



MARKET SUCCESS

New Roots Micro-Producer Academy: Module 8 of 8

Summary

This guide will help you conduct this lesson on marketing success. This can be done as one complete workshop or lesson, or individual activities can be pulled out and done independently with farmers.

The need: After farmers learn about different marketing options and financial planning, they need to know what to do to be successful in their appointed markets. Direct marketing especially requires that many farmers change some of their marketing practices. In this workshop, farmers will learn about branding and knowing your customers and market. Additionally, farmers will learn how to better understand what marketing is and how it applies to agriculture, and will help participants think through how they might stand out in the market and identify their niche.

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Who made this guide?

Collaboration and Testing

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS: This teaching resource was developed by Aley Kent of IRC Food and Agriculture Technical Unit, Jessica Woiderski with IRC Phoenix in partnership with Dani Scherer and the Institute for Social and Economic Development (ISED Solutions). Refugee farmer training programs across the country provided feedback on this lesson, which is now integrated throughout the guide. From 2015 to 2017, ISED partnered with twelve refugee farmer training programs through a USDA BFRDP educational enhancement grant, to support the design and testing of new and shareable teaching resources for culturally and linguistically diverse farmers. To learn more about this project, or to access the whole list of newly developed teaching resources for refugee farmer training programs, see the [New American Resource Library at https://nesfp.org/new-american-resources](https://nesfp.org/new-american-resources). For more in-depth explanations of the teaching approaches and activities used in these materials, please see the [‘Teaching Handbook: Refugee farmer training’](#). While these resources were designed with refugee audiences in mind, they can be adapted and used in any farmer training or incubator setting.

VARIATION:

Throughout this guide, boxes (like this one) contain variations and adaptations that serve varying programs and farmers. They are suggestions and reflections from other programs based on how they made this workshop work for them.

TEACHING TIP:

Throughout this guide, boxes (like this one) contain teaching tips to help you better facilitate farmer learning. Most come from other programs who have tested and reflected on using this lesson.

DEVELOPER’S NOTE:

Throughout this guide, boxes (like this one) contain notes from this guide’s developer that provide insight into how a lesson is typically taught at the developer’s program.

ICONS: You will find the icons below throughout this guidebook. They are there so you are prepared for the activity and can get an idea of what it will bring at a glance.



POWERPOINT



DISCUSSION

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Adaptable except where noted.

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- Resources needed

6 MARKETING AND BRANDING YOURSELF / ACTIVITY 1 / 15 MINUTES

- Farmers will learn about basic marketing ideas, such as getting to know your customers, competition, and branding.

8 DIRECT MARKETING SKILLS / ACTIVITY 2 / 10 MINUTES

- Farmers will learn about what it takes to make a good market display, pricing pointers, as well as some activities that customers appreciate at market.

10 FARMERS MARKET ROLE PLAY / ACTIVITY 3 / 20 MINUTES

- Farmers will practice setting up the market stand and will role play with fake customers, followed by time for self-reflection and assessment.

WHAT TESTERS SAY:

“I like that the lesson is already created for bite sized information instead of having to create my own curriculum and narrow down what’s most important”

- Yui Iwase, *International Rescue Committee in Dallas TX*

Audience and Objectives

Adaptable except where noted.

OBJECTIVES: At the end of this session, farmers will be able to

- Share 3-5 things they might have to say at the market
- Say the price of their crops
- Demonstrate the top four most important display techniques and marketing actions
- Feel more comfortable engaging with their likely customers

STRUCTURE: This lesson will work with programs who support farmers in identifying and getting into indirect and direct marketing opportunities.

INTERPRETER / STAFF: At least one staff member and one interpreter needed for farmers who are not English fluent.

LANGUAGE / LITERACY: Language: With an interpreter, appropriate for beginning to fluent English language speakers.

Literacy: Activity 1 'Activity Board' will be challenging for pre- and non-literate learners, but vocabulary words can be pre-taught for these learners.

EXPERIENCE: This module is intended for farmers who are in their first year or so of production for market. If farmers have not had any marketing experience, some additional ESL words should be taught (such as wholesale, CSA, and farmers market)

Helpful if farmers have had some exposure to the four marketing options, such as farmer's markets, wholesale, CSA and restaurants. (If not, these vocabulary words should be taught.)

