

UDC

FARMERS' MARKET

MANUAL

2016



*The College of Agriculture, Urban Sustainability and Environmental
Science (CAUSES)*

University of the District of Columbia (UDC)

sustainability@udc.edu

Phone: (202) 274-7161

Fax: (202) 274-6016

Table of Contents

I. Introduction	1
♦ The History of Farmers' Markets	1
♦ Basic Market Roles	2
II. Planning	3
♦ UDC's Market Overview	3
♦ Market Permits	4
III. Outreach and Education	9
♦ The Overall Marketing Plan	9
♦ State and Federal Coupon Programs	13
♦ Vendor Recruitment	13
♦ Special Community Outreach Projects	14
IV. Operations	14
♦ Staffing at the Market	14
♦ Produce Availability and Pricing	15
♦ Setting Up and Taking Down the Metal Infrastructure	16
♦ Running the Market Smoothly	19
♦ Events at the Market	21
♦ Keeping Business Records	21
V. Evaluation	22
♦ Completing Your Records	23
♦ Analyzing the Market	23
VI. ANEX	25

I. Introduction

- *The History of Farmers' Market*

- *Basic Market Roles*

- ◆ **The History of Farmers' Markets**

Throughout the United States, the number of farmers' markets continues to rise, their popularity spurred by consumers' growing demand for locally produced food. The USDA's National Farmers Market Directory lists more than 8,300 farmers' markets operating nationwide today, March, 2015—a jump from fewer than 1,800 only 15 years ago. In addition to providing easier access to fresh food, studies show establishing a farmers' market can revitalize a neighborhood, enhance social interaction, improve the local economy, and provide a supplemental source of farm income for many growers. Moreover, because farmers' markets increase the availability of fresh fruits and vegetables for consumers, they play an important role in the Government's mission to combat childhood obesity. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), a lead agency in helping to promote farmers' markets across the nation, has operated a farmers' market at its Washington, D.C., headquarters since 1996.

The District of Columbia is home to more than 35 farmers' markets. DC residents benefit from the variety, quality, and value of fruits, vegetables and other products conveniently available in their neighborhoods through farmers' markets. Dr. Calvin Lewis, Research Associate, with the initiative of Dean Gloria Wyche-Moore, started the CAUSES farmers' market on the UDC campus in 2009 with one vendor. The farmers' market now averages 9-10 farmers and other vendors weekly, including chefs and community service organizations. Average buying attendance increased from 172 in 2009 to over 349 in 2010. In fall 2011, UDC expanded its reach by partnering with other organizations to launch the Parkside-Kenilworth Farmers Market in a designated "food desert" neighborhood in southeast DC. UDC is currently developing a comprehensive strategy to increase access to fresh health foods to all District residents.

UDC's farmers' market is currently housed within The College of Agriculture, Urban Sustainability and Environmental Science (CAUSES). Our farmers' market is a seasonal open air market featuring the produce of Latino farmers from southern Virginia. It is located on University of the District of Columbia's Van Ness campus on Connecticut Avenue N.W Washington, DC.

◆ **Basic Market Roles**

Farmers' markets, to be successful, must serve farmers, consumers, and the community, by providing benefits that ensure the support and profitability of all participants. Farmers, given a ready customer base and a low-cost venue to sell their farm products, may achieve retail level pricing. The market aids farmers by providing them a teaching ground where they can learn the skills needed to be a successful farmer and marketer. Consumers look for an easily access source of fresh foods, nutritious and locally grown. They look for a diversity of product and choices when they come to a farmers' market.

Communities reap many benefits by hosting a farmers market. Offering nutrition education and promoting better diets through farmers markets help to keep a community healthy. In addition, growing and selling foods on a local basis provides food security for a community. Part of feeling secure about the foods people eat is to feel comfortable with where the food comes from and how it is grown. Farmers' markets provide for the interaction between consumers and food producers. Customers have the ability to learn about the production of their foods and about the farmers growing the foods they are purchasing.

There are economic benefits that farmers' markets bring to their communities as well. The customer appeal of a market expands into the surrounding neighborhood, boosting sales of other local businesses, helping to incubate small businesses, and growing local businesses with the increase in customer traffic they experience as a result of the farmers' market. This generates jobs, increases sales tax revenue, and grows the local economy.

Finally, a farmers' market builds a sense of community. A farmers' market creates a vibrant public gathering place that builds community pride and spirit by bringing together a cross-section of the residents within the community, enjoying the shared experiences of the setting.

II. Planning

- *UDC's Market Overview*

- *Market Permits*

- ◆ **UDC's Market Overview**

The atmosphere of a farmers' market is a fun, upbeat experience. To the general public it may seem that a farmers' market just "happens." A group of farmers appears together weekly and sets up to sell their farm products. It seems spontaneous, with little or no management intervention to keep the market running smoothly for both farmers and their consumers. Those involved in farmers' markets know, however, that this "natural" occurrence requires good management and an effective set of rules governing the market to prevent the market from deteriorating into chaos and conflict. The rules lay out the rights and responsibilities of all market participants and keep the market running smoothly and efficiently. By reading and understanding the rules, each vendor is aware of what is expected of them: standards of conduct, what can be sold, and how to handle grievances with other vendors or grievances with the operation of the market.

♦ **Market Permits**

Farmers' Market Parking and Traffic Plan

Location

*University of the District of Columbia
4200 Connecticut Avenue. Building 44, room 119
Washington, DC 20008
sustainability@udc.edu
Phone: (202)274-7161
Fax: (202) 274-6016*

Purpose: The purpose of this plan is to provide a plan for parking and traffic safety so that orderly Farmers' Market activities can be realized at the University of the District of Columbia Farmers' Market located on Connecticut Avenue.

