



Saskatchewan Farmer's Co-operative Ltd. –

Form 1(c)

Start up Considerations for Local Markets

Who are your customers? What are their needs? What day of the week is best to hold a Market in your community? When does everyone come to town to shop? Is there a 'pay day' for local workers? Each week? Every two weeks? Once a month?

Do you have tourists that come for summer or winter recreation facilities near your town that could bring your Market customers? What location do you have in mind for your Farmers' Market? Rent free places are wonderful! Is this location easy to access and easily found? Will older customers have to climb stairs? Are there washroom facilities available to vendors and customers?

Is your Farmers' Market to be held indoors or outdoors?

Outside Markets easily attract more attention and are easy to set up. Drawbacks to outdoor Markets include: sun, wind, rain. The sun makes baking 'sweat' and vegetable 'wilt', it can be hard on other products such as wax candles. Wind and rain discourages customers and blows your products around, covers them with dust and dirt. An indoor option is good to have in bad weather.

Indoors your Farmers' Market will be less obvious to the public so you will need to consider more signage and that they are attractive and inviting to capture the attention of the public. You may have to pay for the use of a building, unless the landlord considers your Farmers' Market a valuable public service to your community, as in the case of some of our oldest Markets. Building partnerships in the community and providing a hamper of products donated by your Vendors a few times a year may make a 'free ride' more palatable to landlords. If you do have to pay, make sure your market can afford the rent.

Advantages to indoor Market venues can include clean, dry and warm. Your product is protected. Customers are more inclined to linger. You may be able to offer coffee, juice and even a lunch which will all bring the Market money. Some community centres take care of the lunch and use that as the hall rental fee during Markets. Again, networking and building partnerships in the community go a long way to making Markets prosper.

Consider the co-operation of the town. Some local merchants may feel threatened by new vendors setting up 'store' in competition to them. What they need to have impressed upon them is that if a Farmers' Market draws people into town, the other merchants will benefit also, as those customers will then shop in their stores too. Things that the stores sell like coffee, sugar, flour, for example will be bought by vendors in order to produce their Market products.

The Farmers' Market should also be involved in the town's activities. A donation to some local fundraiser shows the town that Market Members are contributing to the community. Some markets have donated to local breast cancer drive, or local hospitals, for example.

Money: the market can make money to cover advertising costs, for example, or funds to cover any of its expenses in a variety of ways. Sources include but are not limited to: sale of table space to vendors, memberships, annual dues, concession or lunches, coffee and raffles, for example of products which are donated by vendors from their tables.