

Farmers' Market Best Practices Toolkit:

A Guide for Community Organizations in
Newfoundland and Labrador



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Labrador

In collaboration with the Poverty Reduction Division, Department of Human
Resources, Labour and Employment and the Health Promotion & Wellness
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Preface

This toolkit is designed to assist community organizations in Newfoundland and Labrador who want to start a farmers' market. It outlines key steps to starting a market, and provides a range of tools and supports to help you along the way.

The toolkit is based on best practices research drawn from a review of existing reports, resources, and guides on farmers' markets across North America, enhanced by consultations with farmers' market participants and organizers from across Newfoundland and Labrador and elsewhere in Canada. The bibliography at the end of this toolkit lists the materials consulted during this review.

The research, development, and writing of this toolkit was completed by Lori Heath on behalf of the Food Security Network of Newfoundland and Labrador. This toolkit is one in a series of best practices toolkits, which also cover community gardens, community kitchens, and bulk buying clubs, available through the Food Security Network of Newfoundland and Labrador.

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Introduction

What is a Farmers' Market?



A farmers' market is a place where farmers come together on a regular basis to sell fresh fruits, vegetables, dairy, fish, meats and other farm products (such as preserves, baked goods, flowers and plants), directly to consumers.

Hand-made items such as artwork and crafts are often sold at farmers' markets as well, though many markets place limits on the percentage of non-farmer vendors allowed. This is to ensure that markets which promote themselves as *belonging to farmers* are providing the service that is expected by the public when they arrive on a market day. Generally, farmers' markets also follow a "Make it, Bake it, and Grow it" motto, where all products available at the market have to be produced by the vendor selling it.

Markets which consist primarily of non-farmer vendors are often referred to as 'public markets' or 'community markets,' though many farmers' markets start out with a small farmer base and strive to expand farmer participation over time.

A Note on Farmers' Markets

The term "Farmers' Market" is sometimes used to describe different forms of farm-direct marketing ventures, including road side stands, farm-gate sales, or on-farm markets. While all of these are important sources of healthy, local food, the focus of this toolkit is on community-based markets rather than privately owned operations.

Why Start a Farmers' Market?

According to a 2008 national study commissioned by Farmers' Markets Canada, farmers' markets are an important source of Canadian farm income, providing 1/3 of participating vendors' revenue on average. They produce a remarkable \$1.03 billion in annual sales nationally, for a total economic impact of up to \$3.09 billion. In the U.S., the number of farmers' markets has more than doubled between 1994 and 2004, from 1755 markets to over 3600.

Closer to home, a 2004 study in Nova Scotia found that producers sold close to \$14 million worth of goods and services directly through farmers' markets that year, and that Nova Scotia farmers' markets have experienced a 25% increase in their customer base in recent years.

A Note on “The Multiplier Effect”

The public benefit of farmers' markets extends far beyond those provided to vendors and consumers. Supporting local farmers and artisans can benefit the entire local economy. Studies show that every dollar spent locally circulates in the community three times around in a phenomenon called “the Multiplier Effect.”

The desire for face-to-face interaction between producer and consumer is a major reason for the rapid growth of farmers' markets. Direct marketing provides farmers with immediate feedback from their customers and enables producers to respond more effectively to consumer needs. In turn, growing consumer awareness of the health, environmental, social and economic benefits of supporting local, sustainable agriculture has resulted in a desire for direct contact with food producers.

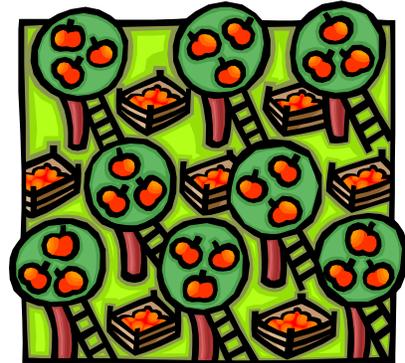
Farmers' Markets can help improve food security for local residents by increasing physical and economic access to adequate amounts of healthy food. There are many additional benefits of farmers' markets, including:

- Greater variety and availability of local food products with higher nutritional value, superior freshness and flavour;
- Providing a new sales avenue for farmers with immediate payment, and a larger profit margin;
- Providing opportunities for food education and awareness (e.g. seasonality of local food, environmental benefits of eating local, etc.);
- Providing support for small- to medium-sized farms and other businesses;
- Providing opportunities for business incubation through the promotion of value-added farm products and other goods and services;
- Creating a vibrant community space for social interaction and cultural events;
- Preservation of local agricultural land; and
- Reduced consumption of fossil fuels for food transportation.

Getting Started: Steps to Success

Farmers' markets vary widely in size, structure and character. Although there is no one best way to start a farmers' market, the following is a list of steps to consider when establishing a farmers' market.

Appendix A: Are You Ready? Checklist (page 35) provides a checklist based on the following steps. This will allow you to evaluate your readiness when starting a farmers' market in your community.



“You cannot develop a market without two things – producers and community stakeholders – pulling together for the common good.”

Robert T. Chorney, *Sharing the Harvest*

Step 1: Form a Working Group

A successful farmers' market is the result of a significant amount of planning and commitment on the part of a dedicated organizing team. Building this team, made up of key stakeholders, advisors and potential partners, should be your first priority.

You will want your organizing team to be a diverse group with different interests in the market, and with adequate representation from both **producers** and other **community stakeholders**.

It is important to have **producer** input in the development of the market from the beginning. If your market has not been initiated by farmers themselves, try to include as many as possible on your organizing team. Contact agricultural associations, government departments, and gardening and horticultural societies to help with initial farmer outreach. **Appendix H: Important Links and Resources** (page 47) includes links to such organizations in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Don't be surprised or discouraged if few farmers attend founding meetings. Farmers are busy people who must dedicate most of their time to the farm itself, and initially may not see the benefit of taking a day away from the farm to

attend a market. However, even one or two farmers on your organizing team will help to guarantee farmers' needs are addressed from the beginning. **Step 8: Recruit Vendors** (page 25) will provide more information on strategies for farmer outreach.

Quick Tip

When trying to recruit farmers early on, get in touch with a local agricultural organization for contacts and tips on reaching farmers in your region. In Newfoundland and Labrador, contact the NL Federation of Agriculture and the NL Horticultural Producers Council. **See Appendix H: Important Links and Resources** (page 47) for these groups' contact information.

Successful farmers' markets are built on a strong community foundation. While aiming to be farmer-based, many markets are initially community-driven and are made up of **community stakeholders** from diverse backgrounds. It will be important to establish partnerships with a variety of individuals and organizations. Involving them from the beginning will ensure broad participation, improve the market's community profile, develop target customers, and ease the workload of other organizers. Your partners will bring a variety of skills and other resources which will be instrumental in establishing the market.

At a Glance: Possible Partners for Farmers' Markets

- Community organizers
- City or town planning officials
- Members of Regional Economic Development Boards
- Members of local service clubs, such as Lions' Clubs, Rotary Clubs, and Legions
- Professionals such as accountants or lawyers
- Marketing experts
- Business leaders and members of the Chamber of Commerce
- Graphic and website designers
- Artisans and craftspeople
- Church organizations
- Neighborhood associations and community centres
- Interested Citizens



Step 2: Plan for Success

Once you have your group organized and partners identified, it is important to develop a collective vision and plan for the farmers' market.

Planning is an essential early activity for any successful farmers' market. It prepares a roadmap for the group and sets achievable objectives by which to measure success. A clear strategic plan

is also an asset when applying for funds or seeking support from government agencies, and may also serve as the basis for a future business plan.

Appendix H: Important Links and Resources (page 47) provides a list of key resources and links including several tools that may be helpful in the planning process.

Prior to developing your plan, your group should consider conducting a simple market feasibility study to determine if a farmers' market is a viable option for your community. If there are few farmers in your region, a 'public market' or 'community market' which includes a couple of farmers and gardeners may be more appropriate than a farmers' market.

A feasibility assessment asks the question, "could this project work?" taking into account initial organizational, operational and market opportunities.

Case Study # 1

Torbay Farmers' Market

The Torbay Farmers' Market has a smart strategy for growth: Start small!

In the market's early stages, organizers from the Torbay Town Council decided to put all of their energy into one or two market days during the summer and fall.

This strategy has the advantage of building organizational capacity while allowing time for evaluation and assessment of the feasibility of a regular market. A single well-organized event can also generate great community excitement and support with which to build on your success!

At a Glance: Market Feasibility

When conducting feasibility analysis, ask the following questions:

- Is there a need and potential support for a market?
- Is there a suitable site available?
- What is the potential customer base and what is the target clientele?
- What are the potential revenue, costs, and sources of funding?
- What is the potential for vendor profitability?
- What is the optimal vendor make-up?
- What are some possible organizational structures?

Once you have determined that a market is feasible, you can begin to develop a strategic plan, consisting of **vision and mission statements, goals and objectives, and strategies and actions.**

Develop a Common Vision

As the reasons for starting a farmers' market can vary amongst different stakeholders, it will be very helpful to host a group visioning session early on to ensure that values are consistent amongst stakeholders. This group will form the initial steering committee or Board of Directors, and their vision will serve as the basis for the organization's strategic plan.