PROOF OF LEARNING:

- Farmers will demonstrate how they will differentiate their marketing for American customers.
- Farmers will be able to answer most commonly asked customer questions about their business.
- Farmers will be able to identify the different marketing opportunities by name.
- Farmers will be able to state what kind of marketing (direct or indirect) they prefer and give 1-3 reasons why.

Resources needed

Adaptable except where noted.

TIME: 1.5 hours

STAFF / INTERPRETERS: 1 Staff Member and 1 Interpreter

LOCATION: Classroom / packing shed, etc.

Classroom or similar, space for a farm stand set up for Activity 3 (can be done outdoors or indoors).

- SUPPLIES:**
- PowerPoint Presentation
 - Farmers market role play supplies for ROLE PLAY (Activity 3)
 1. Farmers Market tables (tent if it's feasible for space)
 2. Table cloths
 3. Baskets and display boxes
 4. Pre-made table signs to label product and price
 5. Plastic produce bags for customer purchases
 6. Reusable shopping bag
 7. Fake money
 8. Wax/cardboard delivery box
 9. Plenty of produce to practice with



MARKETING SUCCESS POWERPOINT

Marketing and Branding yourself

1

TIME: 15 minutes

OVERVIEW:

In this activity, farmers will learn about basic marketing ideas, such as getting to know your customers, competition and branding.

OBJECTIVES:

- Answer customers' most frequently asked business-related questions.

MATERIALS:

- PowerPoint presentation 'Marketing Success'



STEP 1: POWERPOINT PRESENTATION

Introduction to Marketing "Marketing is meant to influence our choices.

Marketing makes us "want" something more and encourages us to pay a higher price for what we "want" or for items of "higher quality".

- Slide 2: Billions and billions of dollars are spent every year on marketing. You see it everywhere. Can you recognize any of these "brands"? How do you know them?
- Slide 3-4: Successful businesses know two things very well: customers and competition. What is the difference between these two customers that Kadija is selling to? Do they want the same thing? Will they buy the same amount? Will they pay the same price?
- Slide 5: Where do your target customers currently shop? This is your competition. Why do they shop there?
- Slide 6: Are there lots of places where they can find the product you will grow? Or is what you will sell hard for them to find?
- Slide 7: How will you get customers to choose your market and your product?

- Slide 8: Let's take an example of these two products...carrots and kunde. (replace kunde with whatever is most appropriate for your group).
 - i. Which product has a larger customer base? (Or, which has more customers?)
 - ii. Are there enough customers to buy the amount that you can grow?
 - iii. Which product has more competition (more people growing and selling it)?
 - iv. Which are you better at growing, or which would you rather grow?
- Slide 9: Once you decide on your crop, then you have to consider how, where, and for what price you will market it. Will your location be convenient for their needs?
- Slide 10: Are there other reasons why they would visit your market venue? For example, cultural events or activities at the farmers' market, or...
- Slide 11: ...while they are picking up their kids from school?
- Slide 12: Is your product higher quality? Will your product taste better? Last longer? Be healthier? How will your customers know that?
- Slide 13: Will you have more or different varieties than other growers?
- Slide 14: How will your product be priced? If you decide to compete on price—have a lower price—how will that affect your business?

STEP 2: ACTIVITY: ANSWERING (SLIDE 15)



**STEP 3: DISCUSSION
(Together or in small groups)**

What would happen if everyone in this class decided to grow kunde (or other example) for the same farmers market or grocery store?

Direct Marketing Skills

2

TIME: 10 minutes

OVERVIEW:

In this activity, farmers will learn about what it takes to make a good market display, pricing pointers, as well as some activities that customers appreciate at market.

MATERIALS:

- PowerPoint Presentation

OBJECTIVE:

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- Say the five rules of good farmers market display:
 1. If you wouldn't buy it, don't sell it
 2. More is better
 3. Color sells
 4. Make them want to see, smell and taste your product
 5. Sell the farmer and the food



STEP 1: POWERPOINT PRESENTATION

Slide 16: No matter the market, your product needs to shine! Let's talk about the basic rules of good marketing.