I. Parking Plan

- a) Customer Parking: Customers attending the market have two parking options (1) 10 reserved spaces located on Connecticut Avenue directly in front of the Building #38 and #39; or (2) 20 reserved spaces located in the garage of the University of the District of Columbia. UDC Farmers' Market staff will place parking signage in the appropriate places to provide ample parking notice to Farmers' Market consumers.
- b) Farmer/Vendor Parking: The Facilities and Real Estate Division at the University of the District of Columbia has designated ___#___ parking spaces for commercial vehicles used by participating Farmers/Vendors. After loading and unloading, Farmers/Vendors may park vehicles at a specified location described as _____. These spaces shall be designated as the Farmer/Vendor Parking spaces and use shall be limited as follows: 8.00 am to 2.00 pm. on each market day.

II. Traffic Plan

Farmers' Market operations and activities at this location will not require any street closures, modifications in traffic patterns, nor modifications to pedestrian traffic. The traffic plan does require, however, proper signage to give pedestrians and vehicle operators ample notice of market activities. Notice by signage has the following components:

Connecticut Avenue. - Farmers' Market signage and orange caution cones shall be placed on both sides of the street in a north and south direction within two blocks of 4200 Connecticut Avenue.

Farmers' Market Food Safety Plan

Location

*\University of the District of Columbia
4200 Connecticut Avenue. Building 44, room 119
Washington, DC 20008
sustainability@udc.edu
Phone: (202)274-7161
Fax: (202) 274-6016*

Purpose: The Food Safety rules expressed in this document are issued for the sole purpose of protecting the health and well being of the public who may visit Farmers' Market activities managed by the University of the District of Columbia.

I. Hand Washing Facilities.

UDC will supply a portable hand washing facility to be used by consumers and farmers/vendors.

II. Prohibition on Food Samples

Farmers or Vendors may not allow consumers to sample any food item, in its raw or processed form, unless and until a Farmer or Vendor allowing such sampling first presents the following documents:

- (a) Copy of Hazardous Analysis Critical Control Point (HAACP) training certificate and
- (b) Valid copy of food service liability insurance in the amount of \$1 million indemnifying the University of the District of Columbia.

Farmers' Market Rules

Location

*University of the District of Columbia
4200 Connecticut Avenue. Building 44, room 119
Washington, DC 20008
sustainability@udc.edu
Phone: (202)274-7161
Fax: (202) 274-6016*

Purpose: The rules and regulations expressed in this document are issued for the sole purpose of effectuating an orderly and safe operation of Farmers' Market activities managed by the University of the District of Columbia. The University of the District of Columbia agrees to act as facilitator by providing space to host the Farmers' Market.

I. Time of Market

The UDC's Farmers' Market will commence on Saturday, May 16th, 2015 and occur each Saturday thereafter until Saturday, November 21st, 2015. The opening time of each market day will be 8:00 a.m. The closing time of each market day will be 2:00 p.m.

II. Market Manager Authority

The Market Manager (or his/her designee) will have authority over the operation of the Farmers' Market, including Vendor qualification and space assignment.

III. Vendor Market Arrival Time

Each Vendor must arrive at the Farmers' Market by 7:15 a.m. in order to (a) review market safety rules, (b) allow Market Manager to inspect insurance documents, and (c) set up tables or booths.

IV. Insurance Documents

Participating vendors, upon arrival, shall present to the Market Manager valid farmers' market Insurance documentation citing UDC as additional insured against any loss or damages incurred as a result of any action or inaction of a participating farmer or Vendor.

Please ensure that when requesting the certificates of insurance, the language for adding the University as an additional insured is as follows:

"University of the District of Columbia, its trustees, directors, officers, employees, representatives and agents" are named as an additional insured.

Each vendor participating in the Farmer's Marketing is also required to obtain a registered tax ID for the District of Columbia

V. Indemnification

Contractor shall indemnify, protect, defend and hold harmless at the University, its trustees, directors, officers, employees, representatives and agents from and against any and all claims arising from or connected with: (i) any alleged or actual breach by Contractor or (ii) any act of omission by Contractor and only to the extent such claim arises by negligence or intentional misconduct or as may be allowed under applicable law. Monies due or to become due to the Contractor under the contract may be retained by the University as necessary to satisfied any outstanding claim which the University may have against the Contractor.

VI. Permissible Market Product

Vendors may offer for sale, articles for human consumption such as locally grown or produced fruits, vegetables, vegetable and bedding plants, nursery stock, edible grains, nuts, berries, apiary products, maple sugars, syrups or articles such as flowers grown and offered for sale by the growers or producers, members of his family or by his employees. The sale of eggs, cheese, meat, fish, poultry or refrigerated dairy products is permitted. However, it is the Vendor's responsibility to know and obey all food safety and handling requirements, as required by the District of Columbia government. Only products that can legally be sold at an outdoor Farmers' Market will be allowed.

VII. Market Payment Systems

Each participating Farmer or Vendor shall be responsible for any and all payments systems or arrangements with market customers. Vendors are encouraged to use Electronic Payment Systems in order to accommodate debit and credit card transactions.

VIII. Scales or Measurement System

Each participating Farmer or Vendor shall provide their own scales or product measurement system and ensure compliance with the District of Columbia Department of Consumer Affairs rules and regulations regarding weights and scales.

IX. Condition of Tables and Tents

Each participating Farmer or Vendor may be required to furnish their own infrastructure equipment such as tables, chairs, or tents. Such infrastructure equipment shall at all times be maintained in a safe and visually aesthetic manner that is more likely to accommodate the needs or tastes of consumers.

X. Tent Size Limitation

Individual tent may not exceed 10 feet X 10 feet in size.

XI. Local Produce

As a condition of participating in the UDC Farmers’ Market each participating farmer agrees to use only products grown on their farm or products purchased from a producer with production operations located within the Mid-Atlantic region. Farmers are prohibited from supply market products acquired from any produce warehouse or producer broker. The warehouse and broker prohibition does not apply to fruits and vegetables acquired from farmer auction systems or farmer owned cooperatives located within the Mid-Atlantic region.

XII. Produce Quality

Vendors must keep their produce in good condition. Low quality or dirty vegetables, or fruit should not be displayed or sold.

