Sustainable gardening products including sea and rock dust soil additions and beneficial microbes.
5100 Schenely Place, Lawrenceburg, IN 47025, 513-354-1482
www.gardensalive.com

Growing Solutions
Compost tea equipment and ingredients.
888-600-9558
www.growingsolutions.com

Heirloom Acres LLC
P.O. Box 194, New Bloomfield, Mo. 65063, 573-491-3001
www.heirloomacres.net

Heirloom Roses, Inc.
24062 NE Riverside Drive, St. Paul, OR 97137, 800-820-0465
info@heirloomroses.com
www.heirloomroses.com

Johnny's Selected Seeds
955 Benton Ave., Winslow, Maine 04901, 207-861-3900
info@johnnyseeds.com
www.johnnyseeds.com

Jon's Heirloom Plants
P.O. Box 54, Mansfield, MO 65704, 870-404-4771
jonsplants@yahoo.com
www.jonsplants.net

Lois G. Lenz
Website with source of alkalizing water and cleansers, and other natural remedies.
www.ascendingenterprises.com

Marianna's Heirloom Seeds
1955 CCC Road, Dickson, TN 37005
www.mariseeds.com

Native Seeds Search
526 North 4th Ave., Tucson, AZ 85705-8450, 520-622-5561
dpeel@nativeseeds.org
www.nativeseeds.org

Neptune's Harvest
Organic sea-based fertilizers.
88 Commercial Street, Gloucester, MA 01930, 800-259-GROW (4769)

Peaceful Valley Farm Supply
Supplies for sustainable agriculture.
P.O. Box 2209, Grass Valley, CA 95945, 888-784-1722
www.groworganic.com

Raintree Nursery
391 Butts Road, Morton, WA 98356, 360-496-6400, Fax 888-770-8358
info@raintreenursery.com
www.raintreenursery.com

Seeds of Change
Sustainably produced seeds from around the world, rare fruit trees.
P.O. Box 15700, Santa Fe, NM 87592-1500, 888-762-7333
gardener@seedsofchange.com
www.seedsofchange.com

Select Seeds

Antique flower seeds
180 Stickney Rd., Union, CT 06076, 860-684-9310
info@selectseeds.com
www.selectseeds.com

SoilSoupInc.
9792 Edmonds Way #247, Edmonds, WA 98020, 877-711-7687,
Services@soilsoup.com,
www.soilsoup.com

South Meadow Fruit Gardens
Rare and connoisseur fruit trees.
10603 Cleveland Ave., Baroda, MI 49101, 269-422-2411
smfruit@aol.com
www.southmeadowfruitgardens.com

Southern Exposure Seed Exchange
P.O. Box 460, Mineral, VA 23117, 540-894-9481
gardens@southernexposure.com
www.southernexposure.com

St. Lawrence Nurseries
Rare fruit trees.
325 State Hwy. 345, Potsdam, NY 13676, 315-265-6739
trees@sln.potsdam.ny.us
www.sln.potsdam.ny.us

The Cook's Garden
Seeds and supplies for kitchen gardeners.
P.O. Box 535, Londonderry, VT 05148, 800-457-9703
info@cooksgarden.com
www.cooksgarden.com

The Territorial Seed Company
P.O. Box 158, Cottage Grove, OR 97424-0061, 541-942-9547
tertrl@territorial-seed.com
www.territorial-seed.com

Books and Periodicals

Acres USA
A voice for eco-agriculture, monthly publication, conferences, huge selection of books which includes many hard-to-find books including *The Complete Herbal Handbook for Farm and Stable* by Juliette de Bairacli Levy and work by Andre Voisin.
P.O. Box 91299, Austin, TX 78709, 800-355-5313
info@acresusa.com
www.acresusa.com

BackHome Magazine
Small farming and sustainable living.
P.O. Box 70, Hendersonville, NC 28742, 800-992-2546
www.backhomemagazine.com

Backyard Market Gardening
By Andrew Lee
Production, marketing, for market gardeners. See *New World Publishing Bookshelf* below.

