

Harvest New England Farmers Market Managers Seminar

February 22 & 23, 2021























Market Managers Seminar Planning Committee

Jimmy Cesario-DeBiasi, Maine Federation of Farmers' Markets; Andrew Graham, NOFA-VT/VT Farmers Market Association; Dawn Kirlin, Francestown Community Market; Yvette Meunier, Maine Dept of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry; Lori Mahar, Barnstead Farmers' Market; Amy Meyers, Mass Farmers Markets; Morgan Morani, Seacoast Eat Local; Edith Murnane, Mass Farmers Markets; Martha Page, Hartford Food System; Brittany Peats, MA Food System Collaborative; David Webber, MA Dept. of Agricultural Resources; Devon Whitney-Deal, Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture; Erin Windham, CT Dept. of Agriculture























So Long 2020!

It's a New Year, a New Day, a New Marketplace in 2021

Monday 8:45 am - 10:15 am













So Long 2020!

How Farmer's Markets adapted and remained successful in 2020

Who we are:

Edith is the Executive Director of Mass Farmers Markets where she leads a team of 10 using her deep expertise in developing food systems that support farmers, food businesses and all enterprises along the food chain while creating food access for Massachusetts residents. Previously as part of Mayor Menino's administration, Edith established the Office of Food Initiatives, launching the Micro Urban Farming Initiative, the Urban Agriculture Re-zoning work, the Restaurant Roadmap, the Food Truck Initiative, and the Food System Resiliency Initiative.

Dawn is the founder and manager of the Francestown Community Market. Dawns professional background is in equestrian/veterinary multi-platform media sales and marketing. She also owns Kingsbury Hill Farm where they make hay, grow cut flowers, herbs, seasonal fruits/vegetables.

How did you as a market manager survive 2020?

What were the specific challenges your market faced?

What were the highlights/wins of the season? Did your vendors feel like they did more or less business in 2020?

What worked/what didn't? Did your vendors encourage customers to order ahead? Did you have live entertainment?

What would you change or do you plan to change?

Some things to think about moving forward:

Are your vendors helping to spread the word about your market?

Are there resources at the state/local level that you would like to see available to farmers markets or are available that you could utilize?

Why we do what we do: Community

How do you think your market affects your community?

In 2020 many markets were viewed as safe havens for their community. Folks could shop locally amongst people they know in a place where safety precautions were much higher than most supermarkets. Some markets had special hours/times that were exclusive to high risk clientele.

For every \$1 spent at a farmers market 100% of that goes back to the farmer/producer. For every \$1 spent on farmed product at a supermarket approximately .15 cents goes to the farmer. Remind your customers that when they shop with your market they are supporting local families and businesses.

Research indicates that the rise in the desire to shop local is not a trend that is going to fade anytime soon. Farmers markets are in a position to thrive as a viable food source for our communities and to shape future generations by educating them about fresh local food and local resources.

Keep up the great work- Your efforts are so important to your community, surrounding communities and future generations!

Helpful Links

Mass Dept. of Ag. Resources: Mass.gov/agr; Covid Guidance; Farmers Market Information for Managers:

https://www.mass.gov/farmers-market-program.

Vermont Agency of Agriculture https://agriculture.vermont.gov

Maine Dept of Ag https://www.maine.gov/dacf/

NH Dept. of Ag https://www.agriculture.nh.gov

CT Dept of Ag https://portal.ct.gov/DOAG/ADaRC/Publications/Farmers-Markets

RI Dept of Ag http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/media/covid19

UNH Extension Office- Farmers Market Resources

https://extension.unh.edu/resource/resources-farmers-markets-best-management-practices-during-pandemic-and-beyond

MA Farmers Markets http://www.massfarmersmarkets.org

Maine Federation of Farmers' Markets http://www.mainefarmersmarkets.org

Farmers Market Coalition https://farmersmarketcoalition.org

Vermont Farmers Market Association https://www.vtfma.org



Thank you!