XIII. Food Safety

All items intended for immediate human consumption must be kept at least 30 inches off the ground at all times under a tent or umbrella and be in a safe and sound condition. Vendors are responsible for any damages resulting from sale of unsafe or unsound goods. No potentially hazardous foods should be sold. The use of generators, electricity, open flames or other methods of generating heat or power is prohibited without an appropriate permit from the District of Columbia Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs and the approval of the Fire Inspector.

XIV. Payment of Market Fees

In order to cover the costs daily market fees such as advertising, management and cleanup, each Farmer or Vendor shall pay a seasonal market fee of \$150.00. Please make check, money order, or cashier’s check payable to “UDC CAUSES” and put “Farmers’ Market Vendor” on the Memo line.

XV. Modification to Marketing Rules

The UDC may amend these rules at any time in order to address issues of food safety, or market viability. Market participants will be given sufficient notice prior to the effective date of any modification.

Agreed this on month and day _____, 2015.

Signed:

Market Manager
UDC

Vendor

Director

III. Outreach and Education

- *The Overall Marketing Plan*
- *State and Federal Coupon Programs*
- *Vendor Recruitment*
- *Special Community Outreach Programs*

◆ The Overall Marketing Plan

A market's success from year to year is due to a great extent on how well its value is communicated to the outside world, and especially to target customers. Through designing a diverse and organized marketing plan, which can be based on the analysis of service and sales from previous seasons, the market can respond directly to the community's needs and desires. Every year at the farmers' market, we develop an extensive plan for letting others know about the resources of health, food, and education that the market provides. Part of the success we have found in integrating young people into the market comes from the fact that the market is a legitimate business and the goal is to please the customers with a fresh quality product that they desire. Knowing the importance of the farmers' market, we should respond by giving high quality customer service and the customers trust the inherent value of the product. Understanding the following concepts will help design an effective communication plan for UDC farmers' market.

1. Know and Trust Your Product:

Before communicating the true value of the market to a potential customer base, it is important to know and trust your product. The produce delivered from the farms to the markets each week is a trusted, quality product. The farmers' market growers are well-informed about the needs and desires of the community and each grower is skilled at growing the produce requested by the customers. When selling, it is important that the manager, and other staff are fully aware of the names and culinary uses of all the products at the market. Knowing in advance what will be available encourages loyal customers to return for certain items. You will feel more capable as a marketer if you can provide customers with a reason to shop week after week.

2. Understand Niche Marketing:

There are many reasons why a person might visit and shop at a certain farmers' market – convenience, price, variety, organics, sustainability, and availability. One way to attract customers is through a niche product (something hard to find but popular among people who live in the area). Because the farmers' market is located in

a culturally diverse community, the market has the opportunity to offer niche market products that customers may not be able to find in the grocery store. A survey held year to year on customers' product wants offers a helpful guide for market managers and growers. The end of the season annual Farmers' Market Analysis offers some insight into the desires of the customers, but it might not help you to gauge the desires of the people who are not attending the market.

Obtaining the input of non-customers can be done through a neighborhood door to door survey, speaking to a local nutritionist, or visiting a health center that may indicate what kinds of products are desired by the community but are not found in other local markets.

3. Location as Key:

Location for a farmers' market is key to its success. Having a visible site for passersby to stop and investigate the market is a significant marketing strategy. The longevity of a market's existence also ends up being its own outreach method. The strength of the UDC Market is that it has been situated in the same place for five years and customers have come to rely on its presence there each year. UDC farmers' market, an open space situated at the frontage of the University's Law School on Connecticut Avenue, is a place where folks come to shop for fresh, high quality products.

4. Communication with Your Customer:

Developing a solid communication plan may be the key to reaching customers who are not currently shopping at the market. Communication should also be geared to remind customers who have shopped at the market in the past, but have forgotten when the season begins, or the kinds of products they can expect to buy. As you design methods for targeting potential customers, be cognizant of the following consumer attitudes and behaviors:

- Most of your customers will come from within a three-mile radius of the market.
- People need to be reminded at least three times of the market, whether it'd be through verbal or visual cues.
- Each potential customer receives relevant information in their own way, determined by the activity and events of their days.

The key to reaching customers is in identifying these life patterns and announcing the market in places and in forms of communication that people are accustomed to. The best utilizes a variety of methods, places, and forms.

5. Market the Mission of the Organization:

The UDC farmers' market is not only a business, it is also a training ground for focused service, community involvement, local food systems, and job preparation.

The market is a place to share with others the value of buying and eating locally grown produce. The market manager's task is to communicate the farmers' market mission in every way possible to the community, and the customers. Accepting federal and state coupons is one way to bring customers into your mission but there are many other ways that the market demonstrates the values and vision of a vibrant, local food system made up of healthy, nutritious farm goods.

6. Methods of Communicating with Potential Customers:

There are various ways to reach out to potential farmers' market customers. Be creative in your approach and methods. When preparing your marketing plan, take into account that the message and the messenger are equally important. Word of mouth can be more effective than even the most polished marketing schemes, so consider developing networks of customers and neighbors to spread the word to family, friends, and community members through your loyal supporters. Remember that there is a wealth of free advertisement available, especially for non-profits.

7. Local Businesses:

The farmers' market relies on local businesses to provide us with the support we need to spread the word about the market. Each May, farmers' market staff request space in store windows for large posters that advertise the market. Many businesses agree to give counter space to our flyers as well, so that when people come in to eat or to buy, they can take an advertisement home with them. When talking with the businesses about advertising, we also use this time to check in with business owners to air any issues they may have with the market.

8. Neighbors and Resident Groups:

In several ways, the neighborhood is very active and involved in planning for their future. With this type of activity, often the primary method for spreading the news is by word of mouth. Door-to-door organizing is a great way to speak directly with a potential customer and get them to speak with each other about the food they buy each week at the market. Involve the farmers' market volunteers in distributing flyers in the late spring and until the end of the harvest in October. Youth find this energizing and understand how it fits into the bigger picture of the business. Collaborate with other farmers' market staff as the season nears, to see if there are plans to organize volunteers in other surveying projects in the neighborhood. Once you have a captured audience at the door, it is easy to share information about the market. We intend to hand out coupons to folks who have not heard about the market, as a way to encourage them to come and buy vegetables.

