

MCFARM Fall OC Meeting Minutes
December 9, 2018

Location: Top of the Willits Grade, Former Mexican Restaurant

OC Members present: Caroline Radice, Julia Dakin, Sakina Bush, Gloria Harrison, Kyle Burns, Sarah Nielson, Amanda Fairall, Michael Foley, Scott Cratty, Angela Harney

Meeting call to order: 10:03am

Agenda approved by all

Market Reports:

Ukiah-Scott: About dead even with last year. Looks unlikely to have a strong finish like last year. Weather (rain and smoke) caused several poor markets. Winter market really suffering from lack of anchor produce vendors. 2013 was the biggest year. Spent fair bit of money to promote the market. Spent a lot on social media.

Willits-Michael: Way up this year. Even more up in stall fees. Not quite up to the 2016 totals before the market was forced to move. Moving the market downtown seems to have helped. Number of vendors has climbed back up. Battle to move down town took a lot of energy. Amanda did the facebook and Willits weekly promoted the market well. Michael

Laytonville-Gloria: As the community recovers so does the market. There is a new produce and egg vendor.

Mendocino-Sakina: The good weather in October seemed to really help with the boost in numbers. Finally have a solid food vendor (empanadas). Averages about 16 vendors (about 12 ag), each vendor seems to be doing better. Spent about \$100 on facebook and it seemed to be helpful. Spent some money on a promo video for the market. Ongoing discussion about date and time change. Looking at Saturdays or later on Fridays. The move to the arts center didn't happen because the residents on that block changed their minds.

Redwood Valley-Amanda: More consistent vendors this year helped to boost the market. MOre consistent number of vendors from week to week. Will bring Chef Demos back next year.

Inspections: for all the markets were easy and casual.

Fort Bragg-Julie (read by Angela): Another great year! Averaged about 30 vendors outside. Fun community group section. Advertised a lot on social media among other sources. News signs. Indoor market is out growing its space. (see report as emailed, at end)

Michael: Thinks consistency is very important, even more important for bigger vendors. Willits lost the Ethiopian food vendor due to strict fire regulations in Willits.

Member Rep Reports:

Inland-Julia: Moved to Casper, visits Ukiah regularly and checks in with vendors quarterly. All vendors report things are going well.

Coast-Kyle: Everyone seems happy there was one issue with a vendor at Mendocino who was selling before the bell. The vendor had a history of trying to sell products not allowed. It has been dealt with, the vendor no longer goes to that market.

General Manager's Report-Scott: Did a bunch of small things. Big time sink this year was the Boonville market issues. Sunday in the Park thing, Willits' business, and new president training time also took time.

President's Report-Isa (read by Scott): Understanding how the organization works and observing the structural behaviors of it has been a big part of my year, that's why for the current year of 2018 I and Scott stayed in touch constantly. Helped with the location of Sunday's in the park/40th anniversary of Mcfarm. Had meetings and conversations with Scott, Julia and Caroline analyzing present circumstances and future opportunities. Had meetings with potential allies that could help us with innovative ideas, access to public resources and experience sharing: NYFC (National Young Farmer Coalition).

Vice President-Caroline: Aside from sending out the newsletter, helped with the Sunday in the Park event, wrangled a group to go to city counsel when dealing with the Willits Farmers' Market issues.

Office Manager-Angela: Mellow year. Market managers are now checking the paperwork. Moved again so office is back at her house. All the markets are up this year in stall fees and gross sales. Bookkeeping Summary read and explained.

CDFA Reports: Since the form has been changed to needing hand written information it has become much more difficult. Be careful to avoid the late penalty! \$100 per market. On ag application next year please use MCFARM's address.

Next Year's Poster: We can use an old poster again and change the info. There was an excess of posters from last year. 4-H kids distributed poster for the RV Market. Discussion of text size and design. Hire a designer? Up to \$500? Kyle will check in with friends who are illustrators/artists for posters and shirts. \$500 for poster and shirt design and up to \$2,000 for shirts. Michael moved, Sakina seconds. All in favor.

Hats: Order more!

