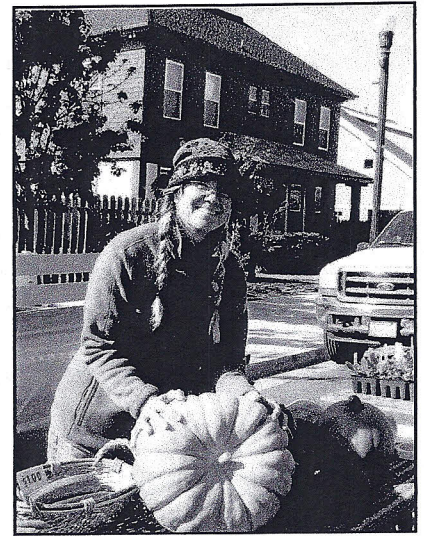
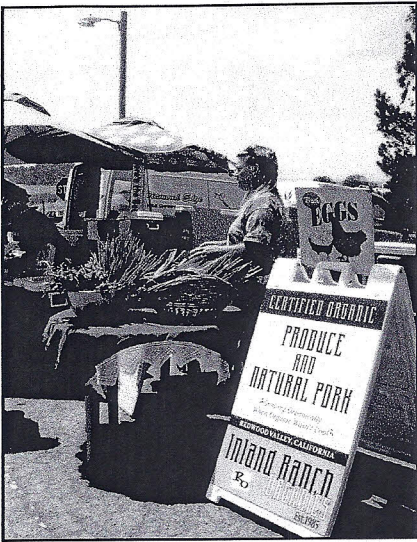


# Tips to Increase Sales at Farmers Markets

Quality, Quality Quality!



- 1. Appeal to the senses.** A mixture of colors, fragrant flowers, and unusual textures make your display interesting to look at. Try arranging basil or lavender periodically to release the fragrance.
- 2. Show abundance.** The more you display, the more you will sell. Avoid empty looking tables/boxes or “picked over” produce. Try arranging products in various heights for visual interest and for consolidating space for the look of abundance. Avoid the sparse looking sprawl.
- 3. Product should be easy to reach with attractive displays.** Consider covering your table with a washable tablecloth in solid colors that enhance your product. Use interesting boxes or baskets.
- 4. Provide shade for your product,** especially in the inland heat. Keep your produce cool using ice packs under towels or spray water from a mister periodically. Remember that canopies and umbrellas also add a festive atmosphere and define your space in a pleasing manner.
- 5. Use signs effectively.** Prices should be easy to read, clean and attractive. Customers appreciate seeing the varieties, as well as their attributes, listed on a sign for each container of produce. Don't forget to proudly display the name of your farm/business.
- 6. Use signs to show what's not on display.** Let customers know if you have a product in your vehicle on ice such as frozen apple pies or meat. Announce that a product is coming soon, such as, “Tomatoes Next Week!”.
- 7. Create desire for your product.** Tout the health benefits on a sign or a flyer. Provide recipes or offer cooking instructions. Offer free samples (see Food Sampling Guidelines). Tell your customers (friends) on Facebook, what you have at the market that week.
- 8. Smile and be energetic!** Stash your cell phone and stand up if possible. Stay busy (or appear to be) and avoid looking bored. Be ready to help immediately when a customer arrives. Be attentive. Show eye contact when a customer is waiting for you to finish completing the transaction with another customer.

9. **Be knowledgeable about your product.** Share growing practices and even growing tips for customers.
10. **Brush your teeth and remove the gardening duds!** Attempt to service your vehicle regularly to avoid giving off fumes. Consider washing your vehicle periodically. You are an ambassador for the agricultural community and our market.
11. **Don't complain or make negative comments to the public.** This is a sure way to repel customers. You may not agree with the regulations of the agencies that support your market, but a positive relationship is necessary for our operations. Constructive criticism is valued and should be directed to your Market Manager, Member Representatives, or in market surveys/evaluations.
12. **Display photos of your farm.** This enhances the farm to table connection and attracts customers.
13. **Distribute fliers or brochures about your farm.** Let customers know who you are, where you are located, how to get more of your products. Inform folks of your growing practices, purpose and goals. Create a mailing list for informing your customers of new products.
14. **Offer a service.** Carry purchases to a vehicle. Offer a recycled paper bag to assist in carrying products, even if they aren't your products. Be willing to store heavy purchases until customers complete their shopping.
15. **Create relationships.** Customers return because they want to support vendors that they trust and have connections with. Avoid obnoxious and repetitive hawking of products that repel many customers and annoy fellow vendors. Instead, be friendly and social.
16. **Keep your prices fair.** If your prices are too low, they send the message of inferior product and they unfairly undercut another vendor whose prices are fair market value. High prices are also discouraging. Check out super market prices, on-line price reports, and get a sense of prices by walking around farmers markets. Offer volume discounts. How about providing something for free (e.g. a sunflower for purchases over \$10)?
17. **Differentiate yourself from the other vendors.** Instead of unfair competition with unreasonably low prices, compete in a friendly manner by attracting customers through attractive displays and creative marketing of products. If your garlic isn't selling, try arranging it differently, improve your signs, or sell it in braids. Bring a giant pumpkin to market. Create vegi sculptures. Grow a product or variety that is unique.
18. **Create a website about your farm.** Include photos and links to other sites such as [www.mcfarm.com](http://www.mcfarm.com). Submit your farm business to on-line directories. Create a Facebook page.
19. **Be informed. Look for new ideas and connections.** Subscribe to farm and market journals. Look up information on-line. Attend farm conferences and local farm/localization events.
20. **The appearance of your product is everything.** Many size and packaging requirements are waived in certified markets, but quality standards remain. Blemished, scrawny, less than average looking product should not be offered for sale. Keep your best looking products for market and use the rest for creating healthy supplements for your chickens or compost pile. Make jam or pickles for gifts. Cut and freeze for winter pies.