

Thank you for sending in your comments and ideas of what works best for you at the farmer's markets! We are so proud to see that all of you agree that our customers are number one. Everyone kept hitting on this key point. Customers are the lifeblood of all our businesses.

We've split the comments into a few different sections. Many of you had similar suggestions and ideas, which we've combined or paraphrased to include everyone's thoughts. The "Best Practices" section is made up of the ideas most everyone felt the strongest about, or had in common with each other. We also have sections for comments related specifically to "Customers", and also specifically for your "Business" or market storefront. Even if you take only one of these suggestions and implement it, it's well worth it!

Best Practices

Always be friendly, listen to your customers and make them feel important. Provide them with an experience that they can't help but tell their friends and family about, an experience that they want to come back to every week.

Build a relationship with your customers. Take a genuine interest in the people that are supporting your business. Learn their names, and take time to make them feel welcome and appreciated every time they visit your storefront. Establish "regulars" that will support your business and spread the word about what you're selling.

You and your storefront are the first impression any customer will have of your business. Make sure your storefronts are tidy and orderly, with your products labeled clearly and displayed attractively. Use signs to clearly describe what you're selling. Dress appropriately – your personal appearance is as critical as your storefront appearance – professionalism matters.

Take your business seriously. Build your market presence by being consistent with attendance at the market, being consistent with products you offer, handing out business cards, collecting an email list, and hanging your banner. Your market storefront is your brand.

Learn to use social media; Twitter, Facebook and a weekly newsletter engage your customers and keep them excited about your products and the market. Spread the word about the fresh52 markets to everyone you meet.

Stay eye level with your customers. Standing whenever possible or raised chairs make you approachable and “open for business”.

Customers

Introduce yourself to the customer so they know your name. Ask theirs as well.

Smile= Sale A Smile and a friendly attitude is something that goes along way. A “Good Morning” today may bring a sale the next time you see them. Welcome every customer to the market.

HAVE FUN! If you're having fun selling your product, your customers will have fun too. The Farmer's Market should be a great experience for everyone who visits, and a positive attitude and high-energy approach goes a long ways towards building loyal customers - not just for your storefront, but also for the whole market.

Offer custom work or special orders. It encourages engagement with clients and makes them feel special.

Business Related

Make a connection with what you have to sell and what the customer needs

SELL your product, with confidence and passion.

If you're selling at a Farmer's Market, you have a unique, high quality product that people probably can't get anywhere else. Make an effort to explain how wonderful your items are, and help your customers feel excited about their purchases and the marketplace. Be knowledgeable about your product and educate your customer on why they should buy (local) from you and their farmer's market. Some market purchases are spontaneous, and reinforcing the sale will bring your buyers back week after week.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT- Give something back to the community supporting your business.

Focus on continually improving your storefront – this can be structurally or even marketing/sales related. Enhancing your booth will keep you challenged and your customers interested.

Become familiar with all fresh52 vendors. Take an interest in each storefront you share space with; get to know each vendor, cross promote each other and support each other. Share marketing ideas – the more traffic each vendor brings to the market the more potential sales there are for everyone.

Set up early and be ready for the start of business before business gets started.

Be sure what you bring to the market is of good quality, a value to the customer, and fairly represented. Provide a unique product or service – something that sets you apart.

Heavily promote your booth before holidays; you have the most intimate take on your business and what you can offer. Take advantage of unique selling opportunities when they arise.

Come prepared - be sure to have enough change to run your business. Make sure you have your signs and supplies to maintain your storefront.

Food Vendors – offer samples whenever possible to create excitement about your business and the market.

Craft Vendors - Run the kids art park one weekend or market to promote your business.