Lessons in Conflict Resolution at Farmers Markets

Monday 10:30 am – 12:00 pm











Lessons in Conflict Resolution at Farmers' Markets

Panelists:

Jimmy DeBiasi, Maine Federation of Farmers' Markets, Freeport, ME
Noah and Lorelei Cimeno, Rainbow Farm, Stockton Springs, ME
Leslie Forstadt, Human Development Specialist, University of Maine Cooperative Extension, Orono, ME
Karen Groat, Director, Family and Community Mediation, Maine Agricultural Mediation Program, Orono, ME
Sherry Maher, Founder/Market Manager, Brattleboro Winter Market, Brattleboro, VT

Workshop Outline

- 1) Quick Overview of Conflict at FM's Maine Fed. of Farmers' Markets
- 2) Story 1 Lorelei Cimeno, Rainbow Farm (Stockton Springs, ME)
- 3) Story 2 Sherry Maher, Brattleboro Farmers' Market (Brattleboro, VT)
- 4) How do we define and think about Conflict? ME Ag. Mediation
- 5) Individual Reflection
- 6) Group Break Out Conversation
- 7) Review of Tools for Conflict Resolution at Farmers' Markets
- 8) Final Reflections & Q&A

The uniqueness of FM's

- Farmers' markets are comprised of
 - Individual business owners (plus their employees)
 - Volunteer managers (potentially vendors), and/or paid staff - not connected to the businesses
 - Customers with varying expectations
 - Steering committee/Board and/or nonprofit behind the market?
 - Surrounding community/neighborhood/businesses

Lot's of opportunity for FRICTION!







De-escalation vs conflict resolution...

Conflicts at Market - a few things to think about...

- 1) Good market management
- 2) Good people skills & customer service
- 3) Systems (agreements, procedures, by-laws, rules, authority, market design)

Reactive vs Proactive Measures

- We can prevent conflict with proactive measures
- Market rules & by-laws are often a result of conflict "no vendor shall blast boring country music during market hours"

Risk - there are costs to doing nothing...

Bought In Meat Dilemma

What is bought in meat?

In this case, meat bought from slaughterhouse (not directly from a farmer) and have sticker on each cut with buyer's address.





State Law

A person may not sell farm and food products at a market labeled "farmers' market" unless at least 75% of the products offered by that person were grown or processed by that person or under that person's direction. A product not grown or processed by that person or under that person's direction must have been grown or processed by and purchased directly from another farmer and the name and location of the farm must be identified on the product or on a sign in close proximity to the displayed product.

The Market By Laws

All products shall be "Maine" produced. Buying in is strictly limited to covering gaps and voids.

In the event that a specific agricultural product is missing from one of the markets within a season (Gap or Void) the present members should attempt to supply the product from their own offerings. If they cannot fill the gaps from their own product offerings, they will be allowed to buy in up to 25% of their display to fill the "gap or void".

Bought In Meat Dilemma

- How did the market respond?
 - Bought in meat requires sign explaining "where" it's from
- How does this affect Rainbow Farm
 & market integrity overall?







Two Stories of Conflict

Change & Challenge



Should BWFM Move after 12 Years?

- A Beautiful Space, Lots of Natural Light
- Heart of Downtown "Visibility" on Main St.
- Walk-in Shoppers, Tourists, etc.
- Weekly Seasonal Rent, vs. 12
 Month Lease

But....





- Outgrown the Space
- Crowded Aisles & Cafe'
- Rent Rising/Space Decreased
- No Space for Families with Kids
- Poor Access for Vendors Loading In & Out Each Week
- No Convenient Parking for Customers
- And All of This Meant We Were Losing Customers ...

Yet the Thought of Change Became Scary...





USDA RBDG = Access to 3rd Party Help!

- KTC Team led us through the process
- Evaluated current space & 3 options
- Vendor fear & resistance emerged revealing other previously hidden concerns
- Gathered lots and lots of data customers, vendors, sales projections, etc.
- KTC analysis & presentation of data was powerful & objective
- Steering Committee supported move
- Ultimately 2/3 of vendors agreed...and many helped with site prep
- And now...













Was It a Success?

- Nearly all vendors returned
- Sales increased 28% in 1st year, and additional 8% in 2nd
- Contrast to 5% year before & 2 of negative growth
- Fewer customers, but they came to shop!
- On-site parking encouraged more purchases!
- Vendors booths remain up for season, much easier to unload product, park behind building.
- We had capacity to respond to COVID
- And now have template for future use when needed.



