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# Best Practices for Farmers' Markets

2014

Christie Welch, Farmers' Markets Specialist



## Agenda

- Low or no-cost marketing ideas.
- Food safety: What do vendors and managers need to know?
- What are cottage foods?
- How to accept Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP) benefits
- Networking



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# Low or No-cost Marketing Ideas



Best low and no cost marketing ideas

# Top reasons consumers shop

#1 Freshness

Taste

Access to local foods

#2 **Supporting local farmers**

*The Ohio Survey of Food, Agriculture and Environmental Issues*

administered by Sharp et al (2002)



## Low or no cost marketing ideas

- Information about the farmer/producer
- Recipe cards
- Business cards
- Product storage and use information





### Low or no cost marketing ideas

- Design displays to be eye-catching and draw customers in
- Easy to read signs with prices
- Offer quality products
- Educate consumers on how to use the product
- Ask consumers what other local foods they would purchase



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Low or no cost marketing ideas

*Be Creative*





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Low or no cost marketing ideas

**Pile it high and watch it fly!**





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Low or no cost marketing ideas

*For eye appeal, mix up the color*





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Low or no cost marketing ideas

# *Table coverings accent a display*





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# *Increase customer reach with layers*





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Low or no cost marketing ideas

*Use aroma to draw attention...*





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Low or no cost marketing ideas

# Easy to Read Signage





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*Sampling sells product...*





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Low or no cost marketing ideas

*Every product needs a price sign...*





Low or no cost marketing ideas

Consumer education  
such as recipes,  
cooking  
demonstrations,  
health and nutrition  
information.





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## Low or no cost marketing ideas

*Invite your  
customers  
back!*





Low or no cost marketing ideas

## **Add in Customer Service**

Always educate your customers.

Hold packages

Take orders

Let your customers know what's coming next week

Look at your presentation, both display and yourself, from the customer's point of view.





## Low or no cost marketing ideas

# Websites – Great for an online presence

- Weekly vendors
- Vendor profiles
- Recipes
- Location, times, special events
- SNAP/EBT acceptance and education
- Contact information





## Low or no cost marketing ideas

### Websites (continued)

Ohio Get Online <http://www.gybo.com/ohio/>

Free for 1 year; \$6.99/month after that.

Weebly <http://www.weebly.com/>

Basic package is free; but you have to buy your own domain name.

Wix <http://www.wix.com/>

Also basic package is free; but you have to buy your own domain name.



## Low & No cost Tech

## Social Media

- Good for similar info as a website
- Stay relevant – post at least 1-2 times/week; especially near market times
- Also useful for specials, weather updates, specific vendors





## Social Media (continued)

Facebook – <http://www.facebook.com/>

- Most widely used; easy to set up a business page.
- Examples

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Athens-Farmers-Market/142927645732169>

<https://www.facebook.com/PickawayCountyFarmersMarket>

Twitter - <http://twitter.com/>

- Good for short, quick info
- Example - <https://twitter.com/PEARLMARKET>



## No & Low Cost Tech

# More Social Media

Pinterest – <http://www.pinterest.com/>

- Online bulletin board.
- Great to link pictures and recipes back to your website.
- Example - <http://www.pinterest.com/silverbridgecof/>

YouTube - <https://www.youtube.com/>

- More than just for funny videos
- Useful for market tours, vendor profiles, cooking demos
- Example - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BT-D0J\\_J2Tc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BT-D0J_J2Tc)



## No & Low Cost Tech

- Determine which type(s) of social media will best fit your customers.
- Get feedback – what do they use the most?
- Set an amount of money and time should be spent on online marketing.
- Establish who has access to edit and post.
- Track social media – ask customers how they heard about your business.



## Where to get help?

### OSU South Centers

Christie Welch, [welch.183@osu.edu](mailto:welch.183@osu.edu)

### The Farmers' Market Management Network

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

### The Farmers' Market Coalition

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



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**<http://southcenters.osu.edu/farmers-markets>**