Willits status: Michael is burnt out and is retiring. In search of a market manager. Application deadline January 10th. He will train/mentor the new Manager through their 1st season.

Break.

Please sign the thank you card for Julie for being our President.

Boonville Market: No longer exists. The Food Shed people are trying to revive it. Possibly to become a monthly event.

Officer Openings: The hunt for suckers is on. Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Inland Member Rep. Send interested candidates to Scott. Positions will be posted for interested people.

General Meeting Date: 2/10, 3/10, 3/3, or 2/24 (in order of preference) at the RV Grange. Shirt, hat, or cash bribe? Agenda for GM: Book exchange, FoodHub update, Production planning, Michael's class, farmer record keeping skills, consistency, Julie's successful market tips, More detailed reports, Sakina's accounting software.

Additional Data Gathering: How to collect number of customers? Figuring out the average amount spent per customer? Why collect this data/how to use it?

Michael's Stall Fee Idea: 3 alternatives offered. Discussion of whether to suggest change at the GM. Small markets with small vendor present a different challenge from bigger markets with bigger vendors. Won't bring up at the GM but will keep working on it.

Tinctures: Sounds like a grey area, possibly illegal in CA. Sakina will do research. Water vs alcohol based.

Convergence: Caroline wants the Convergence to be valuable to farmers of all sizes/scales and would like MCFARM to have a greater presence. Mendocino and Ukiah Markets will donate \$125 each and MCFARM will donate the other \$250 for a \$500 sponsorship. Kyle moved, Michael seconded. All.

Meeting Adjourned: 1:05pm

Fort Bragg Certified Farmers Market Report 2018

We enjoyed another strong energetic season outdoors, which is translating to an increasingly successful indoor season. We averaged over 30 vendors most of the outdoor season, and have about 16-20 participating indoors.

We started a food court area with Tenadam Catering, Meaning of Life, and Living Light offering food plates and a seating area that encourages people to park and enjoy the food and vibe.

We also have a very fun community group section- including regular (weekly or once or twice a month) booths by the local Public Library (giving out books) The City of Fort Bragg (a different display and department each week), Redwood Coast Senior Center (promoting programs and giving out swag) Mendocino Coast Botanical Garden's Master Gardeners (answering gardening questions), Project Sanctuary (domestic violence prevention/information/support), Mendocino Coast Children's Fund (games & activities), Safe Passage (with face painting and family resources), And Occasional booths by La Lecha, Mental Health Services, Foster Family recruiters, etc. We enjoyed a very successful POP Club this year presented by Mendocino Coast Clinics.

I have a blanket policy of no selling or money collecting. Just information/freebies/activities for the groups. And no local for profit businesses (i.e. Dentists, Stores, Propane Services etc). With the strong and consistent guideline it is easy to say no to those that don't meet the criteria. Only MCFARM members are allowed to earn money.

Advertising this year included lots of Social Media mostly Facebook boosted posts. Our posters hung around the area, Advertising on the local online BB, KOZT discussing the market each week, and somewhat improved signage- including Large Bright Farmers Market Today 3-5 placed in Empty Lots on Main Street at noon on Market Day and removed by 6. (very strict signage rules in Fort Bragg).

The indoor market has just about outgrown our space, not to mention that the space is antiquated and in dire need of improvements and cleaning which probably won't happen.

During the outdoor season the parking has become a pretty big problem, especially the first hour. At some point in the future we are supposed to move to a Dedicated Year Round Covered location on the Mill Site.

Problems we have encountered have been Token Fraud- people mix other wooden nickels, like the ones from Harvest Market, into their payments. We had an angry woman with dementia drive into the market via the parking lot- Mike of Inland Ranch thought quick and got her and her car out before anyone was hurt. We have had a couple issues with inappropriate sexual comments by a customer. And the usual array of people ignoring the no parking signs and getting tickets.

Due to vendor interest we were open on Wed. July 4, the market was about half its normal size and did about half its normal sales- so that ended up being a good thing!

Over all it has been another fantastic season! I am so glad that all of the markets are showing an uptrend this season.