9. Press and Other Media

Residents in the district rely on community newspapers for reliable, relevant, and interesting local news. Be sure to coordinate your efforts with the marketing team, so that you are not doubling efforts to advertise the market. Review previous advertisement efforts in farmers' market files to assess their success and consult the Farmers' Market Analysis to plan for more appropriate advertisement efforts.

Community newspapers boast comprehensive calendar listings. The Washington Post reliably posts farmers' markets in the "Community News" section of the paper. It is essential to find a champion at the newspapers, who knows the work of the farmers' market and can promote us from within. In the least, know the name of the person who is responsible for posting the advertisements. When writing an announcement for the market or for other related events, include the location, brief directions to the site, days and hours of operation, and the products sold. Enhance up the advertisement by using words like fresh, convenient, and affordable. You want to be honest and at the same time, gain repeat customers.

10. Mailings:

Reaching people through the mail can be an effective method of reaching former customers or people you know through other activities and connections. At the farmers' market, as we continue to develop contacts within the District, our database becomes an important resource for communicating the value of the market. Do a general mailing to neighborhood residents by zip code within a three square mile radius of the market site. Include market advertisement in other organizational mailings that go out to potential customers. These mailings may reach people who work in the area and can shop at the market before heading back to their own community.

Farmers' market postcards containing photos of young people holding vegetables or working in the fields can provide great incentive for a resident to attend the market. A message that states the dates, times, and locations of the market may be enough to increase participation in the market.

Consider hooking potential market customers through the issuance of a farmers' market coupon. You may decide to print the coupon in a newsletter or just distribute when surveying door-to-door. Consult your budget and decide how many coupons you would like to print for the season. Redemption has historically been low, but this may change as people learn more about the market.

11. Banners and Sandwich Boards:

Big, colorful, eye catching signs are essential for an outdoor market. The farmers' market owns several sandwich boards and banners that are used on the day of the market. They can be found in the supply bins stored in the sheds. The signs are placed strategically along Connecticut Avenue and are effective for folks driving cars or riding the bus. Also, design other signs for the market itself to draw people's attention to the display. These items may need maintenance from time to time, but will be long lasting, if well taken care of by. When you offer a special on one of the products at the market, let your customers know. Cardboard is hard to display unless you have a firm structure to post it on.

♦ **State and Federal Coupon Programs**

Farmers' Market Coupons:

The United States Department of Agriculture supports the dispersal of farmers' market coupons as a way to boost the vitality of farmers' markets and to heighten food security in low-income neighborhoods. These coupons, given out to low-income mothers, elders in the community, and others, provide a critical resource for both farmers and families.

The FMNP was passed by Congress to accomplish two main goals:

To provide fresh, nutritious, unprepared foods (such as fruits and vegetables) from farmers' markets to women, infants, and children who are nutritionally at risk. To expand the awareness and use of farmers' markets often by under-represented consumers.

♦ **Vendor Recruitment**

Lively, full and diverse farmers' markets have the best chance of attracting a steady stream of customers. Farmers' markets in the northeast cannot easily match the one-stop shopping that is so appealing to people about supermarkets, but we can continue to provide fresher and affordable products to consumers. Managing a farmers' market means recruiting vegetable farmers, fruit growers, food artisans, or other product stands to the market site. Seek out a variety of local products and materials. Try to bring in vendors that offer products that do not overlap with one another so that each vendor has his or her own special niche.

The two main categories for vendors are established by the state: food and non-food. District State permits for vendors are given out according to various requirements and restrictions for each category. It is helpful to organize them into these categories because different recruitment methods and permitting needs are required for selling different types of products. Non-food vendors including artists and artisans, are becoming more popular at farmers' markets. They attract customers looking to buy gifts for friends or to purchase organic gardening products. Additionally, farmers' markets may also provide education and information. At the UDC farmers' market, we enhance sales for all vendors by inviting nutritionists and chefs to share nutritional information or to demonstrate healthy cooking methods. Food Vendors Attracting food vendors to a farmers' market holds incredible opportunities and several challenges for a market manager.

The marketing team should:

- Call confirmed vendors in early April to confirm their attendance on the first market day (fruit vendors usually start later in the season). Ask the growers to predict the harvest date, so that you can inform the vendors.
- Thank you letters should be sent at the end of the market season.

Non-Food Vendors

We have found that vendors who are not selling food items are easier to attract to our market. Non-food vendors can fill a niche at the market, bringing their own homemade ideas and products. Non-food vendors need to acquire vendor permits, but are not subject to the handling and preparation standards that food vendors must comply with. Vendors who provide education or resources for the community are easier to recruit than growers or other producers. Most organizations are excited to send a representative to the market to let the community know what they can offer. We also find that these kind of vendors complement our stand, in that they provide health and nutrition services, medical screening, entertainment, youth-centered community development initiatives, and more.

A popular attraction for customers is the chef demonstrations, coordinated by the farmers' market. Here are some steps to follow when recruiting non-food vendors:

- Contact health centers, restaurants, food nutrition programs, culinary arts programs, Department of Food and Agriculture, and university programs to interest them in on-site education at the market.
- Depending on your search, you may need to craft two separate letters; a general one to community groups who may want to do some outreach at the market and another letter to potential chef demonstrators
- Update the application for vending in addition to the letter and send it to organizations and individuals. Provide vendors with an application deadline, so that you have a confirmed calendar of events.
- Prepare a calendar to be aware of who is coming to the market each week.

◆ **Special Community Outreach Projects**

Community Outreach around your farmers' market has multiple benefits. By reaching out to established community groups, churches, or neighborhood based service organizations, you use already developed networks and relationships to increase your customer base. In addition, you are able to make use of services and resources available to these different groups to widen the audience for your market. Bringing various groups to the market brings richness to the customers' experience. The market itself becomes a place where community is enhanced and deepened, where relationships are cultivated, where connections are made.

