



Farmers Market Planning

Student-run Farmers Markets are a fantastic way to get kids excited about their garden and the food they grow, as well as a great fundraising opportunity. Students harvest extra food from the garden and sell it to their parents, teachers, community members or just fellow students. One garden we work with sells bags of vegetables to students for 5¢ because their focus is getting kids to teach their families about eating vegetables, while others treat it as a major fundraiser, promoting the event to parents and the community and selling the same bag of vegetables for \$5. Whatever you decide for your event, here are some guidelines for planning and running a Farmers Market.

1. Schedule—as early as possible, based on readiness of crops

- a. Schedule date with School Office—check school, district and community calendars to avoid conflicts. We have typically scheduled the markets for Friday right after school. Be sure it is not a Friday before a holiday weekend.
- b. Arrange to have tables (for a large garden, expect to need 3-4 6-foot tables), chairs, cashbox and any other necessary equipment from School Office.

2. Organize—at least one month prior

- a. Identify the school organization or classroom(s) that will be helping to run the Farmers Market. Garden clubs or a particular classroom are some options.
- b. Meet with lead teacher and students to plan event and students' roles.
- c. Determine plans—event advertising, date/times for harvest and preparation, will you be preparing any additional items for sale (salad dressing?), prices, list of signs needed, supplies needed, etc.
- d. Have students begin to create signs, posters, etc for the event:
 - i. Posters announcing event to be put up around campus.
 - ii. Labels for each type of vegetable and herb (and other merchandise) to be sold—signs are placed in front of or attached to baskets.
 - iii. Price lists.
 - iv. Signs directing parents to market.
- e. Begin collecting supplies—especially baskets for displaying vegetables and glass vases or jars (old mayonnaise jars, pasta sauce jars, etc work great) if you will be selling flowers.

3. Announce Event—one month prior

- a. Write announcement—date, time, prices
- b. Place on school website, in school newsletter, local paper, etc.

4. Final week

- a. Confirm schedule and materials needed (tables, chairs, cashbox, etc) with school office
- b. Post announcements around campus—can you also announce on big school boards?
- c. Finalize student harvest schedule with teacher

- d. Prepare any additional items for sale—salad dressing
- e. Obtain change for cashbox
- f. Get donation of bags from local grocery store
- g. Collect supplies needed for market (see list attached)

5. Market Day—presuming market is to be held afterschool

- a. Set up tables, chairs, etc in sale location
- b. By noon, begin harvest and prep of vegetables—harvest, rinse GENTLY in tubs of water, display in baskets and place additional in storage bins to use to refill baskets as needed
 - i. Assign groups of students to harvest various vegetables
 - ii. Review procedures with students—rinse gently, where to put rinsed vegetables, keep all out of sun, etc
 - iii. Rinse in cool, fresh water—large plastic storage bins or coolers work well, change water as necessary
 - iv. Keep all vegetables—before and after rinsing—in cool, shady location
 - v. If possible, cover cleaned vegetables with moist cloth or paper towels until sale starts to keep fresh and crisp
 - vi. Edible flowers must be harvested and rinsed especially carefully and are best pre-packaged in small amounts in small Ziploc bags
 - vii. If you are going to sell prepackaged vegetables in carpool line or elsewhere, put together prepackaged bags of vegetables
 - viii. Package up several bags of vegetables to donate to the principal, office and janitorial staff
 - ix. Cut and arrange flowers in vases—have one adult assigned to manage this with student helpers
- c. Set up table display—tablecloths, baskets of vegetables, signage, cash station
- d. Assign students to different tasks at sale—vegetables, carpool sales or announcements, restocking vegetables, cleaning up garden area after harvest
- e. Assign one adult to manage the cashbox—this adult will be responsible for handling all cash—students collecting \$\$ must give to this adult and the adult will also oversee all change given out, etc. **DO NOT LEAVE CASH BOX UNATTENDED!**
- f. **SELL, SELL, SELL!!!!**

6. Post-Market

- a. Clean up
 - i. Clean up garden debris in garden harvest and market preparation area, clean nearby bathrooms which often get muddy with students washing hands, sweep areas outside of garden that may have gotten dirty, etc
 - ii. Market Sale area—wipe off and break down tables, fold up chairs, etc. to help janitorial staff, sweep area if necessary
 - iii. Take down all signs/posters from around school grounds
- b. Distribute prepackaged bags to staff
- c. Count \$\$, and deliver proceeds to PTA for garden account or as otherwise agreed

Farmers Market Supplies

1. **Baskets**—lots in all shapes and sizes for displaying vegetables
 - A. They will get wet so be sure they are water and color-safe for vegetables
 - B. Line with cloth or paper towels to absorb extra water
2. **Tablecloths**—the plastic, disposable rectangular ones work best because they will get wet and dirty—you can wipe off, dry and reuse following year
3. **Tools for harvesting**—clippers, scissors, trowels
4. **Coolers or other large plastic containers/storage bins** for rinsing/storing vegetables—at least 5-6 large
5. **Plastic bags**—get grocery store to donate a roll or two of vegetable bags
6. **Cashbox**—change available as needed
7. **Vases for flowers**—collect mason, mayo, pasta or other jars for vases
8. **Masking tape**—hanging signs
9. **Signs**—with names and prices for everything for sale
10. **Raffia**—for tying up bundles of herbs or flowers or decorating flower vases
11. **Small plastic bags**—for making small packages of edible flowers or herbs for sale
12. **Paper towels or cloth towels**—for moistening to place over harvested lettuces and other vegetables to keep fresh and for clean up
13. **Broom and dust pan**
14. **Trash bags**

GrowingGreat's Farmers Market Salad Dressing

½ cup Extra Virgin Olive Oil

Juice from 1 small lemon*

2 large cloves of garlic, minced

1 Tablespoon dijon mustard

½ Teaspoon sea salt

2 Tablespoons fresh herbs from school garden, rinsed and minced

(best if you combine two—rosemary, marjoram, thyme, oregano, dill, basil all work well in combinations)

1 8-ounce canning jar, cleaned and dried

Additional supplies—1-cup measuring cup, measuring spoons, juicer or juice squeezer, cutting board, knives

Label—Print labels with the name of your school or garden!



This dressing is easily prepared in an assembly line with students. Have adults pre-chop the garlic and herbs (or responsible older students such as fifth grade can do this with adult supervision). Assign each student one ingredient to measure and add to each jar. Line up jars and have students work down the line measuring and adding their assigned ingredient into each jar.

Place lid on jar and tighten. Shake to mix.

Keep refrigerated until day of sale and hold in cooler at sale site.

** Many people have prolific lemon trees in their yards. Send out an email and see if you can get the lemons donated!*