The Story of some Mugs

- Introduced new branded merch policy with application packet
- Applied same criteria for quality, materials, etc.
- Some on jury unhappy with exception to producer only criteria
- Response mixed, strong push back from 1 senior vendor
- Wanted no competition with existing products
- One presented 4 items, another pulled back due to controversy
- Hats didn't pass but board & mugs would have, locally handmade
- Resulted in negative vendor exchanges, one quitting the market
- Policy abandoned, but negative feelings have likely lingered

Conflict Sources & Strategies

Karen Groat

Family and Community Mediation
Maine Agricultural Mediation Program



Leslie Forstadt

University of Maine Cooperative Extension

Maine Agricultural Mediation Program



Generally, There are Four Types of Conflict

- Intrapersonal -- Within oneself
- Interpersonal Between people
- Intragroup within a group
 Culture-Social
- Intergroup Between groups
 Systems-Institutions

(Intra –within) (Inter-between)

Often at the Core: Identity, Power, and Strong emotions

THE CULTURAL ICEBERG

SURFACE CULTURE

Flags Festivals
Fashion Holidays Music
Performances Dances Games
Arts & Crafts Literature Language

DEEP CULTURE

Communications Styles and Rules:

Facial Expressions Gestures Eye Contact
Personal Space Touching Body Language
Conversational Patterns in Different Social Situations
Handling and Displaying of Emotion
Tone of Voice

Notions of:

Courtesy and Manners
Frendship Leadership
Cleanliness Modesty
Beauty

Concepts of:

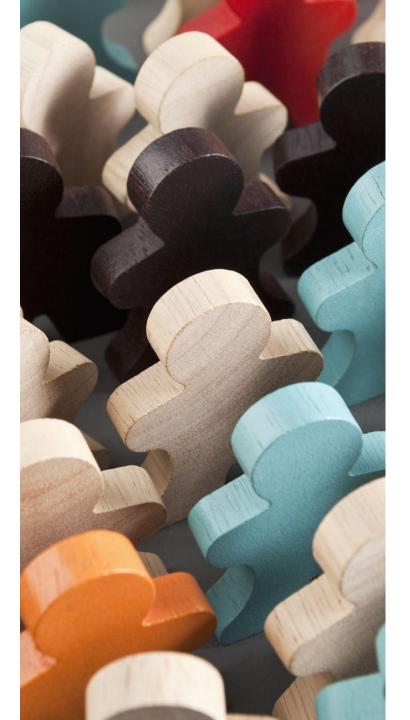
Self Time Past and Future Fairness and Justice Roles related to Age, Sex, Class, Family, etc.

Attitudes toward:

Elders Adolescents Dependents
Rule Expectations Work Authority
Cooperation vs. Competition
Relationships with Animals Age
Sin Death

Approaches to:

Religion Courtship Marriage
Raising Children Decision-Making
Problem Solving



Potential sources of conflict

- Generational communication
- Experience and perspective
- Cultural
- 1. Miscommunication of information or communication roadblocks
- Real or perceived differences in: needs, wants and priorities
- 3. Real or perceived differences in:values, perceptions, beliefs and attitudes
- 4. Structural/Limited Resources

Common Market Sources of Conflict

- A vendor might become disgruntled with a decision by the market management.
- A vendor might violate market rules.
- A vendor might be displeased with the booth/stall assignment.
- A vendor might use tactics to market product and attract customers that are disagreeable to customers or other vendors.
- Vendors may conflict with each other over pricing or product selection.

What types of conflicts have you noticed at markets?

https://farmersmarketlegaltoolkit.org

Sorting through the conflict

Each take 5 minutes to think of a specific conflict and identify potential sources/types of conflict:

- What miscommunication or misinformation has or is taking place? Is there information needed?
- Identify if there are/were real or perceived differences in needs and priorities?
- What are/were real or perceived differences in values, perceptions, beliefs, attitudes, or culture? List
 the underlying possibilities that created/continue the conflict (history, wounds, fears)
- What structural situations exist or existed that created or impact the conditions for conflict? Are there challenges with rules, regs, by-laws, resources (people-space-\$)?

Small Group Share

•Each person take 3 minutes to describe your situation & what sources and type(s) of conflict you identified?

