Setting Yourself Apart in a Farmers’ Market

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Setting Yourself Apart in a Farmers’ Market

• Importance of Great Products
• Design your “store” (booth/stall)
  – Displays that work
    • Customer Friendly Space
      – Easy entry and movement through “store”
      – Easy to purchase
      – Easy to interact with you
  • Abundance
    – Not overwhelming
    – Organized
• 3-Dimensional
Setting Yourself Apart in a Farmers’ Market

- Effective use of signs
  - Importance of labeling
  - Stand out in the crowd

- Packaging
  - Grab and Go
  - Pre-pack for specific price points (SFMNP, WIC, etc.)

- Offer Outstanding Customer Service

- Examples

- Q & A
Importance of Great Products

‘Local’ is the new organic
According to the National Restaurant Association What’s Hot in 2013

#1 Locally sourced meats/seafood
#2 Locally grown produce
Healthy Snacks and Meals for kids


According to Sterling Rice Group
#4 Veggies will take over the plate

http://www.srg.com/permanent/2012/10/2013-culinary-predictions
Importance of Great Products

• Ensure your products are high quality
  – Share variety names with consumers
  – Explain why you grow the varieties you grow
  – Offer taste testing for comparison
  – Properly harvest and transport products to maintain quality
  – If you have a large number of seconds, think of other marketing channels to sell these products
Importance of Great Products

• Great Product Sells Itself

• Locally produced products are perceived to be fresher than grocery store items – ensure that yours are.
Design your store (booth/stall)

• Make your space customer-friendly
• Clean canopies and tents in good repair
• Neat and clean table covers that complement your products
• Design the customer flow through your booth.

http://www.ezup.com/
Ensure your space is customer friendly

- Understand where to enter/pay/exit
- Can easily interact with you
- Can easily move through your “store”

http://getoutslo.com/san-luis-obispo-farmers-market/150/
Best Practices for Farmers’ Market Vendors

Make sure customers can easily move through your store

• No tripping hazards
• Enough room so they don’t feel too pressured to move on.
• As bins become depleted, consolidate
Use table covers that:

• Compliment your products
• Are easy to clean
• Help to maintain product quality
Design your store (booth/stall)

Appeal to the customer’s eye by creating a sense of abundance

Use containers that complement the product and are easy to transport.
Design your store (booth/stall)

• Displays that work
  • Take advantage of vertical space
  • Display unique items to encourage customers to slow down and look at them
  • Mix colors and products
Use Signs Effectively

- Make sure every product is labeled with type or name AND price
- Use creative signs that fit your design style
  - Include your logo, picture, or other eye-catching design
  - Laminate price card and then write the price with wax pencil – inexpensive, effective, and easy to reuse
Use Signs Effectively

- Ensure customers can find you in the market
  - A double-sided sign perpendicular to your “store” front makes you visible from either end of the market
- Include your logo on all signs, print materials, and promotions
Use Signs Effectively

If you accept market tokens and/or food assistance benefits, be sure to prominently display this to your customer.
Packaging

Design grab and go products

Pre-pack for specific price points

– If you know your average sale and want to boost that by a few dollars, develop a package price accordingly

– Display one in an eye-catching manner. Have others already bagged and ready to go.
Packaging

Remember 2013 food trends? Develop a package that is kid friendly, healthy, and kids can easily carry.

Be creative when naming your products. Ex. If you provide recipe cards, always include your name before the ingredient you sell in the recipe.
Offer Outstanding Customer Service

Be willing to share information about:
You
Your products
Your farm
Your production methods
Offer Outstanding Customer Service

• Be Friendly
• Identify yourself/employees
  – Shirts, hats, aprons with your logo
• Provide Bags/Boxes easy to transport
• Product information literature – recipes, how to store/freeze/use product (educate on safe food handling).
• Promote other market vendors
Offer Outstanding Customer Service

• Develop recipes that use your products and products you purchase at market.
  – This gives you credibility, encourages loyal customers, and repeat buyers.
• Share pictures of how you use your products.
Offer Outstanding Customer Service

- Offer samples
- Don't say, "Do you want a sample?" It's easy to say no. Instead, say, "Have you ever tried...?" They slow down. **You want people to slow down at the stall.** The bigger the stall, the easier it is to get them to stop.
- Sample one slice at a time or out of your hand: time to tell them 3 things about your product (where it is grown, how it is grown, etc.) Use a gloved hand for sanitation or a 12-16 inch tong and be sure to follow the proper sampling guidelines.
Offer Outstanding Customer Service

Sampling sells product…

• Sample your best, ripe produce.
• Do a comparative tasting at your own stall.
• Provide recipes for the products you sample.
• Ask your customers their opinion (if they don’t like a product use this information to improve).
Add in Customer Service

- Always educate your customers
- Hold packages
- Take orders
- Let your customers know what’s coming next week
- Look at your “store”, both the display and yourself, from the customer’s point of view
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Be Creative
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For eye appeal, mix up the color
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Table coverings accent a display
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Increase customer reach with layers
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Use aroma to draw attention…
Every product needs a price sign…
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Invite your customers back!
Get to know repeat customers by name.
Best Practices for Farmers’ Market Vendors

Additional Resources

• OSU Extension
  www.ohiofarmersmarkets.osu.edu

• USDA Agricultural Marketing Service
  http://www.ams.usda.gov/AM Sv1.0/

Ohio Department of Agriculture
  http://www.ohioproud.org/

Farmers Market Coalition
  www.farmersmarketcoalition.org
Best Practices for Farmers’ Market Vendors

References:

Shared Wisdom: Selling Your Best at Farmers’ Markets, Executive Producer: Steve Miller
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