Early in the planning process, you will want to develop both vision and mission statements, and identify specific goals and objectives for the farmers' market:

Vision Statement – The Dream

The vision statement is:

- A summary of the ideals of your group of stakeholders;
- A dream statement that expresses the ultimate hopes for the market if you could have exactly what you want and if your concerns could be perfectly addressed; and
- Broad enough to encompass the diversity of perspectives within your team but concise enough to be communicated simply and effectively.

Example: "Local Food – Healthy Communities"

Mission Statement – The What and Why

The mission statement emerges from your vision, and states:

- What business is conducted;
- For whom the organization conducts business; and
- How it accomplishes its purpose and what makes it unique.

Example: "To increase access to fresh, locally grown produce and to provide community support for local farmers through the development of a weekly farmers' market."

Goals and Objectives – The How Much of What by When

- Goals are broad; objectives are narrow.
- Objectives specify the measurable outcomes which will demonstrate that you have achieved your goals, and will sometimes include a timeframe within which to achieve it.

Case Study # 2 (page 12) provides a sample set of **goals and objectives** for the West Coast Community Market in Corner Brook, NL.

Make a Plan

The final component of your strategic plan will include identifying strategies that will help you achieve your objectives and the specific actions which will be required to accomplish them.

Strategies express how your objectives will be accomplished. Some strategies you may want to consider developing are:

- Farmer outreach strategy;
- Consumer education strategy;
- Co-operative development strategy;
- Vendor relations strategy;
- Volunteer recruitment strategy;
- Health and Safety strategy;
- Media strategy; and
- Marketing strategy.

Actions express the fine details: *Who will do what by when, and at what cost.*

Example action: "The Chair of the Location Committee will submit a proposed rental agreement for chosen market location at the next board meeting."

Case Study # 2

West Coast Community Market

The West Coast Community Market in Corner Brook, NL has established a clear list of goals and objectives.

Goals

- Increase healthy eating;
- Support local business;
- Promote sustainable lifestyle alternatives in areas such as food production, energy use, and gardening; and
- Enhance quality of community living.

Objectives

- We will increase healthy eating by providing the community with the necessary connection to local food producers in the form of a centralized farmer's market that offers fresh, local produce.
- We will support local business by providing access to a large consumer base and by promoting the purchase of local produce as a healthy option.
- We will promote sustainable lifestyle alternatives such as pesticide-free gardening, energy efficiency and healthy living by offering workshops and educational material.
- We will enhance the quality of community living by using the platform of the farmer's market to promote events of the local arts community, sporting events, environmental initiatives and active living opportunities. The farmers market will also provide social opportunities for people to connect with neighbours, friends and acquaintances in a comfortable and fun atmosphere.

Step 3: Choose an Organizational Structure

Your vision, goals, objectives, and plan will directly inform the organizational structure your farmers' market will take. Selecting an organizational structure will assist the market in establishing committee responsibilities and developing rules, decision-making procedures, and policy enforcement protocols.

Small farmers' markets sometimes operate as unincorporated committees, with no formal organizational structure through the support of a sponsor. Be sure to weigh the pros and cons of whether to incorporate or not, or whether to locate a market sponsor.

Seeking a **sponsor** can be helpful in setting up the market and getting things running. Sponsored markets are run as sub-committees of town councils, farmer associations, service clubs, or other groups. Sponsors can assist with necessary tasks such as setting up a bank account and sourcing initial funding. Sponsors may also provide market and office spaces and administrative resources.

Incorporation limits liability for debts or other contracts to the organization itself, protecting the personal assets of its board of directors. Every market will have to consider health regulations, parking and traffic laws, hiring and employment policies, permits and licenses and other issues related to potential liability. Incorporation also allows the organization to obtain loans, own property or sign contracts. Many funders will only disperse money to incorporated bodies.

Many farmers' markets incorporate as either **non-profit organizations** or **co-operatives**. In each case, membership can be limited to farmers only, or can include other vendors, community groups and even consumers. Members of the organization vote for the governing board and on major policy matters.

Non-profit Organizations ensure that any profits that arise from doing business are re-invested back into operations. Non-profit organizations are registered under the Corporations Act.

Co-operatives are businesses owned equally by their members, and governed by the principle of "one member, one vote." Co-ops can be either non-profit or for-profit, though for-profit co-operatives distribute their surplus equally amongst members as dividends. Co-operatives are registered under the Co-operatives Act. For more information see **Appendix H: Important Links and Resources** (page 47). Generally speaking, co-operatives can be organized as:

- Producer or Worker Co-ops ;
- Consumer Co-ops; or
- Multi-Stakeholder Co-ops

Charities are exempt from paying income tax and can issue official tax receipts for donations. They are required to limit activities to “charitable purposes” including relief of poverty, education or religious activities. While charitable incorporation may not be suitable for a farmers’ market, it could be one option for a separate ‘Friends of the Market’ organization which conducts educational activities around sustainable food issues or fundraisers, for example.

Alternatively, Friends of the Market could form an unincorporated committee or a non-profit organization to provide other non-charitable support, fundraising or advisory services to the market.

Case Study # 3

St. John’s Farmers’ Market

The St. John’s Farmers’ Market was founded in 2007 by a local farmer with a fall surplus, who organized a small group of other farmers and vendors for a series of weekend markets in downtown St. John’s. Much of the impetus for the start-up of the market however, came from a broad cross-section of the community, consisting largely of non-farmers with a variety of important skills.

In 2008, a steering committee made up of these interested parties conducted a feasibility study for organizing what is known as a multi-stakeholder co-operative, a relatively new type of organizational structure which opens membership to both producers and consumers.

It was determined that this type of co-operative could embrace the continued involvement of the founding members, build more farmer participation in the market and engage the voice of consumers as well. A non-profit organization called the “Friends of the St. John’s Farmers’ Market” was incorporated to oversee the running of the market while the co-operative option was explored.

Surveys conducted with farmers, vendors and consumers determined public support for the multi-stakeholder co-operative to be more than sufficient to proceed with incorporation. During the winter of 2010, it held a well-attended public meeting to announce the formation of the co-operative, and to begin development of its business plan and bylaws.

Step 4: Find a Location

Finding a good location for your farmers' market is an important step in getting established. A market can take place in an open space, such as a public park or square; it can be indoors in either its own building or a public building; or it can be a combination of both.



There are many factors that you will want to consider when searching for the perfect location. The market needs to be visible, it needs to be safe and easily accessible for both vendors and customers, and it needs to be large enough to allow for growth.

Some of the key factors you should look for when choosing a market include:

- **Visibility** of the market to passersby. Try to find a location on a busy street where drivers will be able to notice the market.
- **Safety** of your vendors, staff, volunteers and customers on all the market premises. For example, if you have an outdoor market then a smooth lot with little debris and potholes as well as adequate space for vehicles and pedestrians to move around safely will be important. Vendors will need a safe access route to unload supplies from their vehicles to their display areas.
- **Accessibility** of the market. Make sure your market is wheelchair accessible by having no stairs or by providing ramps. Also, look for a location that is near public transit and provides bike racks to accommodate all modes of transportation.
- **Parking** for both vendors and customers. A good rule of thumb is to have 2-3 parking spaces per vendor stand.
- **Shelter** from the elements. If you are organizing an outdoor market, be sure your location provides adequate space and appropriate conditions for setting up tents and/or canopies. Keep in mind that shelter areas need to be resilient in windy conditions.

Be sure to secure **permission** from the property owner, or in the case of outdoor markets, find out whether the location requires a zoning permit. If leasing a property, be sure to understand all of the terms and conditions and liability issues of your lease. You may wish to engage a professional to explain these to you.

Locations should also be family friendly. If possible, locate your market in an area with a nearby playground, green space, sports field, recreation centre, or library. Just as farmers' markets draw shoppers in to nearby businesses, they also attract families to nearby recreational activities.

Other important amenities include:

- Public washrooms
- Emergency exits
- Public phones
- Garbage and recycling
- Indoor and outdoor eating areas
- Food preparation and clean-up area
- Chairs and tables
- Storage
- Electricity and water, i.e., for freezers
- Extra space to hold workshops or children's activities

A Note on Location

For every vendor visit to a farmers' market in a small business district, two additional visits are made to other shops in the surrounding area. For this reason, many farmers' markets set up in the heart of their town's small business sectors – the Main Streets and Water Streets of communities.

Step 5: Look for Funding

The next step is to consider how your market will be financed. Sustainable funding is key to the long-term viability of the market.

When planning your market draw up a budget including **Start-up Costs**, ongoing **Operating Costs**, and **Potential Income Sources**.



Start-up Costs include any initial costs which are required to start the market, such as:

- Consulting or facilitation during early meetings;
- Feasibility studies;
- Site expenses;
- Insurance;
- Advertising/promotion;
- Permits; and
- Incorporation fees.