Listeners:

- Practice active listening
- •Avoid questions or solutions for this exercise
- Take turns



$\textbf{conflict} \rightarrow$	Vendor - Vendor	Vendor - Manager	Vendor - Shopper	Shopper - Shopper	
Use these Tools	Vendor agree Strong mana Documentati Clear market Clear & frequ	Clear rules, Dispute resolution procedures, Grievance policy, Vendor agreements/contracts Strong manager, manager and vendor training, Documentation of events and actions taken Clear market signage Clear & frequent market communication Manager/committee evaluations, surveys for vendors & customers			
Access these resources	Education - f Communicat De-escalatio Transparenc	Education - for market managers (strong management is crucial) Education - for vendors (help manage expectations) Communication & market manager tools (mail chimp, social media, De-escalation training Transparency in decision making, 3rd party, impartial, support systems			

Type of

Rules & By-laws - It all starts here

- Lay out the decision-making process
- Outline grievance procedures
- Set clear market requirements
 - Licensing
 - Signage
 - Product rules
 - Behavior expectations
- Enforcement is necessary.
 - Manager/team should have discretionary power to resolve disputes
- Transparency is critical



Considerations and Questions to Help address Conflict

- What needs to be clarified: Have the concerns been heard?
- Who needs to participate: Are affected persons, representatives and decision-makers present and able to provide needed input?
- Does something need to change? What if it remains unaddressed? Who will it impact?
 How are you impacted?
- What type of feedback is needed? Are there structures, rules, shared understanding of expectations or governance to support managers and market for evaluating issues?
- Do managers have tools -practice -methods to address relational challenges skillfully?
- Do managers have access to support and resources?
- In what types of conflict or communication are you most comfortable?

Three Key Best Practices

Farmers market businesses and organizations make the most of vendor relationship management through rules and procedures: transparency, consistency, and discretion.



<u>This Photo</u> by Unknown Author is licensed under <u>CC BY-ND</u>

*Two of the most significant legal claims a vendor could bring against a market are discrimination and wrongful eviction

How to Listen Well

- Be mindful and give full attention
- Hold curiosity and consideration
 - Ask open-ended and neutral questions to better understand what their needs and concerns
 - Pay attention to the content and feelings of the speaker
 - Let the speaker know that s/he/they are being heard and understood
 - Clarify what appears ambiguous
 - Listen more than talk. There is very little talking on the part of the listener in active listening
- Build trust through alignment of values and clarifying expectations

"The intention of Listening is to restore communication because once communication is restored, everything is possible."

-Thich Nhat Hanh

Toolbox: Examples of Phrasing

REFLECTING

"It sounds like you're"

"You said..."

"You'd like___X___to understand...."

"From your point of view....

"So X has made a suggestion to try____"

"So the Agency needs X because....."

SUMMARIZING

"One of the things the two of you hope for is...."

"There are a number of things we've discussed regarding, x, y, z and together we've agreed to.... and are needing more information aboutand..."

"It seems that _____ is important to each of you/us therefore:"

Open- QUESTIONS

"What aspects are most important to address now?

"Would it be helpful to talk about what made you angry?"

"Are there more details you need to discuss?"
How did this event/comment/change affect you?

To Strategize Solutions

- How can the relationships be restored?
- What if apologies are exchanged? Would that help?
- How about we pursue X,Y, or Z? Could that help to remedy this situation?
- What might work for you?
- What else could we try?
- What does our organization need to address this?

What can you do? Explore best practices

A few Examples...

- Develop criteria for vendor selection and governance
- Have Market implement policies to create a safe environment for vendors and address on-site issues
- Protocols for vendor grievances and product challenges
- Market monitors and enforces compliance with market rules and procedures

www.Portlandfarmermarket.org

Resources – links to further reading

Specific market practices, including having dispute resolution policies:

https://farmersmarketlegaltoolkit.org/risks/vendor-relationships/

Active Listening:

https://extension.umaine.edu/publications/4806e/

Managing group conflict:

https://www.shawnee.kstate.edu/community/Managing%20Conflict%20in%20Groups%20BLS8.pdf

Maine Agricultural Mediation Program:

https://extension.umaine.edu/agriculture/agricultural-mediation

Family & Community Mediation: https://mainefcm.org

Resources – links to further reading

9 Immediate Ways to Improve Communication in the Workplace

https://bit.ly/2Zs3rEU

Conflict worksheet used in the workshop

https://drive.google.com/file/d/19REPoArpvtCPUjUqaNhQ0giL0qua2d7L/view?usp =sharing

Communication rules can Improve Problem Solving

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1tBtuA_cq3amk8Q4aVHtZPtOlhMOkZPMm/view?usp=sharing

A Few General Guidelines for Resolving Conflict

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1n3WLm4g0dZpOwOwQp2tVAKJj9cOfzhP4/view?usp=sharing

Thank you!!