IV. Operations

◆ **Staffing at the Market**

Staffing needs for farmers' markets differs greatly from market to market. Traditionally, farmers and their families and friends staff market stands in larger markets. In the case of UDC farmers' market, the staff for the market is comprised of

market manager and a market support team. As the farmers' market manager, is responsible for training staff, managing operations, and ensuring the future of the market through proper record keeping and administration. The success of the market depends on the time, energy, and effort invested in staff, as they will make the implementation and administration of the market much easier.

It is important to have enough staff to accommodate customers and keep the market moving. Too few workers behind the table can impact sales, frustrate customers, and decrease energy in market supports and volunteers. When determining the number of workers for the market, consider the following factors:

- Volume and diversity of food harvested on the farm
- Weather conditions
- Customer needs
- Availability of employee at certain times of the year
- Management style
- Market manager and market supports preparedness for running the market
- Whether or not interns will be hired
- Number of well-trained support staff available to support the needs of the market

Anticipating staffing needs for the market will be easier as you become more familiar with the market operations. While planning the market season, request sufficient time at Program Production meetings to talk about market staffing, training for market supports, and overall market operation protocols.

◆ **Produce Availability and Pricing**

Talking with growers to build market team's knowledge about agriculture and food. This information will help market team talk with customers about the food at the market. Agriculture fact sheets serve as a resources for any agricultural questions asked by customers. Recipes and nutrition materials serve as ways to initiate conversations with customers about local food and health. If market staff don't know the answer to a question, find the answer, and let that customer know the next week. Farmers' market team connection with the growers through the season will serve as a base for communicating information to customers about what they can purchase in the future.

Before the market season, develop an efficient and convenient process for communicating with growers about product availability. Some suggestions to set up a system of determining the products for each week for the market:

- Meet with farmers before the market season (April) to determine when market team will communicate about produce.

- First, talk with the urban grower because their crops are grown specifically for the market. Find out what the grower has available and how much (for example, three crates broccoli, five bunches of basil, and so on). Write this down.
- In market staff meetings with the growers, discuss the general quantities that the market can handle during different parts of the season. Review the prior year's records to see how the market changes over time.
- Create a list of available vegetables to be faxed to local health centers and other community organizations for posting. Many centers have inter-office email and will communicate with each other. Make a contact in the health center who will do this for market team.
- After determining what is available for the week, market team should go to the local supermarket and note the prices of all items the market team are selling at the market that week. The market team may be able to price some organic produce, but most of the price checks will be from the conventional produce. Usually, farmers' market keep our prices at or slightly higher than the supermarket price for the conventional items (not organic).
- Round the prices to the nearest quarter dollar to make things easier for farmers' market work staff running the market (for example, if something is \$1.39 a pound, you might round the price to \$1.50 or \$1.25).
- When the market team begin pricing items, check with the growers. The market team may want to discuss the prices for the upcoming year based on the experiences of the previous year. Get the growers' feedback early and then continue discussing it with them throughout the season. Get their views on the way each item is being sold (by the bunch, pound, bag, or head). Standards are already set up for this that the growers adhere to when they harvest. Remember a cardinal rule: if no one complains about prices, then it means they are too low. The market team know your prices are fair if a few people are complaining. If lots of people are expressing frustration, then prices are too high.

◆ **Setting Up and Taking Down the Metal Infrastructure**

Time and efficiency is crucial in set up and take down of the market. At the farmers' market, both of these are time sensitive and involve managing several people as well as several pieces of equipment. Therefore, the more organized the market team are in management during the set up and the take down, the better it will go. Several suggestions for how to organize people during these two important times are as follows. Also, it is important for the manager to communicate exactly and directly with the market team about what he want them to do. It may be effective to give the team members to work with and make them accountable to one another in each of the tasks. If it is feasible, create short but detailed "To-Do" checklists so that everyone is clear as to what they are doing.

Set Up

As part of the training, the manager should divide the team into set up and take down

teams. The team should be in charge of setting up the tents, putting up the tables, sandwich board and banner. They should hang also, the scales, chalkboards, and bags. Set up proceeds as follows:

1. Load all of the farmers' market equipment into the market van. The following is a list of or the items you will need at each market:

- Tents (2-4 depending on the season)
- Tables (4-6 depending on the season)
- Fold out chairs.
- Bin with paper and plastic bags (full)
- Sandwich boards
- Lit applicable bin with hanging scales (4)
- All of the bushel and half bushel baskets, some smaller ones.
- Bins with materials (pens, markers, receipt pads, rubber bands, tools)
- Metal tubs for displaying veggies with water.
- Bin with vegetable signs.
- Water cooler.
- Chalk boards and chalk.
- Signs to prop against tents.
- Cash registers and calculators.
- Broom and dust pan.

2. At the market site, unload all market equipment and supplies. Unload the tents first and have the tent team set them up while everyone else is unloading the remaining equipment. One person can stand at the back door and hand items to people and another person can stand at the side door. No more than two or three people should unload, as it gets crowded at the back door of the van.

3. Have each member of the tent group grab a tent leg and first pull the legs out as far as they will go. Then, they should step on the tent foot or bolt on the bottom of the leg and push the leg up from the bottom. Each leg will snap into place once on the bottom and then again on the top. Make sure that the pins are in the same holes for each leg. It is important that this happens first to provide shade for the vegetables.

4. When the weather is windy or stormy, the tents are easily blown around by the wind. Depending on the severity of the conditions, different strategies for anchoring the tents can be used. One way to prevent the tents from shifting around on a light wind day is to tie the tents together with rope. With all the legs of the tents connected to each other, the wind cannot pull up the entire structure.

However, on blustery days, the tents, even connected, can be blown around. So on the days when the wind is heavier, it is important to secure the tent legs to the ground by attaching them to buckets of sand, crates of heavy vegetables, or large rocks. In the past, we have placed the tent legs directly into full crates of beets or parsnips to hold

them down, but since the vegetables need to be put on the table to be visible, once a market is set up, customers are eager to shop.