“Don't be surprised if personnel comprise 50% of your budget, perhaps with 35% for promotion and advertising, and 15% for insurance and office expenses. With a small, rural market and volunteer manager, the percentages will differ dramatically.”

The New Farmers' Market

Operating Costs will vary according to the size of the market, and may include:

- A market manager (which may begin as a volunteer role, but will likely be paid if the market is a regular event);
- Space rental;
- Legal assistance;
- Educational programming;
- Vendor outreach;
- Technical support;
- Promotion/publicity;
- Logo and website design;
- Signage; and
- Office expenses and supplies.

Potential Income Sources can include:

1. **Sponsorship and donations** by partner organizations. These can include in-kind goods or services. It is important to keep track of in-kind donations and to value and acknowledge contributions from partners and volunteers. Some funding organizations require matching donations from other sources and will count in-kind contributions in that calculation.
2. **Vendor fees** make up a significant portion of operating costs for most farmers' markets. This can include table fees and membership fees.
 - **Table fees** can be a flat rate or based on size of vendor space and can include any combination of the following:
 - **Annual fee** – A once a year fee charged at the beginning of the season. Discounts may be offered for advance payment. This fee could also be collected semi-annually or at other intervals.
 - **Daily fee** – A fee collected at each market.
 - **Annual plus daily fees** – A larger fee at the beginning of the season to provide start-up money as well as a daily fee to provide an ongoing source of funds.
 - **Percentage fee** – A percentage of vendor sales, with a set minimum, based on the honour system.
 - **Base plus percentage fee** – A fee charged for the table/booth plus a percentage of sales.
 - **Membership fees** are annual fees which provide individuals with membership in the market organization. Membership fees can help pay the operating costs of the market. Benefits of membership fees to members may include:
 - The right to vote or stand for the board of directors;
 - Privileges at the market such as discounts or guaranteed tables for vendors; and
 - Building a sense of ownership in the community in the farmers' market.

Some markets make membership fees optional, charging a higher daily booth fee for non-members. This works well for vendors who only sell for part of the season. Some restrict membership to vendors only, while some open their membership to consumers as well, to increase engagement of community and to provide another source of revenue.

At a Glance: Fee Fairness

When considering your fees, keep fairness in mind as your prime consideration.

You will have to decide whether to charge the same amount per unit of space for each vendor, or to base the market fee on a percentage of sales. While some argue that charging more from the vendor who does better business constitutes an unfair penalty, others will argue that charging the same amount to all vendors places an unfair burden on the small vendor, since the fee represents a greater percentage of his or her income.

Give this issue careful consideration and make a decision that is appropriate for your community before opening the market. Once a fee structure has been established, it may be difficult to change in the future.

3. Grants from municipal or provincial governments, federal agencies, downtown development associations, foundations or other funding agencies may provide support for start-up costs, or for specific ongoing activities or projects. These could include market supplies, upgrades to facilities, farmer outreach programs, marketing plans or other business strategies.

- See **Appendix B: Sources of Funding and Technical Support** (page 36) for a list of some potential sources of funding in Newfoundland and Labrador.

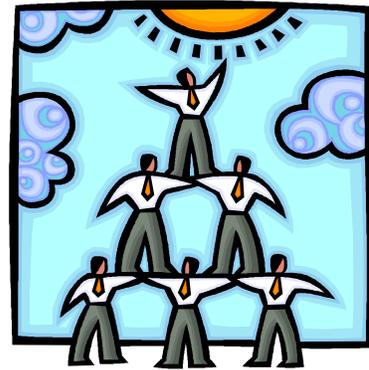
4. Fundraising events can provide another avenue of additional income. These can include:

- Selling advertising space to sponsors on market promotional materials (such as posters, pamphlets, etc.);
- Hosting a dinner, breakfast, social event or silent auction;
- Sale of coffee, tea, healthy food and beverages;
- Yard sales / flea markets; and
- Sales of T-shirts, cookbooks, calendars, and other market paraphernalia.

Step 6: Appoint a Market Manager

Now that you have conducted some initial financial planning, you can start to think about hiring a market manager.

The market manager is the most important person in the market organization, as they will act as the face of the market and will manage the daily market activities. They are appointed by, and accountable to, the board of directors, working group, or sponsoring organization. It is recommended that for regular markets, the manager is a paid employee and is not a current vendor of the market, although this position may begin as a volunteer role.



The market manager should be someone who is passionate about farmers' markets, has strong leadership, communication, conflict resolution, and organizational skills and ideally has experience working with a volunteer board, food service management and/or market management.

Some of the duties and responsibilities of the market manager may include:

- Communicating with the board of directors;
- Interpreting and enforcing market rules;
- Mediating disputes between vendors, vendors and customers, or vendors or customers and the market;
- Ensuring the market and vendors adhere to all applicable local, provincial, and federal regulations;
- Maintaining market records and books;
- Recruiting, selecting and retaining vendors;
- Promoting the market publicly;
- Coordinating the set-up and break down of the market;
- Supervising and coordinating volunteers;
- Carrying out market evaluation; and
- Advising vendors on marketing and display of their products.

See **Appendix C: Sample Market Manager Job Description** (page 38).

Step 7: Establish Policies and Procedures

Policies and procedures will guide the market manager in running the farmers' market, and will provide members and vendors with an understanding of what is expected of them.

Bylaws

While many of the day-to-day issues of the market can be regulated by various policy manuals and can change as the board sees fit, official bylaws outline the core functions and fundamental operating regulations for your organization. Bylaws can only be changed when approved by the membership during an annual general meeting.

If your market is incorporated, it will be required to establish its own bylaws which will be filed with its articles of incorporation.

At a Glance: Farmers' Market Bylaws

Bylaws should include:

- The name of the corporation;
- The mission of the organization;
- Membership requirements;
- Number of board members and length of their terms;
- Board responsibilities;
- Meeting times, notification requirements and conditions;
- Executive and other committee structure;
- Insurance and indemnification;
- Fiscal year return; and
- Amendment process.

“The fewer the rules, the better. Too many rules bog down progress and discourage participation. Second, rules should be written to keep the customer happy. If there aren't too many rules, and they are written with a positive spin, and are aimed to make the customers' experience a happy one, then everyone wins.”

Farmers' Market Forum, Farmers' Market Federation of New York

Vendor Rules and Regulations

Clearly established vendor rules and regulations help create a positive market experience for everyone by ensuring that vendors understand the purpose of the market, their rights and obligations, training or other opportunities available to them, food safety requirements, and dispute resolution mechanisms. It is also a good idea to have the market manager go over the rules and regulations with each vendor to make sure the vendors understand them. Have each vendor sign a copy to be kept on file by the market manager.

See **Appendix D: Sample Vendor Rules and Regulations** (page 41).

At a Glance: Vendor Rules and Regulations

The rules and regulations establish:

- Location of the market and allocation of vendor stalls, booths, or parking spaces;
- Hours of operation and market requirements for arrival, set-up, clean-up and departure;
- Vendor eligibility and approval processes, including product requirements – e.g., “Make it, Bake it, Grow it,” allowable product categories, types of food allowed, jury procedures for craft vendors, etc.;
- Verification procedures for compliance (e.g., farm checks/kitchen inspections);
- Vendor fees, including when they need to be paid;
- Food safety requirements, including allowable products, safety procedures, food safety course requirements, etc.;
- Procedures for infractions of market rules, including lines of communication for dispute resolution; and
- Permit, licensing, and insurance requirements.

Food Safety

Food safety is a significant issue for farmers' markets. It is important to be aware of provincial and federal food safety regulations, which are generally overseen by the provincial Department of Government Services, Government Service Centres Division. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency also has a national mandate for food safety.

- **Regulations:** Most venues that allow or host the sale or processing of food products require a Food Premises License from the Department of Government Services. This is particularly important for high risk foods, such as those containing meats, cheeses, dairy, eggs, and prepared or processed foods.
- **Exceptions:** There are a few exceptions to this rule. Most farmers selling their own **fresh fruits, vegetables, grains or honey are exempt**, as well as some baked goods and bottled preserves. Check with the department to confirm which products are exempt from regulations in your area.
- **Wild meats:** Wild meat may be sold at farmers' markets as long as the vendor has a Wild Meat Service permit from the Department of Environment and Conservation, and the meat is legally obtained and handled in a safe and sanitary manner in accordance with the applicable regulations mentioned above.

Quick Tip

In striving to meet best practices, your farmers' market can offer food safety courses to your vendors, as well as your market manager.

The Department of Health and Community Services offers a Food Safety Recognition Program to food establishments that go beyond minimum standards. Criteria include having participated in recognized food safety courses and inspections.

Qualifying premises will receive a "Food Safety Served Here" certificate and a link to their business from the Department of Health and Community Services website.

A farmers' market can maintain a competitive marketing advantage by exceeding minimum food safety requirements.

