**Steven Thomas** 





Farmers Market: A place where farmers and food producers sell their products directly to consumers.

Due in part to the increased interest in healthier foods, a greater desire to preserve local cultivars and livestock (some of which may not be up to commercial shipping or yield standards) and an increased understanding of the importance of maintaining small, sustainable farms on the fringe of urban environments, farmers markets in the US have grown from 1,755 in 1994 to around 8,000 today.

In excess of 3 million consumers shop and more than 70,000 farmers sell at these markets annually. The United States Department of Agriculture estimates that these markets generate an estimated \$1.5 billion in consumer spending each year.

**Build an economy** around a local food system, support local farmers, create jobs for local urban and rural people, and develop the region's ability to retain more of the wealth spent on food in the area.

# **Food Security**

- Economic viability of small- and medium-size farm operations
- Conservation of heirloom and local cultivars
- Consumer access to healthy, locally grown foods
  - SNAP
  - 🌣 EBT
  - Farm to Cafeteria
  - Food Policy



#### **Benefits to Farmers and Food Producers**

- Expand marketing opportunities
- Premium profit margin
- Less handling, storage and refrigeration
- Provides mentoring and education through contact with other farmers and food producers
- Strengthens civic engagement between urban and rural communities

Farmers earn fair prices for the fruits of their labor by selling directly to consumers.

#### **Benefits to Consumers and Community**

- Fresher, higher quality foods
- Larger choice of food varieties
- Social interaction between producers and consumers, as well as neighbors
- Provide a unique outlet for local artists, craftspeople, musicians and artisans
- Generate foot traffic and awareness of surrounding businesses
- Keep local money in the local economy

**Consumers gain access** to fresh, nutritious, local produce. **Communities regain a** figurative "town square," experiencing the many positive outcomes of foot traffic and animated public spaces.

#### **Types of Farmers Markets**

- Producer-Only
- Producer and Re-Seller
- Produce Market

'Producer-only' means that vendors at the market sell only what they themselves produce — resale of items purchased elsewhere is prohibited and ensures the integrity of a market and its vendors.

### **Characteristics of a Successful Market**

- Management and Operations
- Rules and Regulations
- Promotion and Special Events
- Community Interaction

Some markets are strictly managed, with rules for pricing, quality and vendor selection. Others are much more relaxed in their operations and vendor criteria.

#### **Management and Operations**

- Farmers farm. Managers manage.
- Truth in advertising.
- Playing nice with others.
- Too much of a good thing the pitfalls of vendor selection.

Some markets are strictly managed, with rules for pricing, quality and vendor selection. Others are much more relaxed in their operations and vendor criteria.

#### **Rules and Regulations**

- Standardized market rules.
- Minimum price lists.
- **G** Farm inspection trust, but verify.
- Problem solving 101 keeping it within the market.

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# **Promotion and Special Events**

- Generate free press.
- Social media.
- Websites.
- Produce-specific promotions.
- Cooking demonstrations and guest chefs.
- Cooking lessons for kids.
- Customer appreciation days.
- Musical accompaniment.

Take advantage of every opportunity to promote your market through interviews with the local press and interacting with, Ag organizations, local businesses, government organizations, and nonprofit organizations.



#### **Community Interaction**

- Local Government
- Local Businesses
- Non-Profit Organizations
- Community Organizations
- Customers!

**Farmers market** customers come to buy food for their families, socialize with their neighbors, and participate in the life of their community.



# **PROCLAMATION**

WHEREAS, the Historic Downtown Gainesville Market On The Square serves Gainesville by providing locally grown, fresh, high quality produce and products, and provides local farmers, producers, and artisans with an economic outlet within Gainesville; and

WHEREAS, the Market strives to enhance the quality of life of Gainesville by creating a social opportunity to gather and interact with neighbors, the local farmers who grow our food, local food producers, crafts people, and cottage industries; and

WHEREAS, the Market also provides an outlet for programs conducted to provide an educational forum for consumers from City and County services and local non-profit organizations; and

WHEREAS, the Market also conducts weekly cooking demonstrations using items from the Market to teach customers interesting ways to utilize local produce; and

WHEREAS, the Counct of the City of Gainesville would like to thank Steven Thomas for the countless hours of making the Market thrive and function and collaborating to bring business to the downtown area of our City, Gainesville, Georgia; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that I, C. Danny Dunagan, Jr., Mayor of the City of Gainesville, do hereby proclaim

#### "Steven Thomas Day"

"Volunteer Manager, Historic Downtown Gainesville Farmer's Market"

Presented on this 18th day of September, 2012

C. Danny Dupagan, Jr., Mayo City of Gainesville



In municipalities with a downtown, farmers markets attract visitors to the downtown area, driving customers to local business and making the downtown area a more attractive destination.

**Farmers Market Training Modules** 

- Online training for market managers
- Online training for farmers and food producers planning to sell at markets
- Online training for groups setting up community kitchens to teach food production and business start-ups
- Online training for starting community gardens
- Standardized rules and regulations across all farmers markets