Once all the produce is unloaded, make sure everyone remembers which table he or she is responsible for setting up. Remind the team members to use the bushel baskets for bigger items of high volume and to use the half-bushel baskets for smaller items. The very small baskets should be used for small things we have a limited quantity of like hot peppers, artichokes and herbs. A typical produce display and the appropriate baskets to use are as follows:

1. Greens Table:

Collards, lettuce, bok choy, swiss chard in the long metal tubs with about two inches of water for their roots to absorb. Salad mix in a metal tub without water or in a half-bushel basket. Broccoli, cabbage, and peas in half-bushel baskets or in bushel baskets if we have a large quantity.

2. Roots Table:

Celery, beets, carrots, daikon, turnips, potatoes, onions, and garlic. If there is a large quantity, use the large bushel basket; otherwise, for a smaller quantity, use the half-bushel basket.

3. Specialty Table:

Items like bread, flowers, herbs, beans, honey, okra, and anything else that doesn't have a place on the other tables can go on this center table.

4. Summer or Fruit Crops Table(s):

Tomatillo, peppers, tomatoes, corn, eggplant, cucumbers, summer squash, winter squash, cantaloupes, watermelons. This table may vary depending on availability or to make it easier for customers to see the vegetables on the stand. Once the produce has been displayed, workers should spray all greens with water. Any overstock of greens should be maintained in the same manner. Squished tomatoes won't sell either, and need to be culled from the stand or overstock. The inventory pair is responsible for restocking and maintaining all vegetables during the market.

Market Signs

Recognizable and eye-catching signs are important for the market. The UDC farmers' market has a series of market signs. These signs should be posted at the markets. Permanent signage for the market site would be a great asset to the market. Any advertisement of the market (such as a sandwich board) should indicate the name of the market and site, the city, and dates and times of operation. Multilingual messages ensure that all of our market constituents can become informed. We have sandwich boards that contain these items. There are smaller, blank ones that can be used to advertise specials. Try setting them up a block or two away from the stand and pin up a poster announcing popular vegetables like tomatoes or corn. Signage that is

displayed on the produce stand should have a picture of the vegetable, fruit, or product, some color, multilingual messages, and a place to write the price per pound. Other signage may include harvest dates for certain items, announcements of demonstrations, lists of events, and other information about the farmers' market. Be creative and bold!

Take Down

Focus must be held even to the very end of the market when the take down session begins. By the time we are ready to close the market for the day, both volunteers and staff have been working long hours and are tired. Conditions like this make it very easy for mistakes and frustrations among co-workers to occur. As with the rest of the market experience, the more clearly jobs are given, the more efficiently everyone moves. Below are some steps that will help with closing the market.

1. Send two people to take down the sandwich board and load it into the van. Have them also take down the banner under the clock, fold it, and put it away.
2. Depending on how busy the market is, you may also be able to consolidate the produce on the tables and take down one table or a whole tent while the market is still open. Make sure at least two people remain behind the stand to help customers while the rest begin to take down the stand.
3. At this point the banner behind the stand can be taken down and folded up. If there are not too many customers, have some staff start taking down extra bags and scales. Also, some staff can unload boxes from one of the growers' trucks and line them up in rows behind the scale. The overstock will be poured into these boxes to be weighed and then brought to the shelter. Once closing time arrives, bring the group together to announce the plan of action. When the group is joined together, all focused on a common goal, the work goes faster and is implemented more efficiently.
4. Next, remove all of the produce off the tables, consolidate the crates of produce, and put same vegetables into boxes to be weighed.

◆ Running the Market Smoothly

The success of the market will be based on the personal touch that the team and participants bring to the market.

It's An Experience

Setting up a beautiful stand efficiently and on time is crucial. Though the market staff are running around lifting crates and sweating, customers are anxious to buy despite the fact that you are not ready to sell. After six times of asking folks to please wait and stand back while market staff try to weave a fifty pound crate of potatoes around their eager bodies, market staff may begin to get a little frustrated. One of the most

important things you can do for yourself is anticipate this. Know this mantra: The market can be crazy from 08:00 am to 2:00 pm. It requires a lot of energy from market team. If you prepare yourself for this, you will probably be exhilarated by it.

One way you can ease the hectic nature of the market's opening is by purchasing an "Open/Closed" signage or sandwich board.

Customer Service

The farmers' market constantly encourages our crew to be as friendly and considerate as possible when helping customers. Market manager and a team of market support have a dual role in this regard. Keep an eye and ear on market support and volunteers as they help customers, encouraging them to engage customers and go out of their way to help them. Market team need to be a resource for customers as well. They need to come to market team if they have a complaint, problem or question that a young person can't deal with. Anticipate these needs and step into situations as they come up. Here are some common complaints and situations you may come across during the market season:

- **Complaints about prices.** We price our produce compared to conventional produce and our vegetables are organic, so we feel that we are providing a good product at reasonable prices. We are also willing to look at our prices and if several people complain about the same item, we will revisit the price.

- **Complaints about waiting.** People know that if they want the more popular items that sell out quickly, they should come as early as they can. For this reason, there can be a lot of impatience and frustration if customers see that we are selling out of corn. This is a time you should step in and help the working staff. Market staff may also want to address the crowd, asking for their patience as we try to help everyone as quickly as we can.

- **Theft.** Occasionally a work staff will come up to you and say that they think a customer has walked away without paying. You should ask if other staffs have seen this and after a couple of validations approach the customer yourself. Ask them if they have paid for their item. Tell them that perhaps they forgot, because we didn't see them pay. This is about all you can do and if the person strongly feels they paid, you should let them go.

- **Disturbance.** Occasionally there will be someone who disturbs the market. If market staff see an individual whom you would not feel comfortable approaching, call a community police officer or campus security who will come to your assistance. The market team should try to anticipate these moments and stop them before they occur. Often, ignoring these people rather than confronting them will make them go away. If they are really disturbing the people, ask if market staff could speak to them for a second away from the group.

Maintaining Relationships with Local Businesses

It is important for any existing business to create positive relationships with its neighbors. Shops, stores, and outlets can foster business for each other. These are important relationships for the market manager to foster. When market staff put up posters around the neighborhood, use that time to introduce yourself to the business owners and let them know of any changes to the market for the season.