Food Handling

Food that is prepared in a licensed kitchen and served at the market must be kept sufficiently cold (i.e., refrigerated) or sufficiently hot to prevent the growth of harmful bacteria. Be sure there are adequate electrical outlets and extension cords for any necessary chafing dishes, slow cookers, or refrigeration. Although the farmers' market is not actively preparing/serving the food, it is important that to ensure vendors are following all food safety and food handling regulations.

- **Inspections:** The local Environmental Health Officer will conduct regular inspections of food safety conditions throughout the market season. The market manager should keep up to date copies of health and safety regulations and keep health inspection reports on file.

At a Glance: Sanitary Food Preparation

When preparing or handling foods remember the following key messages:

- **Clean:** Wash your hands with soap and warm water frequently, and keep food contact surfaces clean and sanitized.
- **Cook:** Cook foods to the required internal temperatures, and check for doneness with a food-grade thermometer.
- **Chill:** Chill foods quickly to keep them out of the “danger zone” (4°C to 60°C or 40°F to 140°F)
- **Separate:** Store ready-to-eat foods above uncooked meats, and use separate utensils and cutting boards for these food products.

Insurance

Insurance is very important for farmers' markets of all sizes and should be considered an essential cost of operating a market. Speak to an insurance agent about necessary insurance policies before opening your farmers' market. The most basic coverage is for General Liability and Property Damage to protect the market operations, but you may also want to consider Directors and Officers Liability Insurance, which protects the board of directors or working group.

It is strongly recommended that you encourage your vendors to carry their own liability insurance coverage; some markets require proof of coverage from vendors. Vendors should also contact an insurance agent to determine what level of coverage they require.

Step 8: Recruit Vendors

Your farmers' market is almost ready to begin! At this stage, it is important to recruit a diverse group of vendors. For this, you will want to ensure adequate representation from two key groups: **farmers**, and **other vendors**.

Determine farmer interest before opening a new market and be sure to have the involvement of a sufficient and stable number of farmers before investing in major infrastructure (such as buildings). A market can survive and even thrive without its own building, but will not succeed without a core group of producers.



As mentioned earlier, don't underestimate the complexity and effort involved in getting farmers to join a new market. Farmers may not see the benefits of a new farm-direct marketing opportunity at the beginning. Promoting these benefits to local producers may take some persistence and creativity, but it will pay off in the long run.

The following quote highlights the benefits of the St. John's Farmers' Market for one of its farmer vendors. Asking engaged farmers to act as spokespeople can assist in farmer outreach.

"We love the market! Up until the past two years we were selling our produce to wholesalers, so we'd get no feedback from customers, and, of course, we get a lot less for our produce.

At the market we are one-on-one with everyone who buys from us...we are learning what they are looking for and how they like what we have had available so far. It is a very positive atmosphere with everyone looking to support local producers....

Of course the big plus is that we get a fair market price for our goods, which we don't get going through a middle man."

Karen Durfey, Ripple Trail Farm, Markland



Farmer Outreach

If possible, start recruiting farmers at least six to eight months before your market opening date, during the winter months, as farmers will have more time to participate in planning during this time. This also gives them time to order seeds and supplies, and plan for the amount and types of crops they will require for the market. Forming a Farmer Outreach Committee specifically for this purpose may be helpful in spreading the word about the new market as widely

as possible. See **Appendix E: Farmer Outreach Brochure** (page 43) for a sample brochure from the St. John's Farmers' Market.

Some **tools and techniques** for successful farmer outreach:

- Develop and maintain a current contact list of farmers in your area.
- Ask for support in promotion from:
 - Department of Natural Resources, Forestry and Agrifoods Agency;
 - NL Federation of Agriculture;
 - ACORN (Atlantic Canadian Organic Regional Network); and
 - NL Horticultural Council.
 - Food Security Network of Newfoundland and Labrador **See Appendix H: Important Links and Resources** (page 47) for contact information for these groups.
- Contact farmers by phone and if possible, arrange in-person visits – don't rely solely on email!
- Place ads in agricultural magazines and newsletters.
- Ask partner organizations to promote your project through their own communication networks, including websites, listserves and social networking sites.
- Attend and make presentations at agricultural meetings.
- Place posters and flyers at garden supply centres, seed companies, and other farm supply stores.
- Use free media press releases and public service announcements.
- Learn the needs of farmers and be accommodating.
- Invite farmers to attend the market for free for their first visit, which will give them a taste of the experience.
- Reach out to large-scale gardeners as well as small-scale farmers

Plan for Variety

It is acceptable for farmers to have a slight overlap of the products they sell at the market, as many will produce the same crops. This can provide options for the customer while keeping pricing competitive. However, it is important for farmers to work together to ensure a variety of seasonal produce in adequate quantities at the market. More variety means more customers and more sales for everybody. Nova Scotia Farmers' Markets calls this process 'co-opetition'. **Case Study # 4** (page 27) highlights the benefits of variety at a farmers' market.

Case Study # 4

Fogo/Change Islands Farmers' Co-operative Market

The Fogo/Change Islands Farmers' Market is an initiative of the Fogo/Change Islands Farmers' Co-operative and the Shorefast Foundation.

Winston Osmond, who coordinated the market during its first year, saw the potential risks of having too many farmers selling too many of the same products at the same time. Using his own garden as a demonstration site, Winston proved to his community that an incredible variety of vegetables and fruits can be grown in his region, and encouraged farmers to experiment with different varieties.

The experiment paid off, with many new varieties of vegetables and fruits now being grown in the Fogo/Change Islands area. The farmers' market provides quality goods to the new tourism initiatives being established by the Shorefast Foundation, including a five star hotel, and tourists themselves express surprise and delight at the abundance and variety of produce in this "remote" region. Winston has even been successful at growing honeydew melons!

The real success of this initiative, however, was the benefits it provided to the farmers themselves. "Before the farmers' market", says Winston, "farming took place out of sight. Since the market and community garden started up, it's out in the open...the community garden, and the market, are right by the roadside."

This openness and visibility means that farmers are communicating with each other, and with their customers, in planning their farms and gardens. The proof is in the pudding... or rather, says Winston, in farmers' wallets!



Other Vendors

Farmers' markets often include a diverse range of vendors, beyond growers. These other vendors make up an important part of the farmers' market atmosphere, and can include:

- Arts & Crafts
- Pottery
- Jewelry
- Preserves
- Baking
- Prepared food
- Clothing
- Beverages

When recruiting vendors, be sure to connect with your local craft council, community organizations, and small businesses to promote the upcoming market and recruit new vendors. You can also advertise by submitting public service announcements and press releases, and by encouraging partners to promote the market on their websites, listserves, and social media accounts.

Case Study # 5

Bay St. George Sustainability Network

The Bay St. George Sustainability Network has adopted an organizing strategy for a new market in its community which will gradually build on farmers' involvement over time.

Since there are few farmers in the immediate vicinity, their idea is to start off with a “community market” made up of a wide variety of vendors, local entrepreneurs and artists, and as many farmers as possible at the outset. Over time, it hopes to increase farmer involvement, with strong community participation in the market as a foundation to do so.

While public markets or community markets may include more vendors than farmers, it is important that markets called “Farmers' Markets” strive for strong farmer participation and limit the number of other vendors. Both farmers' markets and public markets however should make sure that vendors are producing products that will reflect positively on the market.

For handicrafts and artwork, it is a good idea to have a craft jury, made up of qualified representatives of the local craft council or other arts organizations to select what to allow at market, based on uniqueness and quality. These requirements will greatly enhance public perception of your market, and will benefit the artisans themselves as well, by inspiring them towards excellence.

Step 9: Promote the Market

Now that you have vendors, a location, an organizing committee and a market manager in place, you are ready to begin promoting the market.

Since new markets often operate on a limited budget, be sure to consider low-cost and/or free publicity and promotion opportunities available to you before spending money on advertising.



- Send **public service announcements** out for free to local radio and print publications.
- **Arrange interviews** on cable TV shows or community interest spots.
- Make announcements on **radio call-in shows**.
- **List the market** in tourism directories and summer entertainment guides.
- **Distribute flyers** at tourism displays, hotels, B&Bs, and local businesses.
- Ask like-minded organizations to **promote your market** through their listserves, websites, mail-outs, etc.
- Use **social networking** sites such as Facebook and Twitter to build a popularity base.
- **Send mail-outs** to restaurants, informing them of what produce is in season and that they can access it at the market.
- Work with a local paper to create a **weekly market column** on a particular topic, such as 'Farmer of the Week' or a recipe column.
- Create a **regular newsletter**, with recipes, farmer profiles, editorial stories contributed by community groups, and promotions of special events.

Another way to promote the market is to host regular special events that will attract media and new customers, and engage the local community. These can include **seasonal events, children's events,** and other **community events.**

Try to keep the focus on food and start out small and simple. It may be helpful to have an event coordinator on your board or staff.

- **Seasonal events** are an easy way to create a festival atmosphere based on the growing season. Many farmers' markets plan regular events to coincide with the peak season for particular crops. A Strawberry Festival can include strawberry shortcake giveaways and the Corn Festival can host a community corn roast, for example. Pumpkin Festivals can include

Halloween costumes and pumpkin carvings. These events have the added benefit of educating the public on the seasonality of local foods at the same time as stimulating media coverage and community interest.

