



# Assisting Mississippi Farmers with Direct and Intermediate Marketing

➤ Markets should maintain a page on their website that offers information directly to potential market vendors, whether the market is currently seeking more vendors or not. Work with the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce (MDAC) to embed a link to your vendor page for prospective farmers.

➤ Markets should regularly solicit shopper input via social media and market surveys on desired products and maintain that updated list on their website for potential and current market vendors.

➤ PSAs should be distributed to small radio stations and newspapers in farming counties to attract more vendors to markets.

... *Find out why more than 66% of farmers that sell through markets have sold through farmers markets for more than five years and why almost half of them are using more markets than the previous year.*  
... (Mention market and/or MDAC website).

➤ When feasible, market organizers can offer to attend initial meetings farmers schedule with potential new sales outlets, or host events for intermediate buyers (such as chefs, small grocery retailers, and institutional food buyers) at markets annually.

➤ Create a semi-annual event for current and prospective farmers at markets.

1 Mail a small number of hand-addressed postcards to farmers identified by MDAC staff or through their published directory or from a list shared by Extension Service agents.

2 Work with the Chamber of Commerce to collect free passes and coupons for nearby shops, museums, or other attractions and combine with a small amount of purchased market goods for goodie bags for visitors to take home.

3 Have a tent, ice water or tea, and seating with applications and other marketing materials available for farmers to peruse. Introduce them to anchor vendors and to friendly shoppers.

4 Gauge interest among prospective producers, then set up a time to call and follow-up with the most interested farmers- within the next two to three weeks.

➤ Offer a new vendor packet with tips for product marketing, display, and signage such as those found on **hobbyfarms.com**.

➤ Regularly survey market vendors for feedback on the other outlets at which they sell their products. Survey these outlets for feedback on farmer goods and interactions, sharing this information with current market vendors seeking additional market channels.