

Notes from MFFM Convention  
What's Happening at Your Market? & Market Manager Roundtables  
January 26, 2014

What's Happening at Your Market?

- a) What worked well **this season**? What were issues/challenges?
- vendor attendance/turnover
  - location/busy roads/growing out of space
  - location changes – indoor/outdoor, parking, year-round
  - SNAP/EBT & community partnerships/funding to make program successful
    - o nutrition workshops/SNAP-Ed collaboration
    - o posting prices/pre-bagging produce with price visible to make shopping easier for price-conscious customers
  - innovative partnerships, utilizing volunteers
  - methods of payment for each vendor, technology (EBT, the square)
  - scheduling (day of week, time of day, etc.) depending on goals (family oriented, catching an after work crowd, etc.)
  - access/visibility of new markets
  - vendor involvement/input/control of market organization
  - logistics & legalities of market structure
  - music/demonstrations/activities
  - customer loyalty/relations
  - events, harvest meal (each of season)
  - market layout, vendor assigned spaces
  - involvement of town governance/chamber of commerce
  - vendor application process & membership
- b) What are you looking forward to about **next season**?
- expanding # of vendors
  - utilizing vendors (especially in order to run SNAP/EBT program)
  - SNAP incentives for “local food” (written into the Farm Bill, something to keep an eye on)
  - accepting WIC and technology barriers to accepting benefits
  - low-income access, building customer base (through SNAP), potential for mapping
  - improve vendor involvement
  - decrease politics, increase community amongst vendors
  - finding markets closer to home/farm (check out MFFM list of vendors wanted and markets wanted)
  - events! (coordinators, focus on nutrition, children, music)
  - marketing materials
  - identify/delegate roles for vendors on market application
  - connect with local grange halls
  - increase vendor attendance to market meetings

- community meals (e.g. full moon dinner in Bath?)
- transportation to market (shuttles with campgrounds, senior housing, etc.)
- musicians paid with market goods
- connecting with Healthy Main St. projects
- flash mobs? cash mobs?
- connecting with food pantries and gleaning initiatives
- growth & appropriate location

## Market Manager Roundtable

### a) Challenges

- establishing rules & bylaws
- new vendors & space restrictions
- committed vendors, consistent attendance, maintaining full markets
- enforcing rules & buy-in from vendors
- outside co-ordination/sponsorship & vendor empowerment (set expectations from outset)
- increase vendor variety
- MFFM facebook/website – listing of vendors/markets wanted

### b) Strengthening things that Work

- partnering with community organizations
- perfecting parking
- great community relationships
- defining character of market – buy-in & producer-only markets
- giving space to variety of high-quality, beautiful things
- boisterous, lively markets
- vendors with high capacity (quantity and quality)
- great signage
- rule enforcement & market maturity

### c) Rules & By-laws

- vendor licenses/insurance/certification
  - o MFFM.org has resources, examples
  - o spreadsheets, google docs, drop box
  - o weekly notices sent by market manager
- being aware of city ordinances
- licensing responsibility falls on vendor if they signed market agreement, vendors should be bringing licenses with them to market
- write in market by-laws that vendors must pay dues and have pertinent licenses before market season starts

### d) Non-profit status?

- good in order to take tax-deductible donations
- difference between state recognized non-profit and 501c3 status

- to receive grants, easier to have arms' length foundation/fiscal sponsor
- make decision early in market life, if transitioning to non-profit status must prove documentation since beginning of "entity's existence"
- support from chamber of commerce, local media, social media, etc. is also way to advertise without budget
  - o use template for newspaper articles, chambers of commerce have free advertising for members, public access TV gives free still ads, partner with other markets in the area for promotion
- focus on community, invite school garden groups, art show, themed events, etc.
  - o free concert series, "power produce clubs," strengthen community partnerships, each vendor coordinates an event throughout season