- **Children's events** are a great way to encourage families to attend the market. Families are always looking for places to go on weekends, so making your market a child-friendly space will make it a destination for family outings. Be sure to include activities for children such as face painting and crafts.
- **Community events** can help build partnerships with local organizations and make the market a vibrant community gathering space. There are many opportunities for creating a “buzz” by partnering with other groups. These can include gardening workshops hosted by the local horticultural society, the launch of a healthy eating campaign by a dietitians association, or cultural events such as dance demonstrations or choral performances.

Quick Tip

No matter what type of event you are holding, be sure to send out press releases and public service announcements to all local and provincial media. Maintain a media contact list, send releases often, and build relationships with local reporters.

Be sure to make your releases newsworthy and eye-catching by giving them catchy titles and including pictures. Examples might include the first market of the season, a market cooking competition, or the hiring of a new manager.

The **Community Sector Council NL (CSC)** provides a wide range of supports for developing and sending out press releases. See **Appendix H: Important Links and Resources** (page 47) for contact information. See **Appendix F: Mock-up Press Release** (page 45) for an example of a press release.

Step 10: Open the Market

After completing the previous steps in this toolkit, your team should be ready to “cut the ribbon” and open your first market.

Robert Chorney of Farmers' Markets Canada suggests that you have a detailed plan for opening day. First impressions are critical to the start of any new business, so prepare for your first day as if your business depends upon it. This is your best opportunity to make a splash: attracting large crowds and generating lots of free publicity.

Be sure to send invitations to your partner organizations, local officials, local media and others who have helped you along the way. This is an opportunity to thank them for their support and to celebrate your collective achievement. Signage, posters, an event calendar, brochures and other promotional materials should also be prepared for your opening.

If yours is a weekly market, now is the time when the market manager and volunteers shift gears and buckle down to the regular routine of market preparation, set-up, clean-up and follow-up, as well as event planning, market administration, record keeping and financial management.

See **Appendix G: Weekly Market Activities** (page 46) for a general outline of the necessary tasks each week.

Timing

Starting out, it is advisable to start small and build gradually on your success. As mentioned earlier, some markets start out as one-time events, or operate during the harvest period only, and then expand the market during the following year.

Once established, plan the market season in time with the growing season. Consider scheduling your opening when your growers have a good variety of produce, especially during your first year, in order to make a positive initial impact. It also helps to end on a high note, when produce is still abundant, instead of allowing the market to dwindle as produce availability diminishes. If and when your vendors are capable of extending the market season with spring crops and bedding plants in the early season and root crops and preserves in the late fall, you can consider extending the market.

Likewise, schedule hours and days of operation to ensure a maximum (but comfortable) flow of customers. If planning a regular market, start off with one day a week. Long hours are not necessary, since you do not want to waste farmers' time with dwindling crowds. Four to five hours are often long enough for

a good market day (or even two hours in small towns). If necessary, you can always extend your hours “by popular demand,” which is a much more positive message than having to cut back due to low turnout.

Saturday mornings are the most popular time for farmers' markets, but some consider Sundays to be a more relaxed family market day. Weekday markets are more common in large urban centres. Be sure to note when other markets in your region operate, especially if there are few farmers in your area.

At a Glance: Market Day Scheduling

- Start at one day per week.
- If unsure, start with fewer hours and then expand.
- Schedule volunteers for one hour before and after the market for set-up and clean up.
- Try not to compete with a similar market in your region.

Volunteer Recruitment and Duties

Volunteers will be essential to the success of your market. Volunteers can be recruited from local service clubs, youth groups, educational institutions, and the general public.

Volunteer duties can include:

- Market set-up and take down, including tables, chairs, and tents.
- Selling tea and coffee or any other products for the market itself.
- Counting visitors to the market.
- Helping vendors by allowing them to take breaks.
- Organizing and supervising children's activities.

Evaluation

Now that the market is up and running, it will be important to monitor your progress to ensure that the market is serving the needs of both vendors and customers.

Preparing separate evaluation surveys for each of these groups will provide:

- Valuable demographic information about your clientele;
- Information on why people buy or sell at the market;
- What people love about the market; and
- Areas for potential improvement.



Evaluation surveys can help the market manager respond proactively to vendor concerns. They also provide valuable statistics for organizing effective advertising and publicity campaigns, geared towards target audiences.

Surveys provide important data to record your successes, to quantify your impact on the community and to share with project partners and funders. Diligent record keeping by your market manager or board members will ensure that this information is disseminated effectively.

Quick Tip

A great way to encourage people to participate in evaluation surveys is by entering all participants' names into a draw for a market-related prize.

Community Engagement

Farmers' markets are as much about people as they are about produce. From the early stages of coordinating a working group and involving growers and other stakeholders in the planning process, right up until opening day, organizing a farmers' market is an ongoing process of engaging an entire community. The relationships and social bonds which emerge from this process will serve the market and the community well into the future, as they continue to grow together.

Consistent communication with your membership and customer base, through newsletters, membership meetings, social media, and evaluation surveys will promote the market, help you to become responsive to member and consumer needs, and involve them in market activities. It will also help the market manager, vendors, and volunteers work together to ensure product excellence and an enjoyable market experience for all participants. Regular involvement of local organizations in market special events will showcase the best that your community has to offer, and instill a deep sense of pride and ownership amongst the residents of your community.

The best farmers' markets are in essence community *hubs*. They are a place for entrepreneurship, community organizing, social interaction, education and cultural expression. Farmers' markets can be the heart of the community by being the venue for the direct exchange of goods and services and, just as importantly, for the sharing of food, fun, ideas, experience and celebration.

Appendix A: Are You Ready? Checklist

1. Form a Working Group

- Have you organized a steering committee?
- Do you have at least 1-2 farmers involved?

2. Plan for Success

- Have you identified your vision, mission, goals, and objectives?
- Do you know how you are going to achieve them?

3. Choose an Organizational Structure

- Do you have a sponsor? Or have you selected an organizational structure?
- Have you begun the incorporation process, if applicable?

4. Find a Location

- Have you identified a location?
- Is it accessible and safe?
- Is it in a central location, and visible to passersby?

5. Look for Funding

- Have you drafted a start-up budget and operational budget?
- Have you established a fee structure for vendors/members?
- Have you identified other potential sources of income?

6. Appoint a Market Manager

- Have you selected a market manager?
- Have you trained your market manager?

7. Establish Policies and Procedures

- Have you developed bylaws, vendor regulations, food safety regulations, and insurance?
- Have you developed operating procedures?

8. Recruit Vendors

- Have you recruited a diverse mix of farmers and other vendors?
- Have you established requirements for vendors?

9. Promote the Market

- Have you developed a publicity plan?
- Have you scheduled special events?
- Have you delegated tasks to key organizers?

10. Open the Market!

Appendix B: Sources of Funding and Technical Support

Adapted with permission from the St. John's Farmers' Market consulting team final report – Feasibility Analysis of the Co-operative Model

There are a number of potential sources of support for the development of a farmers' market and each has its own focus and intent.

1. Agricultural Support Programs

Agricultural programs are designed to further the success and sustainability of agricultural producers in the province. Generally speaking, such supports are directed at individuals and businesses involved in agricultural activities. Some eligibility criteria restrict recipients to those who are either just entering the field ("new entrants") or those with established operations with annual sales over a certain threshold. Careful attention to the eligibility criteria and consultations with representatives of the appropriate department and program is essential before applications are submitted.

Growing Forward is a federal-provincial agricultural development and support program administered by the provincial Department of Natural Resources, Agrifoods Division.

For more information about Growing Forward visit <http://www.nr.gov.nl.ca/nr/funding/growingforward/>

Advancing Canadian Agriculture and Agrifoods (ACAAF) is a complimentary agricultural support program administered by the Agri-Adapt Council Inc. and administered by the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Agriculture. It is intended to address areas that 'Growing Forward' is unable to support and is based on a number of clear program objectives or 'pillars'.

For information on this program contact the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Agriculture at 709.747.4874 or www.nlfa.ca.

2. Small Business Development Programs

The **Regional Sectoral Diversification Fund** is administered by the Department of Innovation, Trade and Rural Development and provides non-repayable contributions to eligible organizations for the development and implementation of economic initiatives that address regional and sectoral development. The program will support the following objectives:

- Completing strategies to enhance development and implementation of key sectors;
- Creating an environment for business development;
- Conducting studies and feasibility analyses;
- Bringing projects to the level of commercialization; and
- Developing infrastructure that demonstrates economic benefit for the regions and province.

The Innovative Communities Fund (ICF) is administered by the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA). It is a program that invests in projects that lead to long-term employment and economic development of the community. Not-for-profit organizations are eligible for funding -

including municipalities, co-operatives, educational institutions, economic development organizations and businesses, technology and industry associations.