- Slide 17: **Rule #1** - If you wouldn't buy it, don't try to sell it.
 - i. Ask farmers: What is wrong with these items?
 - ii. What can you do with it if it isn't sellable? Eat it yourself or feed it to the chickens or compost pile.
- Slide 18-19: **Rule #2** - More is better. Use tricks to make it appear like there are more than you have.
 - i. If you can: Have a basket of items that is empty.
 - ii. Illustrate how filling the bottom of the basket, and placing the items on top looks better.
- Slide 20-22: **Rule #3** - Color sells! How do these two pictures look different?
- Slide 23: What did they add to make this product more beautiful? Do you think they can charge more money for this lettuce now?
- Slide 24-26: **Rule #4** - Make them want to see, smell and taste your product. What do you like about these displays?
- Slide 27: **Rule #5** - Sell the farmer and the food. Think about how you appear to customers. Customers want to interact—be yourself, answer their questions and get to know them.



STEP 2: REFLECTION

Show farmers pictures of a good market display, and ask them to point out the five rules that are being used by that stand. Look at some other pictures: are these stands following the rules or not?



STEP 3: RETURN TO POWERPOINT PRESENTATION

- Slide 28-31: Choose a market that builds on your strengths. Do you like talking to people? What venue would you do well in? Or, do you prefer not to? What market would be best for more shy people? Are you a person that is good at being on time? Do you have a vehicle to make deliveries or get to market?
- Slide 32: What else do you need to consider to choose the right market for your business?

Market Role Play

3

TIME: 20 minutes

OVERVIEW:

In this activity, farmers will practice setting up the market stand, and then do a role play with fake customers. After going through the motions, farmers will debrief, using happy / sad faces or other forms of self-assessment to help them identify what they still need to work on in their marketing skills, and what they are doing well.

MATERIALS:

- Farmers Market tables (tent if it's feasible for space)

- Table cloths
- Baskets and display boxes
- Pre-made table signs to label product and price
- Plastic produce bags for customer purchases
- Reusable shopping bag
- Fake money
- Wax/cardboard delivery box
- Plenty of produce to practice with

OBJECTIVE:

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- Demonstrate the top four most important display techniques and marketing actions.



STEP 1: SET UP

Work together to set up a farmers' market booth. Walk through each step with all of the participants.

STEP 2: PRACTICE

Once the booth is set up, explain that it's time to practice selling at a farmers' market.

STEP 3: SELECT CUSTOMER

Select a participant to "role play" being a customer and you act as the vendor.

STEP 4: TRANSACTION

Instruct the "shopper" to buy three or four items and give them fake money to make their purchase.

STEP 5: TAKE TIME

Take 3 to 4 minutes for the role play.

STEP 6: TEST FOR RECOGNITION

During the role play, make sure to make a few "mistakes" in how you interact with the customer so that your students have something to "catch" and critique.

STEP 7: DEBRIEF

Debrief after the role play.

STEP 8: SECOND ROLE PLAY

For the second role play, ask the customer to become the vendor and select a new customer from the group.

STEP 9: TIME REGULATION

Make sure to cut off the role play if it is going too long.

STEP 10: REPEAT

Do as many role plays as the participants want to do—ideally, everyone would get a chance to either be the vendor or shopper.

VARIATION:

One reviewer suggested that higher level English instruction and practice could be given if farmers will be interacting with restaurants, CSA customers, or wholesale buyers.

STEP 11: PACKING

After the farmers' market role play, work with the participants to pack a box for sale to a small grocery store or restaurant. Make sure to reinforce product quality and illustrate how to pack a box correctly.

STEP 12: MORE ROLE PLAY

Follow the same procedure as above, with you as the purchaser and a participant as the vendor.

STEP 13: SWITCH ROLES

Debrief, and switch roles as many times as participants want to.

STEP 14: DEBRIEF

Reflect on all the different skills and logistics involved in farmers markets. Given the information on the slide, and the role plays, what would they need to work on to be successful at the farmers market?

TEACHING TIP:

One reviewer mentioned that some of the dialogue suggested here is more suitable for farmers more advanced in their business and in their English. Beginning farmers can just stick to the basics of a simple direct interaction with a customer at a farm stand or farmers market.