◆ Events at the Market

During the planning section of this manual, we advise the market team to develop an outreach plan for the season. While the central mission for the market is to provide produce to the community at reasonable prices, the market team also aim to be a resource to the community and try to offer more than just vegetables. This distinguishes farmers' market from a supermarket and can be an incentive for customers to shop with us; they see the positive impact the market team can have on the community as well as on individuals. Additional vendors or events occurring at the market can encourage customers to linger, buy more vegetables, get connected with their neighbors and have an enjoyable shopping experience. At the very least, it is nice to have other market festivals throughout the season. This helps to bring more people to the market and to keep momentum up during the season. Talk with the marketing team to see if they wanted to collaborate on an outreach event at the market or if they would be willing to offer their help as you develop and coordinate events.

Here are some ideas and themes to think about as market's plan events: Who is your audience. What are the types of things customers in general as well as this specific community enjoy. Free food is always a sure fire way to generate happiness at an event. Be sure to check in with the growers about which vegetables will be in surplus this season. Music is another item that will attract people to your celebrations. Our market also had a children activity corner in the market. Allow the market team at least a month to plan an event. This will allow market team some time to play phone tag with possible presenters or vendors. Make sure you check your budget for events within that total when buying food or hiring entertainment for these celebrations.

◆ Keeping Business Records

Keeping track of details, exchanges, and customers for any business is important. When training the new work staff on record keeping at the market, make sure they understand the larger context for what they are doing:

- Why are we keeping these records?
- How is data like this helpful?
- What skills will they be developing when weighing, counting, and recording?

Before changing any of the templates for the market's data, share these ideas with the business manager so they make suggestions and assist market staff in changing the present system.

Record Keeping Tools. Something to carry the market team's record keeping materials is essential. Checklist for record keeping tools:

- ✓ Notebook
- ✓ Plastic file box
 - waterproof, sturdy, enable to carry multiple files
 - different binder to carry your record
 - two file folders: a file with the masters of the recipes, and a section to keep coupons and cash to be deposited
- ✓ Additional folders or organizational tools may be required for your own style
 - Electronic device to record data

Customer Tally. Keeping records of customers allows our market team to gauge how much the market is growing each year. Customer tallies have been taken in a variety of ways. In the past, each market support and volunteer was responsible for making receipt slips for the customers they worked with. At the end of the market, these slips would be counted to determine the customers that had come that day. One method is that our market team have a cash register at the end of the market, we used the receipt slip to count the number of transactions. Another method is to have a customer tally sheet next to the cash box or register and instruct market staff to put a check mark on the sheet each time they sell to a customer. Each of these methods has its strengths and weaknesses and none of them are a completely accurate method of recording. In the early stages of planning the market, decide which method seems most efficient to market team and work to make it as accurate as possible throughout the season.

Compiling Data on the Market Spreadsheet. Spreadsheets are an easy way to keep track of the variety of information collected about the market. These spreadsheets are on shared files and should be used to accurately record the happenings at the market throughout the season. Ultimately, all of the information described above – vegetable weights, revenue, and customers – will need to be inputted to this spreadsheet. The market manager will save a lot of time at the end of the season by reserving a weekly or biweekly time to do the data entry necessary for market records.

V. Evaluation

- *Completing Your Records*
- *Analyzing the Market*

End of the year evaluations are crucial for each program within the farmers' market. They allow for definitive completion of tasks and formal evaluation. Most importantly, they enable us to develop tools and strategies to improve the next season. At the end of your market season, the market team will have several tools available with which to evaluate the market.

♦ **Completing Your Records**

The final records for the farmers' market need to be submitted to the U.S Department of Agriculture as year-end reports. All of the information needed should be found on the market spreadsheet. At the end of the market season, go through the spreadsheet and make sure all of the information is filled in accurately. Notice if the functions on the spreadsheet have worked. If things are highlighted in red or there are asterisks in the cells instead of numbers, this could signify an error. Sometimes the solution is as simple as enlarging the width of the cell to make room for all of the numbers. The red could be telling market staff that there is a high margin of error in the data. It is helpful to look at these numbers because it could mean there was an error in your data entry or at the market. If market staff are having trouble deciphering the spreadsheet, speak with our business manager, your supervisor, or one of the growers.

♦ **Analyzing the Market**

A couple of different analyses will happen towards the end of the market season. At the end of the program, there will be an evaluation of all aspects of the program by the staff and leaders. There will be a section on the farmers' market and market team should make a note to themselves before the analysis if there is anything specific about the market team would like to have feedback on. This could include the new employee training if market team added anything new, the organization of workers at the market, and so on. Be sure to get a copy of this evaluation for your records.

Developing a Market Survey. It is important to begin the surveys as early as possible to get as many returns as possible and to improve market team's results. Focus on creating a survey for the market. It is helpful for the market team to have reviewed past years' surveys and results to have an overall sense of the successes and challenges to be learned from. With the new employee, however, it is best to begin by brainstorming about what would be interesting and useful to know from our customers. After compiling questions from the brainstorm, have the new employee look through the past surveys and see if they missed anything that might be important to their analysis. Do not stick to the format, however, if the market staff see a new need or a different direction in which the survey should go.

Conducting the Survey. The market team will also discuss the methods with which to deliver the market survey. When planning for the number of new employees needed to run a fall market, keep in mind that one or two of the new employees should be reserved for giving surveys to customers. A method would be like having at least one person doing a survey the whole market with two people during the rush hour. Halfway through the market, have the survey person switch with someone who is operating the market. To provide incentives for the new employees, try setting up a competition for who can do the most surveys in a season. Aim for at least 100 surveys by the end of the market season.