3. Employment Support Programs

The **Job Creation Partnerships** (JCP) employment benefit is administered by the NL Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment and designed to support projects creating jobs that will provide unemployed, insured participants with opportunities to gain meaningful work experience. Project activities should benefit both the participant and the community. However, the primary focus must be on helping the participant. The program will not support employment activities related to the core operations of an organization or business. For more information visit: <http://www.hrle.gov.nl.ca/hrle/lmda/jcp.html>

Career Focus provides funding for employers to help post-secondary graduates obtain career-related work opportunities in Canada to support their development of advanced skills, to help them make career-related links to the job market, and to assist them in becoming leaders in their field. For more information contact the Service Canada Centre in your area (visit <http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/> for a list of Service Canada Centres).

Student Work and Service Program (SWASP) is a program of the NL Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment designed to provide funding to profit and not-for-profit organizations to create summer job opportunities for students attending or returning to post-secondary institutions. This program provides work experience for students and helps offset the cost of a post-secondary education. For more information visit: <http://www.hrle.gov.nl.ca/hrle/students/swasp.html>

Targeted Initiative for Older Workers (TIOW) is a program of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada that provides employment assistance services and employability improvement activities (such as skills upgrading and work experience) to unemployed older workers aged 55 to 64. For more information visit: http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/employment/employment_measures/older_workers/index.shtml

4. Co-operative Development and Support Programs

The **Co-operative Development Fund** is a program partnership between the NL Federation of Co-operatives and the Dept. of Innovation, Trade and Rural Development. The program is administered by the NLFC. It can participate in the financing of co-operative start-up by providing equity participation.

The **Co-operative Development Initiative (CDI)** is a national co-operative development fund to help develop co-operatives, and to research and test innovative ways of using the co-operative model. It is administered by the Co-operatives Secretariat of Agriculture and Agrifoods Canada. CDI has two main components:

- **Advisory Services** to provide expert assistance to groups who want to start new co-operatives, or who need help to manage existing ones. This component is managed jointly by the Canadian Co-operative Association and the Conseil Canadien de la Coop eration.
- **Innovation and Research** projects to study and demonstrate how co-operatives can be used successfully in new ways. This component is managed by the federal Co-operatives Secretariat.

Appendix C: Sample Market Manager Job Description

Adapted with permission from Alberta Farmers' Market Association

Information Sheet: Market Manager Job Description

Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development (ARD) and the Alberta Farmers' Market Association (AFMA) are committed to the long term success of approved farmers' markets in Alberta. One of the ways this can be achieved is through increasing the level of skill and knowledge of the individuals who choose to manage the farmers' markets. The purpose of this information sheet is to provide a template for a job description which would be customized at the market level to suit the needs of each market.

Purpose

Responsible to the Board of Directors/Advisory Committee (the Board), the farmers' market manager plays an integral role in the operation of the farmers' market. The position is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the market, working with market vendors and other stakeholders, both internal and external to the market. In addition, the position works closely with the Board to ensure that strategic plans for the organization are developed and implemented.

Responsibilities

1. Board-Management Relations
 - a. Work closely with the Board to develop a reporting process so the Board is always aware of issues in the market as well as projects being worked on and progress on those projects.
 - b. Work with the Board and committees to develop and implement a strategic plan and annual action plans.
 - c. Attend Board meetings as required.
2. Market Rules
 - a. Work with the Board and vendors to develop market rules and ensure they are reviewed and updated annually.
 - b. Ensure all vendors, both new and returning, are given a copy of the rules at the start of the market season.
 - c. On a day-to-day basis, interpret the market rules for vendors and others in a consistent and fair manner. In some cases, this will result in disputes which need to be escalated through a dispute process designed by the Board.
3. Dispute and Emergency Resolution
 - a. Responsible for mediating disputes between vendors or between vendors and customers. In some cases, this will result in disputes which need to be escalated through a dispute process designed by the Board.
 - b. Work with the Board to develop and implement an emergency readiness plan.

4. Regulatory Compliance

- a. Have a working knowledge of legislation and associated regulations, both provincial and federal, which impacts all the vendors in the market.
- b. Ensure vendors and the market operations are in compliance with all local bylaws and provincial and federal legislation.
- c. Responsible for prohibiting vendors from selling their products until they are in compliance with all applicable legislation.
- d. Work closely with the local public health inspector and other agency inspectors to ensure regulatory issues are addressed within the market and by the vendors.

5. Record Keeping

- a. Work with the Board to develop and implement a table fee collection process.
- b. Maintain accurate and complete records on the market and vendors throughout the year.
- c. Approve and process all bills incurred by the market.

6. Vendor Recruitment, Selection and Retention

- a. Work with the Board and/or Vendor Selection Committee to determine the optimal market mix, always keeping in mind the 80/20 rule.
- b. Actively recruit vendors to meet the optimal market mix.
- c. Ensure all new and returning vendors complete an application form listing their contact and product information.
- d. Work with the Board and/or Vendor Selection Committee to select vendors for the market.
- e. Assist vendors on pricing, merchandising and other business or marketing related issues.
- f. Hold vendor information meetings at least once per year and as issues arise throughout the market season.

7. Communications and Market Promotion

- a. Represent the market in meetings with external stakeholders, building positive community relations.
- b. Communicate respectfully with vendors, board members, sponsors, inspectors and other stakeholders.
- c. Initiate media stories on the market using innovative techniques.
- d. Respond positively to ad hoc media inquiries about the market.
- e. In conjunction with the Board, develop and implement a promotions program for the market.
- f. Work with the Board to identify signage requirements. Ensure signs are made and displayed prominently in the community.
- g. In conjunction with the Board, develop and implement special events for the market.
- h. Respond to market inquiries in a timely manner.

8. Market Set-Up

- a. Ensure tables and/or booths are allocated each week in compliance with market policy.
- b. Arrive at the market at a scheduled time before the market opens to the public in order to set up tables or mark out booth spaces and to greet vendors when they arrive to set up their stalls.
- c. Be visible and accessible to vendors and customers during the market day.
- d. Prior to leaving the market at the end of the market day, ensure the market area is clean and meets all the requirements laid out in the market rental or lease agreement.

9. Market Evaluation

- a. Conduct periodic surveys, both formal and informal, to assess customer opinions and satisfaction with the market.
- b. Receive input from vendors and others to improve the market.

10. Professional Development

- a. Identify and attend professional development activities annually.
- b. Debrief Board members and vendors after workshops, conferences and retreats.

Skills and Qualifications

- Interest and passion for farmers' markets as a direct marketing channel
- Excellent conflict management skills
- Able to communicate well, both in writing and orally, with a variety of stakeholders in a variety of situations
- Previous marketing experience
- Time management and organizational skills are critical
- Experience in food service management would be an asset so there is a good understanding/knowledge of food safety and regulatory requirements for food vendors
- Experience working with a volunteer board
- Strong leadership skills
- Willingness to engage in additional professional development activities
- Physical requirements: able to set up and move tables or tents as needed, able to walk the market during market hours
- Previous experience managing a farmers' market would be a definite asset

Appendix D: Sample Vendor Rules and Regulations

Reprinted with permission from Saskatoon Farmers' Market

Prospective Vendor Information – May 5, 2007

Rule #1 YOU MAKE IT, YOU BAKE IT, YOU GROW IT, YOU SELL IT

How to apply to become a vendor:

Please note: To be a vendor you must be an approved member of the Co-operative. The procedure to become a vendor is as follows.

1. Come to the Farmers' Market on a Saturday at 414 Ave B South between 8:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. to discuss the operation of the Market with the Manager of Operations. If your product qualifies, you will be given a membership application package. Applications will be processed in the order they are received.
2. Complete and return the application form with the required fees. Application fee currently is \$150. This amount includes your membership dues for the year ending December 31 and processing fee. This fee will be held in trust until the Saskatoon Farmers' Market (SFM) Board of Directors reviews your application.
3. You will be contacted by telephone to notify you of a date and time when the SFM Board of Directors will review your membership and products. At that interview you will have the opportunity to discuss your product and business with the SFM Board of Directors. Only products listed on your application will be reviewed for acceptance. If you are unable to attend this interview, please contact the Market phone at **384-6262** to advise that you will not be attending the interview and to request a re-schedule. Your application will **not** be reviewed if you are unable to attend this interview.
4. Crafters - The SFM Craft Jury will initially review all craft applications. An interview will be arranged for you to present your products for review by the Craft Jury. The Craft Jury's recommendations will be presented to the SFM Board of Directors. If products are recommended, you will be contacted for an interview with the SFM Board of Directors for membership – please see above #3.
5. You will be notified the following day, as to acceptance or rejection of your product. Remember – Products approved will be based on need.
6. If your application is accepted you will receive your permit as to what you are approved to sell, a copy of the Saskatoon Farmers' Market Bylaws, Rules and Regulations, Harassment Policy, Privacy Policy and Public Health Guidelines.
7. If your application is NOT accepted a \$10 application fee will be retained for administration costs and the \$140 returned.
8. When you are ready to attend Market you **must** contact the Manager of Operations **one week** prior to request a stall. Space allocations continue to be at a premium and you will be advised whether there will be a stall open for you at that time. Stalls are given out by way of seniority at that particular market.

