

Farmers Market Sponsorship



Benefitting Your Community
Through Farmers Market Sponsorship

CONCLUSIONS

According to Michael Shuman, author of *The Small Mart Revolution: How Local Businesses Are Beating the Global Competition* and a leading analyst about the strength and potential of local economies, there are four basic arguments as to why buying local can offer great economic benefits. First, local businesses have direct multiplier in the local economies and can generate more local wealth, income and tax revenue for their home communities. Second, local businesses are more responsive and responsible, towards the long term plans and goals of a community. Third, local businesses are anchors for other economic development issues like tourism, creative economies and smart growth. Finally, local businesses tend to have a smaller carbon footprint.

“Shopping at a Farmers Market is investing in something longer term for the community,” says Shuman.

If success is defined modestly as enjoying the opportunity to establish, expand or change the direction of a business or a community, then farmers' markets are making an important contribution to that success. There is room for further development of the "incubation function" of farmers' markets, and we have identified some of the ways that communities and local economic developers may be able to support farmers' markets and enhance their capacity to foster economic development, community improvement and expand the quality of life in rural communities



Your Local Market Contact:

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Why Farmers Markets

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF FARMERS MARKETS

The Incubation Function

Farmers' markets provide a rich entrepreneurial environment for starting new businesses or products, or changing the direction of existing businesses. They provide the opportunity to convert an avocational skill or hobby into a money-making venture, thus transforming an informal enterprise into a more formal one.

Other Community Impacts

1. Farmers' markets can plug economic leaks and promote a re-circulation of local dollars - that is, they can capture some of the dollars that formerly left the community as payments for food and household goods produced elsewhere.
2. Farmers' markets tend to have a unique blend of farm, food, and craft businesses. Markets showcase the sights, smells, and sounds of a community - all of which draw tourists who bring new dollars from outside the community.
3. Consumers who come to a community to shop at a farmers' market also tend to patronize other local businesses - especially those close by.
4. Because they provide supplemental income and low-cost start-up opportunities, farmers' markets may be particularly helpful to communities which are undergoing severe economic dislocation or restructuring.
5. Markets can provide opportunities for youth entrepreneurship development and for retirees in the community to generate extra income.
6. As vendors' businesses expand, they may hire additional non-family labor. This creates further employment opportunities for rural residents.
7. Finally, by helping farmers stay in business, farmers' markets directly contribute to the preservation of open space, and the maintenance of the rural character of the land.

Supporting farmers markets supports your community

Annually, Americans consume more than \$600 billion in food. In most communities today food is purchased entirely at a grocery store or market, with only about 7% of local food dollars staying in the community. The other 93% of the modern food dollar travels to pay processors, packagers, distributors, wholesalers, truckers and the rest of the infrastructure that a global food system demands, a stark comparison to 40% in 1910. When more dollars stay in the community, through buying local, they are transformed into thriving main streets and local jobs.

SUPPORT SOLUTIONS

- SPONSOR AN EVENT
- BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD
- PROVIDE MARKETING OR PRINTING SERVICES
- SPONSOR ADVERTISING
- PROVIDE BAGS FOR SHOPPERS
- PROVIDE EBT OR DEBIT CARD SERVICES
- MANAGE TAX, INSURANCE OR LEGAL PAPERWORK
- PROVIDE STAFF TO MANAGE THE MARKET OR SPONSOR A MANAGER POSITION
- PROVIDE SPACE FOR THE MARKET
- PROVIDE BUSINESS SERVICES TO VENDORS
- SPONSOR SENIOR OR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION TO THE MARKET
- COORDINATE MARKET EVENTS WITH OTHER COMMUNITY OR BUSINESS EVENTS AND ATTRACTIONS
- HELP SURVEY YOUR MARKET TO PROVIDE DATA FOR IMPROVEMENT AND TO MEASURE ITS IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY

GROWING ENTREPRENEURS

Farmers markets permit entrepreneurs to achieve as a group what is extremely difficult to do as individuals - that is, to tap a large and loyal customer base.

Farmers' markets offer a package of benefits and opportunities to their vendors. The capability of the farmers' markets to do this varies from market to market and community to community. Your help can make a difference.

Furthermore, these contributions are most likely under-utilized by market sponsors and local economic developers.

SUPPORTING FAMILY FARMS

Buying locally or directly from farmers can dramatically increase a farmer's income. Regional studies demonstrate what would happen if consumers shifted 1% of their purchasing power to buy locally grown products: farmers would see a gain of 5% in their income. Even better, buying direct from a farmer sends 90% of those food dollars back to the farm. Increasing farm income means more money can be spent locally by the farmer to run their business and home, helping keep the local economy alive.



CONNECTING YOUR BUSINESS TO THE ECONOMY OF YOUR COMMUNITY

Our research suggests that the greater the public and private support of farmers' markets, the more their economic development potential will be realized, and the greater their contribution to the community will be. Local agencies can help support the economic development contributions of farmers' markets by assisting with:

1. **Finance**
 - Raising funds for facilities and promotion.
 - Providing appropriate and adequate liability insurance coverage.
2. **Education and Training**
 - Linking educational and training opportunities in marketing, merchandising, market gardening, bookkeeping, food processing, state and local regulations, personnel management and labor regulations. Many educational agencies can provide training support for farmers' markets, including community colleges, vocational centers (e.g., FFA), SBDC's, SCORE, Minority and Women-Owned Business Development Centers and Extension (e.g. 4-H).
 - Training of market managers so they can further help the vendors regarding county and state regulations, permits, sales tax, product labeling and referrals for business counseling.
 - Identifying possible clients for more intensive support. Representatives from agencies should be encouraged to occasionally visit the farmers' market to talk with vendors, ask and answer questions, find out who the serious entrepreneurs are, what stage their businesses are in and where they would like to take their businesses.
 - Preparing manuals for new vendors, including how to make stalls more attractive, how to keep products from spoiling, etc.
3. **Facilities/Organizational Development**
 - Helping to secure a permanent farmers' market location, or, if desired, a year-round facility. Dealing with zoning and regulatory/tax relief.
 - Helping to establish a certified inspected food processing center either at a farmers' markets (as part of an indoor facility), or at some other location specifically for farmers' market vendors.
 - Helping to establish producer cooperatives as separate business entities that sell product wholesale to local restaurants, grocery stores and institutions.
4. **Regulatory Assistance**
 - Helping market managers and vendors to stay abreast of local, state, and federal legislation affecting them.
 - Working with local code enforcement, zoning and planning agencies to ensure a safe and prosperous market.
5. **Public Relations**
 - Facilitating open and ongoing dialogues with local businesses to alleviate concerns about traffic congestion, parking problems, competition, etc.
 - Providing staff or personnel help for special events or promotions that may also promote your business or organizational goals such as health checks, cooking demonstrations, entrepreneurship days or community events promotion.
 - Promoting inter-agency cooperation to avoid organizational turf battles which inhibit community development. Potential collaborators include Cooperative Extension, Agriculture and Farmland Protection Boards, Chambers of Commerce, planning departments, economic development agencies, consumer groups, churches, etc.