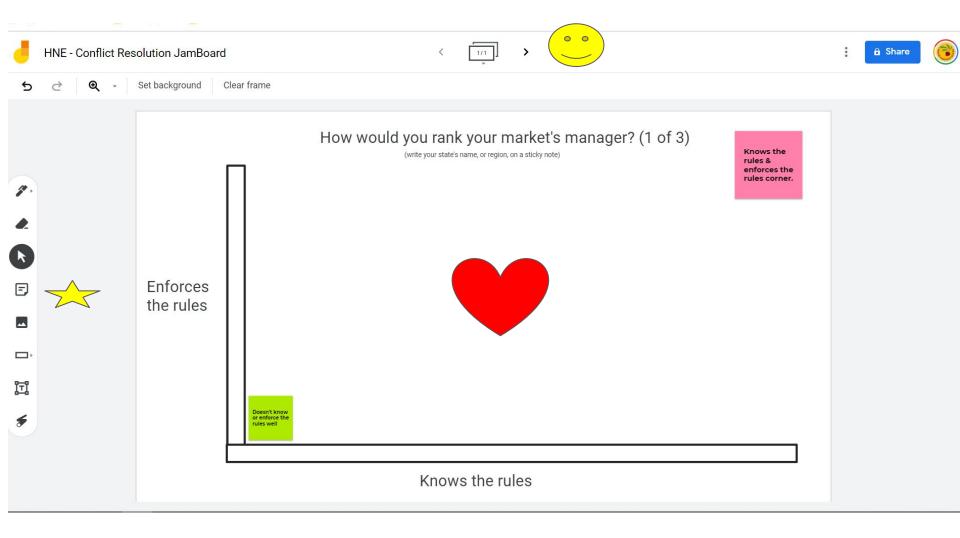
Karen Groat

Karen@Mainefcm.org

Leslie Forstadt leslie.forstadt@maine.edu







Question and Answer time!

- -Enter questions in the chat!
- -Please check out the Jamboard and respond to the prompts.
- -Fill out our survey! We'll be in touch as our project develops.

Thanks for joining!!!

Karen - karen@mainefcm.org

Leslie - leslie.forstadt@maine.edu

Jimmy - director@mffm.org

Sherry - farmersmarket@postoilsolutions.org

Lorelei - rainbowfarm41@gmail.com







Thank you!













Break

Monday | 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm













Creating Effective Partnerships Through Community Engagement

Monday 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm











Creating Effective Partnerships through Community Engagement

Hear from speakers about how farmers' markets can create partnerships with community stakeholders in the form of fundraising, event planning, and sponsorships.

Methods for attracting volunteers and successful outreach tactics including social media marketing will also be discussed.

This will be a short presentation followed by an open forum to discuss ideas and methods that have worked for markets in the past.

Lori Mahar, Barnstead Farmer's Market Barnstead NH

- Lori Mahar, Volunteer Market Manager and Chair of the Barnstead Farmers Market. Lori started the farmers market in 2016. The market offers a family friendly atmosphere, local music, community events including Kid's Business Day and Articulture Festival.
- Our success is based on the relationships and engagement of all of our area communities working together for a common cause. "Better Together" is our motto.



Picture: Governor's visit to the Farmers Market Lori Mahar, Gov Chris Sununu, Director Gail Jelli McWilliam and Comm. Shawn Jasper

Key Community Partners:

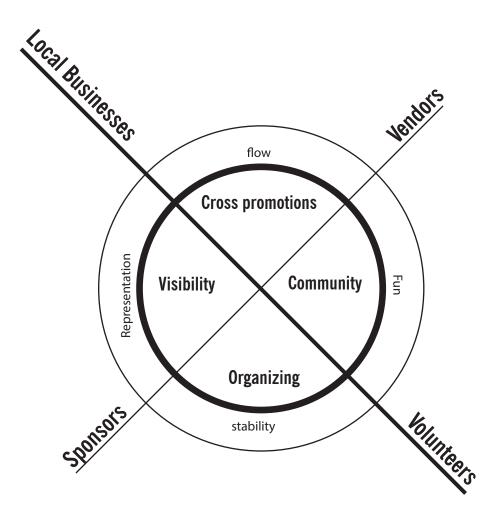
- School/After School and Summer Programs (Kids business Day, Master Gardener Program, Community Garden, etc)
- High School: Community Service Hours
- Boy and Girl Scout programs
- UNH Coop-Extension: Master Gardener, Nutrition Programs, Greenhouse
- Conservation Programs: land Use, fish and game
- Churches: Strawberry festivals, yard sales
- End 68 hours of Hunger and Vouchers for Veterans: Jar fundraising efforts
- Health and Wellness Fairs
- Articulture Festival: featuring Artists, Authors, Music, Craftsman

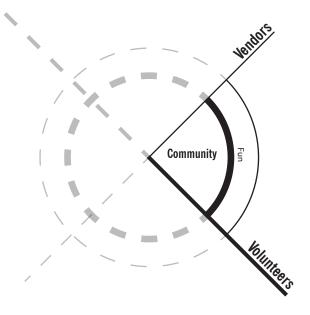
Business Sponsorships

- **Music:** Visit or send letters to local businesses seeking donations/sponsorships for weekly music. We pay \$50 a week for music.
- Businesses who donate or sponsor: We offer Facebook recognition, Website links and business info sharing at our market.

Our Niche

The BACFM niche is the small country feeling of a warm, family friendly environment. We talk to our customers, share recipes and we share stories of our town. We make our consumer feel welcome. This is what sets us apart from most markets.





Community stalls Theme Days at the market Farmers market committee e



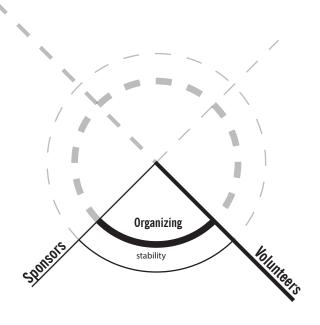












Shoppers

First, we want to ask about this year's Summer Farr this year's Grab-and-Go Farmers Market?



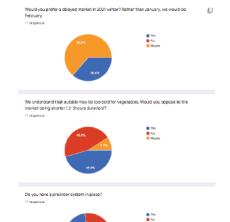




Have you ever preordered with our vendors?



Vendors



Programs

Music series Children's activities Wellness series

\$3 off when pre-ordering with The Neighborhood Farm on 2/14/2021. Made possible by Balanced Rock Investment Advisors. Fiduciary advice and values-based investing.



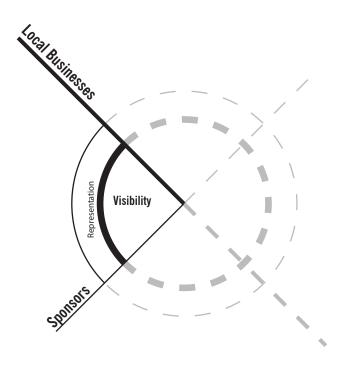


Pick up on Sunday 12-2 pm at 32 Birch St, Roslindale









Support local

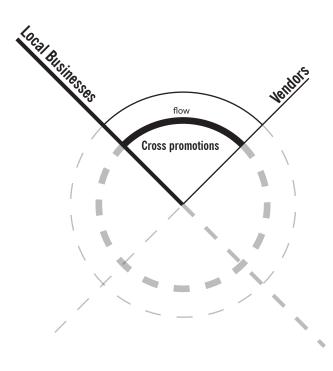
Musician Educator Artist Makers



Pre-order and Pick-up
Winter Farmers Market



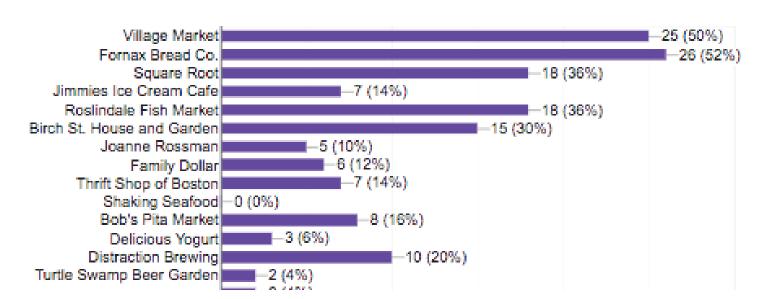
Get a free bumper sticker on Sundays with proof of purchase at a Roslindale business!