9. Make certain that you are aware of the policies, rules and regulations as they pertain to your product before you come into the Market.
10. Vendors are required to be in attendance at their stall at least 50% of each vending day.
11. Your membership dues are valid until December 31. Renewal of membership dues is \$100, which is due by January 31.
12. You must provide your own table and set-up. Table fees average \$25.00 per stall (approximately 8-10' frontage). Please note all markets will require prepayment for the entire season. There is a day charge for occasional vendors.
13. Vendors wanting to introduce a new product after initial acceptance by the Board of Directors are required to complete a New Product Application form and submit to the SFM Board of Directors for approval.

Vendorship Considerations:

- a. Vendorship is dependent on availability of space at the Market, product mix, and quality of product offered.
- b. Consider if your products qualify for year round operation and which market days – (Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday or Saturday) or for seasonal consideration.
- c. Consider your ability to conform to Market policies, Rules and Regulations.

In Addition to our Primary Rule: “You Make it, Bake it, Grow it and Sell it” Preference for Vendorship by the Board of Directors is given to:

- a. Vendors of agricultural products.
- b. Vendors who raise their own product as well as make, design, or process their product.
- c. Items which might be unique or that will bring added interest to enhance the Market's attractiveness.
- d. Preference may be given to vendors NOT utilizing alternate sales outlets.
- e. Preference may be given to vendors interested in selling year round.

Prospective vendors whose applications are rejected may appeal to the Board in writing within 30 days of notice of rejection and shall be considered by the Board at the next scheduled meeting. Decisions made by the Board shall be made by majority vote. Failure to appeal within the 30 days indicates that the prospective vendor gives up the right to appeal.

Appendix E: Farmer Outreach Brochure

Reprinted with permission from St. John's Farmers' Market

Did you know...

Farmers can earn up to **THREE TIMES** as much money by selling directly to the consumer?

It's true!

By eliminating the middle man, farmers can make a lot more money...selling at farmers' markets!

**St. John's Farmers' Market
Farmer Outreach Program**

Sarah Hansen, Coordinator
Tel 709-895-3586 or 709-689-3262

www.farmeroutreach.ca

This project was made possible with help from:

Farmers work very, very, hard.

It's about time they earned what they are worth.

www.farmeroutreach.ca

Words from farmers already selling at the SJFM:



"The St. John's Farmers' Market has given our farm an avenue to create direct relationships with our customers, which has expanded markets for our products and increased our customer base. The farmers market has given us a place where our family farm feels connected and our hard work is appreciated."

- **Jim and Michelle Lester, Lester Farms, St. John's**



"I've found the market to be a financially and socially rewarding experience. I am adjusting my operation to produce more of what I sold last year, and am looking forward to trying some new products as well. I enjoy meeting the people who buy what I grow and the lively conversations about food, health, cooking, and the food industry. I've encouraged people to be a bit more adventurous in what they try to grow here in St. John's and I have learned some of the nutritional benefits of what I grow."

- **Jeremy Carter, Mt. Scio Farm, St. John's**



There are so many reasons to sell your products at The St. John's Farmers' Market:

- the SJFM is a very successful and growing operation that is moving towards expansion and permanence
- over 1500 people visit the SJFM each Saturday at the height of the season
- SJFM customers are strongly interested in buying high-quality local agricultural products and in having direct contact with farmers
- producers find selling their products at the SJFM to be a very rewarding experience
- by becoming involved in the Co-operative, vendors can contribute to making the SJFM more valuable to them and more convenient and functional for selling
- the SJFM is a family event for both customers and vendors

■ the SJFM is a great opportunity for marketing knowledge – producers get input directly from customers on what they want to buy



The St. John's Farmers' Market
Runs every Saturday, 9am - 2pm
from June until November
at the Lion's Chalet
on Bonaventure Ave., St. John's, NL

We are a co-operative that is
run by a volunteer board of directors
and a paid market manager.



"We love the market! Up until the past two years we were selling our produce to wholesalers so we get no feedback from customers, and, of course, we get a lot less for our produce. At the market we are one-on-one with everyone who buys from us so we are learning what they are looking for and how they like what we have had available so far. It is a very positive atmosphere with everyone looking to support local producers whether it be vegetables, canoles, pickles, jams, soap, knitwear, meat, or anything. Of course the big plus is that we get a fair market price for our goods, which we don't get going through a middle man."

- **Karen Duffrey, Ripple Trail Farm, Whitbourne**



Appendix F: Mock-up Press Release

[Name of Farmers' Market]



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[Date]

Farmers' Market Announces June 5 Opening
Door Prizes, Face Painting, Crafts and Entertainment for the Whole Family

[Your town/location] – The Eastern Farmer's Market is proud to announce the opening of its very first market season at the courtyard of the downtown Marine Premises, 456 Marine Drive, on Saturday, June 5, 2010. The market will feature fresh fruits, vegetables, baked goods, preserves and other farm products from at least half a dozen local farmers as well as a variety of local crafts, jewellery and other handmade items.

City Councillor Sharon Dunne, a long-time supporter of the new market, will do the ribbon cutting honours during a brief opening ceremony at 9 a.m.

At today's announcement at City Hall, Councillor Dunne said, "Farmers' markets are a proven model not only for supporting local small and medium sized farms, they also provide an enormous boost to the entire local economy. I am delighted to have been asked to participate in the opening of this most important initiative."

Saturday's opening will feature one door prize every hour, consisting of a basket of farm-fresh local produce or unique craft items from market vendors. A noon performance by the East Coast Women's Choir is an added highlight. Face painting and crafts will take place in the children's tent.

The new farmers' market will run from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. every Saturday, rain or shine, until the last week of November. City residents are invited to come and meet local farmers and craftspeople, and sample a wide variety of locally prepared foods in a family-friendly venue.

-30-

For more information please contact the Farmers' Market Manager:

First name Last name [Phone number]
[Address] [Email address]
 [Website]

Appendix G: Weekly Market Activities

Days before Market Day:

- Ensure market rental fees are paid up to date, insurance and safety requirements are met
- Publicity: press releases, PSAs, email notices, website updates, listserves and social media notices
- Supplies gathered for any market-run vending stands (such as tea and coffee)
- Float prepared for market related sales (food and beverages, raffle tickets, etc.)
- Vendor confirmation
- Volunteer confirmation
- Buskers/workshops/other performances or events confirmed
- Ensure all vendors are aware of food safety requirements and have filled out appropriate forms
- Vendor layout planned

Market Day:

Pre-market

- Table, booths and/or tents and chairs set out
- Set-up of any market-run food and beverage stands
- Signage and posters
- Safety check: Access routes clear, tables requiring electricity placed close to outlets (so as to prevent tripping over electrical cords), first aid kits on site, fire exits unobstructed
- Washrooms clean and well-stocked
- Garbage and recycling facilities set-up

During market

- Visitor count...(St. John's Farmers' Market does this once every half hour for ten minutes at a time)
- Keeping food and beverage stands well-stocked, advising vendors on displays
- Keeping market clean and tidy
- Regular safety checks
- Manager collects vendor fees, issues receipts and ensures compliance with market regulations

Post-market

- Market clean up, break down of tents, tables, booths, etc.
- Storage of tables, booths, tents and chairs
- Garbage and recycling removal
- Financial records updated weekly

Appendix H: Important Links and Resources

Canadian Farmers' Market Links

Farmers' Markets Canada

Promotes farmers' markets and develops national initiatives and partnerships to further the viability, growth and prosperity of the Canadian farmers' market industry.

www.farmersmarketscanada.ca/Mission.cfm

Food Safety Resources

Department of Government Services - Food Premises License

Contact your regional Government Services office to obtain an application for a food premises license. Food premises licenses are free of charge. A list of regional Government Services contacts is provided at their website.

www.gs.gov.nl.ca/department/contact.html

Department of Health and Community Services

For a complete list of recognized courses and detailed food safety information, visit the site at:

www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/publichealth/envhealth/foodsafetyinfo_fsrp.html

Food Security Network of Newfoundland and Labrador

The Food Security Network of Newfoundland and Labrador (FSN) is a provincial non-profit organization with the mission to actively promote comprehensive and community-based solutions to ensure physical and economic access to adequate and healthy food for all. FSN may be able to provide helpful resources and networking support in the process of establishing a community kitchen. For more information contact:

44 Torbay Rd, Suite 110
St. John's, NL, A1A 2G4
Tel. (709) 237-4126, Fax. (709) 237-4231
Email: info@foodsecuritynews.com
Website: www.foodsecuritynews.com

FSN has developed a Food Security Initiative Inventory which lists community food security initiatives from across the province. Find it online at:

<http://www.foodsecuritynews.com/Publications/FSN%20Inventory.pdf>

Gardening and Horticultural Links

MUN Botanical Garden

A not-for-profit corporation that creates and inspires understanding, appreciation and conservation of plants in gardens and natural areas.
www.mun.ca/botgarden

