



Vendor Tips for Increasing Sales

1. Keep Customers in Front of Your Stall (Sampling, Eye-Catching, Broadcasting)

• SAMPLING

- * The Herding effect is important
- * Don't say, "Do you want a sample?" It's easy to say no. Instead, say, "Have you ever tried...?" They slow down. **You want people to slow down at the stall.** The bigger the stall, the easier it is to get them to stop.
- * Sample your best, ripe produce.

Sampling tips: Piles with toothpicks = grazing, free food for people, they are gone (Do not do this.) You want to keep people at the stall. Sample one slice at a time or out of your hand: **time to tell them 3 things about your product** (where it is grown, how it is grown, etc.) Use a gloved hand for sanitation or a 12-16 inch tong.

Do a comparative tasting at your own stall. Create signs with 3 tips on each laminated card. Do this during winter.

SOMETHING EYE-CATCHING

Put something unusual at your stall – kohlrabi (looks cool), a huge pumpkin, etc. It gives you something to talk about, makes people slow down when passing your stall.

BROADCASTING: When you talk to the crowd

Example: Does anyone know how to... (i.e., putting corn in the dishwasher)

End sales with, "See you next week!"

2. Provide Great Customer Service

- * Educate customers about the varieties, how they are grown, etc.
- * Have tips on how to cook or freeze food.
- * Explain how to make items last longer. Customers will buy more.
- * Make sure to have enough help so that customers do not have to wait too long. Devise a system that helps you identify the order customers have arrived in.
- * Memorize your regular customers' names and greet them with a smile. Try memorizing two new names per week.
- * Educate yourself about what the other vendors at the market have so that you can be of help when customers are looking for certain items. It will also give you ideas for your own stall.

(cont)

3. Increase Dollar-Per-Customer Purchasing

- * Put up signs: “Next week...xxx...will be in.”
- * Offer new varieties (you want to feed the family every week)
- * Try having some selections pre-packaged in family sized portions
- * At busy markets you need to reduce transaction time. Have some items pre-weighed, pre-packaged.
- * Mix and match techniques (Bakers dozens, give them the 13th free); some already in pints; bulk sells more.
- * Salsa pack: tomatoes, onions, cilantro, peppers, etc. (Value added-already packaged)
- * Mixed pepper pack (pretty, eye-catching)
- * Try creative packaging: Nuts packaged in plastic that is shape of a carrot (“Easter gift”)
- * Soup mix: Pre-package everything customer will need for the soup

4. The Key to Direct Marketing is Repeat Buying

- * Know your market. Know your Customers. Are people browsing or are they there to quickly get things they need?
- * Think from the customers’ point of view.
- * Maintain consistent freshness, supply and quality. (Only bring stuff you are proud of.)
- * Farm identity: Use farm name and logo so they know who to come back to. Use as much labeling as possible.
- * Consider frequent buyer programs (works well for things like flowers). Give them a punch card, and after 9 purchases, the 10th is free. (or something similar)

5. Merchandise Your Stall

- * Make a focal point to draw people in.
- * Pile produce up. Tilt the containers. Have it artfully “spill over” from nice containers. Get produce out of tubs and boxes. Use bi-level merchandising.
- * Think in terms of colors, shapes and textures. Balance aesthetics with practicality.
 - Use contrasting color tablecloths.
 - Display items that go well together visually and when prepared. Think about complimentary colors like the red of tomatoes and the green of basil. They go together in all sorts of ways. It’s enticing!
- * Show prices! Tell varieties. Laminate your signs so you can write new prices, etc.
- * Use big signs for branding. Take a picture of your farm. Put the name of farm on it. Laminate. Put on paint stir sticks.
- * Consolidate items as they are sold to give the appearance of abundance, even when there is not abundance.
- * Keep things well organized.
- * Use product props like farm equipment, an old wheelbarrow, etc.
- * Make an investment to have a nice display.

Don’t forget why people are coming to the market: freshness, flavor, from a farm, friendly atmosphere. Use this information in your signs.