



Attracting Shoppers to Mississippi Markets

Alternate between messages to attract new shoppers and returning shoppers. Work on seasonal messages that can be used annually with some variations.

*Example:
Create a Find Your Farmers Markets campaign during National Farmers Market Week, which traditionally happens in early August. Media outlets might be searching for stories about farmers or shoppers or events.*

Local Economy Message

Conduct a one-day price comparison between goods seasonally available at farmers markets with comparable goods at area grocery stores using volunteer college students from the area. Offer some qualitative comparisons as to freshness, describing attributes like color, crispness, or the number of varieties available at each outlet. When possible, include data from discount and high-end stores in the analysis.

Share the results on social media with market farmers, shoppers, and other community members with message:

On a Wednesday in July, 3 area farmers markets had okra grown and picked within 25 miles for sale at \$ ___. No area stores had local okra available. Come see us at (locations) between (hours) on (day)!

or

Are local goods really more expensive? Recently, students did a price comparison on field tomatoes at 3 area farmers markets and 2 grocery stores: All 3 markets were less expensive. Come see us at (locations) between (hours) on (day)!

Identify the difference between varying sustainable agricultural messages (such as Integrated Pest Management, Certified Naturally Grown, and National Organic Standards) and share regularly with shoppers and with farmers on social media, in market newsletters, and on market websites), for example:

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is an effective and environmentally sensitive approach to pest management that relies on monitoring and complementary common-sense practices.

Certified Naturally Grown (CNG) is a non-profit organization offering certification tailored for small-scale, direct-market farmers and beekeepers using natural methods.

Availability of High Quality Goods Message

Count number of varieties of any one item in height of season.

Count the number of goods on a typical market day.

Ask market farmers to share general information about any and all increases in the number of outlets where their goods are available for sale. Share this data regularly with Extension agents and incorporate it in any market press releases. These numbers can also be highlighted in a flyer distributed at area community centers and agencies.

If you still think farmers markets are too small to satisfy your grocery shopping needs:

Last week, ___ market had 80 items for sale and 8 varieties of tomatoes. Try us again!