Newfoundland Horticultural Society

Promotes Gardening and provides information to gardeners in the province.
nfldhort.dhs.org

NL Horticultural Producers Council

www.hortnl.com

General Resources

Community Sector Council Newfoundland and Labrador (CSC)

For information on how to register as a non-profit organization, as well as information on funding sources, visit the “Managing Voluntary Organizations” section of the CSC website.
communitysector.nl.ca

The Community Toolbox

A global resource for free information on essential skills for building healthy communities. A detailed template for strategic planning, including a handy power point presentation and planning checklist can be accessed at the Community Toolbox website.
ctb.ku.edu/en/

Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Co-ops

Information on how to register as a co-operative.
www.nlfc.coop

Robert’s Rules of Order

This outlines widely-accepted meeting procedures.
www.robertsrules.com

North American Farmer’s Market Links

Farmers’ Market Coalition

A wealth of free online information for all aspects of starting up and running a successful farmers’ market.
farmersmarketcoalition.org

North American Farmers Direct Marketing Association

Networking association for farm direct marketing and agritourism.
www.nafdma.com

Newfoundland and Labrador Farmers' Market Links

Facebook - Newfoundland and Labrador Farmers' Markets
www.facebook.com/#!/group.php?gid=341379128665&ref=mf

St. John's Farmers' Market Website
stjohnsfarmersmarket.org

West Coast Farmers' Market Website
www.wecnl.ca/Farmers_Market/Farmers_Market.html

Online Farmers' Market Tools and Templates

Are You Ready to Start a Farmers' Market?

An online checklist from Farmers' Markets Ontario
www.farmersmarketsontario.com/Upload/File/Pre-Readiness.pdf

Farmers' Market Board Strategic Planning Workbook

Alberta Farmers' Market Association
www.albertamarkets.com/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=zFOzaZS2%2bAc%3d&t_abid=173

Farmers' Market Consumer Evaluation Form

New York Farmers' Market
www.nyfarmersmarket.com/PDF2009/FMEvaluation.pdf

Farmers' Market Month-by-Month Timeline

An online checklist from Farmers' Markets Ontario
www.farmersmarketsontario.com/Upload/File/TimelineForMarkets.pdf

Farmers' Market Vendor Evaluation Form

New York Farmers' Market
www.nyfarmersmarket.com/pdf2007/fmvendorevaluation.pdf

Farmers' Markets Canada: Economic Benefits of Farmers' Markets

A national study that reports on the economic impact of Farmers' Markets in Canada.
www.farmersmarketscanada.ca

Sample Farmers' Market Manager Job Description

Alberta Farmers' Market Association

www.albertamarkets.com/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=v8Eq2lYZr6l%3d&tabid=173

Sample Farmers' Market Rules and Regulations, W.W. Boyce Farmers' Market, Fredericton, NB. Recognized nationally in both the Globe and Mail and Harrowsmith Magazine as one of the top farmers markets in Canada.

www.boycefarmersmarket.com/rulesandregs.html

Sample Farmers' Market Vendor Application Form

Saskatoon Farmers' Market

www.saskatoonfarmersmarket.com/documents/membershipapplication.pdf

Saskatoon Farmers' Market

www.saskatoonfarmersmarket.com/documents/RulesnRegulations.pdf

Start a Market 101, Portland Farmers' Market, Portland, OR

www.farmersmarketcoalition.org/resources/home/article/1-resource-library/336-start-a-market-101

Provincial Agriculture Industry

Atlantic Canada Organic Regional Network – Newfoundland and Labrador (ACORN-NL)

A non-profit organization which promotes and encourages a viable organic agricultural industry throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.
acornnl.wordpress.com

Department of Natural Resources, Agrifoods Branch

The Agrifoods Branch offers numerous programs and services designed to facilitate the orderly development of agricultural production in Newfoundland and Labrador.

<http://www.nr.gov.nl.ca/nr/agrifoods/index.html>

Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Agriculture (NLFA)

An organization which represents farmers and farmer groups in the province.

www.nlfa.ca

Provincial Farmers' Market Associations

- Alberta Farmers' Markets Association: www.albertamarkets.com
- Association des Marchés publics du Québec: www.ampq.ca
- BC Association of Farmers' Markets www.bcfarmersmarket.org

- Farmers' Markets Association of Manitoba:
www.manitobafarmersmarkets.ca
- Farmers' Markets of Nova Scotia: farmersmarketsnovascotia.ca
- Farmers' Markets Ontario: www.farmersmarketsontario.com
- New Brunswick Tourism/Farmers' Markets Listing:
www.tourismnewbrunswick.ca/Home/Activities/CultureEntertainment/FarmersMarkets.aspx

Annotated Bibliography

Books, Reports and “How-to” Manuals

Colihan, Mary Ann & Chorney, Robert T. (2004). **Sharing the Harvest: How to Build Farmers' Markets and How Farmers' Markets Build Community!** Brighton: Epic Press.

The first-ever Canadian Farmers' Market “how-to” handbook. Robert T. Chorney, Executive Director of Farmers' Markets Ontario and President of Farmers' Markets Canada is a co-author, and brings his experience of organizing over one hundred Farmers' Markets across the country. Contains detailed information in an accessible format.

Corum, Vance, Rosenzweig, Marcie, & Gibson, Eric. (2001). **The New Farmers' Market: Farm-Fresh Ideas for Producers, Managers & Consumers.** Auburn: New World Publishing.

This three hundred page book is jam-packed with detailed information for farmers, managers, market planners and the broader farmers' market community. The detail is a bit daunting at first but a well organized layout and table of contents make identifying specific issues easy for market start-ups.

Eggert, Diane. (Date unavailable). **Step by Step Guide for Establishing a Farmers' Market Association.** New York: Farmers' Market Federation of New York. Retrieved from www.nyfarmersmarket.com/pdf_files/developingFMA.pdf

An informative, step by step guide to farmers' market start-up and development. Contains draft bylaws and vendor forms.

Farmers' Market Manager's Resource Manual. (2004). Edmonton, AB: Farmers' Market Program, Alberta Agriculture and Food. Retrieved from [www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/apa8431/\\$FILE/farmers_market_manual_2007.pdf](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/apa8431/$FILE/farmers_market_manual_2007.pdf)

While some of this information is geared specifically towards markets seeking approval to join the Alberta Approved Farmers' Markets (a provincial organization providing leadership and support to member markets), most of the information provided is valuable for all market organizers. Provides detailed information on market start-up,

management and promotion in a readable format, with many relevant forms in the appendix.

Festing, Harriet. (1998). **Farmers' Markets: An American Success Story**. Bath: éco-logic books.

A little outdated, but still informative. Based on a five year research project by Harriett Festing for the University of London, Wye College, the book provides details and case studies from visits to over thirty U.S. markets. Festing also explores the broader environmental and socio-economic benefits of farmers' markets.

Fullerton, David and McNeil, Sue. (2004). **Farmers' Markets and their Economic Impact in Nova Scotia: Customer and Vendor Survey Analysis**. Antigonish, NS: St. Francis Xavier University Enterprise Development Centre.

Survey commissioned by Farmers' Markets Nova Scotia. Hard copy available from the FMNS coordinator. Write: Box 33008 Halifax Nova Scotia Canada B3L 4T6 Phone: (902) 425-9776. Web: www.nsfarmersmarkets.ca

Hofmann, Christa and Dennis, Jennifer. (2007). **Starting a Farmers' Market**. West Lafayette, IN: Department of Agricultural Economics, Purdue University. Retrieved from www.ces.purdue.edu/extmedia/EC/EC-739.pdf

Features a detailed meeting schedule for farmers' market development.

Jolly, Desmond, Series Ed. (2005) The Farmers' Market Management Series: Volume 1 **Starting a New Farmers' Market**. Davis, CA: UC Small Farm Centre. Retrieved from www.sfc.ucdavis.edu/farmers_market/management1/chp1.pdf

Covers successful methods and innovative strategies for farmers' market start-up based on the experience of many managers and organizers. Prepared in California, only a couple of sections are geared more specifically to a U.S. context. Designed to guide markets with different goals through the many aspects of market organizing which they have in common and to tailor design to local contexts. Contains relevant information on visioning, feasibility analysis, vendor rules, management and more.

Meta Robinson, Jennifer, Hartenfeld, Jeff A. & Roebuck, Jennifer (2007). **The Farmers' Market Book: Growing Food, Cultivating Community**. Bloomington: Quarry Books.

Documents the history of farmers' markets in Europe and America and explores the reasons for their recent resurgence. Using the Bloomington, Indiana Farmers' Market as a case study, it includes perspectives farmers' market vendors and consumers. Future challenges and opportunities faced by farmers' markets are also studied. Filled with colourful photos and first-hand accounts acquired from close to fifty interviews.

Stephenson, Gary. (2008). **Farmers' Markets: Success, Failure, and Management Ecology**. Amherst: Cambria Press.

A new publication, written by a prominent applied researcher on farmers' markets in the U.S. and coordinator of the Small Farms Program. An academic study and yet a practical tool with colourful, real-life anecdotes and stories.