Squareroot Cafe and Kim Pure Pastry
Distraction Brewing and Emma's Way Garden
Lyfecycle and Wild Pop
Friends of the Library and Apex Orchard
Turrtle Swamp Brewing and Exodus Bagels

What local businesses do you visit on your way out and in of the farmers market?

50 responses













Social Media Marketing Farmers Market Style



Social Media Toolkit

Whether you're using Facebook, Instagram, TikTok or Pinterest or any combination of these options there are a few things that need to happen to be successful:

CONSISTENCY- The one thing that is consistent is "inconsistency". Lack of consistency in the message creates a sense of disorganization to those that are interested in following or supporting your organization. Have a message that you want people to take away from your market, reinforce that message through your social media channels. Whether it's "eat fresh, eat local", "shop local", "know your farmer, know your food". It's the reason your market exists. Your market is collectively representing your town, your region, your connection to agriculture in your community. Consistency in timing is also important. You don't have to post multiple times/day or the same days each week, but people who follow you and recommend your page are doing so because they want to hear from you. If they don't hear from you for a while, you slip off their radar and your momentum is lost. Depending on the number of weeks your market runs, the number of vendors you have, the magic number is yours to determine but think about the pages you follow and like to hear from. The good ones will have a pattern.

To help with consistency there needs to be **collaboration-YOUR TIME IS TOO VALUABLE**. As the market manager for Francestown, I work hard to share out posts and other details that our vendors are sharing but I have to go searching for those items. I'm always striving for more active collaboration, it helps the vendors/farmers grow their own audiences organically and also simultaneously grow the market audience. You need to collaborate with your vendors even if it means just getting images and some brief copy from them.

Creating hashtags that are exclusive to your market and reflect your message. These will help but only if others are also using your hashtags. Look for hashtags that your followers and other farmers and markets are using, use them. This helps connect you to your audience, it will drive traffic to your posts and increase the likelihood that they will be shared and organically expand your market share. Another tip is to make sure your market email address is on their email subscriber list.

One thing to remember:

** Only 40% of farmers are on Facebook. Some rely on Instagram but the reality is they don't know what you need to grow an audience, they just want you to bring more people to the market. Taking the time to explain what you need and why you need it is something that HAS to happen for this to work.

Using Social Media to Maintain Successful Partnerships

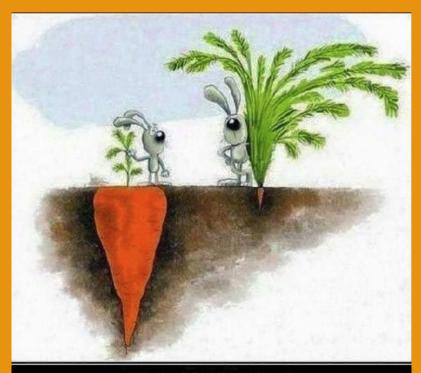
ALWAYS THANK YOUR SPONSORS- ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS

There are ways to use social media without having to actual say the words "thank you" and help your market increase it's traffic:

- 1. Post a sponsor profile linking back to their page
- 2. Share, like and tag their organizations and posts from your page and personally.
- 3. Use hashtags they are using. They may be ones they have created or regional hashtags, either way it will drive traffic to your page and they will notice.
- 4. Encourage your vendors to support the sponsors by sharing your market posts and following them back

Regardless of the dollar amount the sponsor/supporter is spending, they want to "see" return on their investment. Whether its an increase in business, a shoutout on social media, recognition at the market itself, they are investing in your market because they want to be a part of what you're doing not just write you a check.

The "partnership" concept should start from within the group and that unity will help show the community and potential sponsors/volunteers etc what they are missing out on by not being a part of your market.



SUCCESS

it's not always what you see

Breakout Sessions

Community Engagement

10 groups: 15 minutes for discussion on topics

Groups: Please choose 1 lead speaker and 1 note taker

After Groups meet:

We will come together and each group will speak for 2 minutes

What are your successes?

Give a brief introduction and one success on community engagement at your farmers market.

Give one example of what sets you apart from everyone else!



Thank you!