Analyzing the Survey. When the survey is completed and the market has finished for the season, the main part of the market analysis is conducted. The market manager and market support gather the information collected on the surveys and create charts and graphs to illustrate the results. The objective is to use customer suggestions, needs, and desires to influence how the market team run the market. The market team need to know convenient market times for people, what products customers are looking for, what market team could do to improve our service, and many other aspects. It is important to have the survey available in several different languages for all of our customers. Additionally, it may also be advantageous to offer the survey in the summer months as well as the autumn to get a better idea of what the majority of our customers want.

Vegetable Analysis. During the market analysis, the market manager and market supports take time looking at the vegetable log sheets that they filled out during the season and the spreadsheets that were created to compile all the information. They also determine how much of the produce was sold at the market versus what was donated to the shelters. There are many possibilities for deepening and expanding the current vegetable analysis. The growers might have some input as to information that would be useful for them to have.

Weekly Analysis and Monthly Reports. At the end of each week during the program, the market manager and market support analyze the markets that they have run. As has been already discussed, part of their analysis is quantitative-counting and recording cash, coupons and customers. The other part, however, is qualitative.

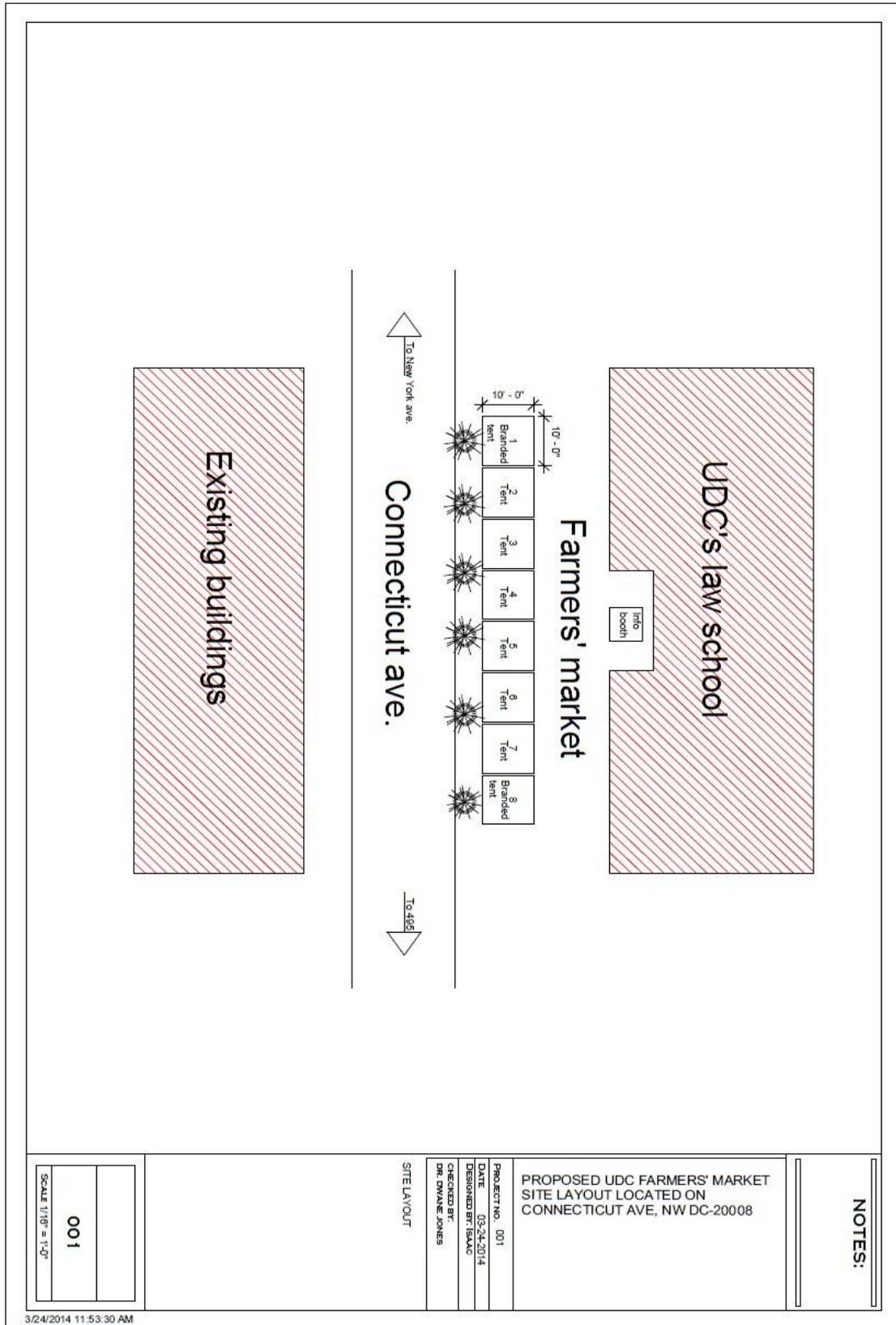
- Did the market run smoothly?
- What parts need improvement?
- Was there a backlog at the cash register?
- How can the market team improve our customer service?

Each crew's reflection are recorded on a flip chart page to be referred to later.

The Market Analysis Presentation. The final presentation of the market analysis is an event and should be treated accordingly. Every year the market runs from May through November and has lasting impacts on the youth, the community, and the neighborhood. The market manager and market support have spent many hours reflecting on the successes and challenges of the market. With all the effort, thought, and time, it is critical to plan the presentation to reflect the importance of what the market manager and market support have created. By bringing people together for the analysis, we are able to gather input both on the results of the analysis and how we came to them. In addition, with an engaged audience, the market manager and market supports see the importance of their work in the future of the market. Taking pictures or filming the presentation can create a valuable resource for future market team or for use at conferences. The presentation and all of the tools used throughout the process of the analysis should be used when developing the annual plan for the next year and adding new initiatives to the farmers' market.

VI. ANEX

• Farmers' Market Layout



NOTES:

PROPOSED UDC FARMERS' MARKET
SITE LAYOUT LOCATED ON
CONNECTICUT AVE, NW DC-20008

PROJECT NO. 001
DATE 03-24-2014
DESIGNED BY: ISAAC
CHECKED BY: DR. DWANE JONES
SITE LAYOUT

001
SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"