Cash from Square Foot Gardening
by Mel Bartholomew
The Square Foot Gardening Foundation
info@squarefootgardening.com
www.squarefootgardening.com

Diet For a Small Planet, and Hope's Edge
www.dietforasmallplanet.com

Four-Season Harvest
by Eliot Coleman, Kathy Bary, and Barbara Damrosch
www.fourseasonfarm.com

Growing for Market
News and ideas for market gardeners.
P.O. Box 3747, Lawrence, Kansas 66046, 800-307-8949, Fax: 785-748-0609
growing4market@earthlink.net
www.growingformarket.com

Hobby Farms Magazine
Rural living for pleasure and profit.
P.O. Box 58701, Boulder, CO 80322-8701, 800-365-4421
fancy@neodata.com

How To Grow More Vegetables Than You Ever Thought Possible on Less Land Than You Can Imagine
by John Jeavons
www.growbiointensive.org,
www.bountifulgardens.org

LaSagna Gardening
by Patricia Lanza, Rodale Press, Inc.
www.lasagnagardening.com

MetroFarm: The Guide to Growing for Big Profit on a Small Parcel of Land
by Michael Olson
P.O. Box 1244, Santa Cruz, CA 95061, 831-427-1620
michaelo@metrofarm.com
www.metrofarm.com

Michael McGroarty
Books and articles on growing landscape plants on 1/20th of an acre.
P.O. Box 338, Perry, Ohio 44081
mcplants@ncweb.com
www.freeplants.com

New World Publishing
Publisher of this book, as well as *Sell What You Sow!, The New Farmers' Market,* and *Wild Herbs.* Online catalog, *New World Publishing Bookshelf,* has dozens of titles on sustainable agriculture, green building, and renewable energy. (See p. 175).
11543 Quartz Dr. #1, Auburn, CA 95602, 530-823-3886
nwpub@nwpub.net
www.nwpub.net

Organic Gardening Magazine
33 East Minor Street, Emmaus, PA 18098, 610-967-5171
OGDcustserv@cdsfulfillment.com
www.organicgardening.com

How to Have a Green Thumb Without an Aching Back: A New Method of Mulch Gardening
by Ruth Stout
www.earthlypursuits.com

Sharing The Harvest
By Elizabeth Henderson
All about Community Supported Agriculture (CSA). See *New World Publishing Bookshelf* above.

Solar Gardening: Growing Vegetables Year-Round the American Intensive Way (American Intensive Method)
by Leandre Poisson and Gretchen Vogel Poisson
Chelsea Green Publishing
www.chelseagreen.com

The Growing Edge Magazine
Hydroponics, aeroponics, greenhouses, explores sustainable methods.
P.O. Box 1027, Corvallis, OR 97339-1027, USA: 800-888-6785, Worldwide: 1-541-757-8477, Fax: 541-757-0028
www.growingedge.com

The Heirloom Gardener Magazine
Hill Folk's Publishing, 2278 Baker Creek Road, Mansfield, MO 65704, 417-924-1222
magazine@rareseeds.com
www.theheirloomgardener.com

The Permaculture Activist
Publication for Permaculture, the study of allowing the earth to do more and more, the human to do less and less, while increasing productivity.
P.O. Box 1209, Black Mountain, NC 28711, 828-669-6336
pcactivist@mindspring.com
www.permaculturereactivist.net
Other sources for Permaculture information include: *Acres USA* (see above).

Networking, Workshops, Information Centers, etc.

Andre Voisin (see Acres)

CSA-L
E-mail list and discussion group on Community Supported Agriculture (CSA).
http://www.prairienet.org/pcsa/CSA-L

GardenWeb Forums
The largest community of gardeners on the internet, with many threads of interest to high-value crop growers and marketers.
http://forums.gardenweb.com/forums

Ken Hargesheimer
Workshops and information on organic, biointensive, raised-bed gardening, market gardening, mini-farming, and mini-ranching worldwide.
P.O. Box 1901, Lubbock, Texas 79408-1901, 806-744-8517, Fax 806-747-0500
minifarms@aol.com
www.minifarms.com

Market Farming
E-mail list and discussion group plus helpful articles on market farming.
www.marketfarming.net

Organic Research.com
Updates on policies, certification, organic farming research.
CABI Publishing North America, 44 Brattle Street, 4th Floor, Cambridge, MA 02138, 800-528 4841
tbrainerd@pcgplus.com

Peter Weis, Futurist
Holistic health, sustainable farming, restoring the 72+ trace elements.
#306 - 1035 Pendergast Street, Victoria, BC, Canada V8V 2W9
pweis@direct.ca
www.truehealth.org

Sylvia and Walter Ehrhardt
Internships and information on small organic farming.
Fax: 301-834-5070
ecoag@igc.apc.org

The "NEW FARM" web site
Information on organic farming, price indexes for organic foods, and forum for organic farmers.
www.newfarm.org

The Stewardship Community
Guidestone CSA Farm and Center for Sustainable Living, 5943 N. County Road 29, Loveland, Colorado 80538, 970-461-0272
guidestone_alliance@msn.com
www.stewardshipcommunity.org