

A chalkboard sign is positioned in the center of a market stall. The stall is filled with numerous baskets of fresh produce, including ripe red tomatoes, green apples, and peaches. The baskets are made of light-colored wood and some have wooden handles. The background is slightly blurred, showing more baskets of produce. The overall scene is vibrant and fresh.

Bringing New
SOLUTIONS
to the TABLE

2019 ANNUAL REPORT
Farmers Market Federation of New York

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

This "year in review" highlights some of the ways that the Farmers Market Federation of New York lives its mission to:

SUPPORT AND PROMOTE THE VIABILITY OF FARMERS MARKETS THROUGH INNOVATIVE SERVICES, PROGRAMS AND PARTNERSHIPS THAT MAXIMIZE THE BENEFITS OF MARKETS TO SELLERS, BUYERS AND COMMUNITIES

As a board member, I am continually impressed with the vision, creativity and perseverance of this organization, led by our Executive Director Diane Eggert, that is fully supported and enhanced through the work of our board members and partners. This report reminds us of how the Federation works to ensure strong and vibrant markets across the state that provide not just access to fresh local foods, but also support our local farmers and entrepreneurs, and that build local economic vitality and rich, multifaceted experiences.

A prime example of this is the visionary work of conducting a massive customer participation survey across four states, resulting in a comprehensive "toolkit" for adapting farmers markets to match consumer trends. The print resources and free webinar series rolling out in 2020 provide a wealth of ideas and practical strategies that all our markets can readily use. The Federation does the hard work of conducting research, building partnerships, developing resources and implementing programs that all our markets benefit from - that none of could do on our own.

As you review this report, I hope that it also serves as a reminder of the multiple resources and supports that are available - for free! Please check out the website at www.nyfarmersmarket.com and spend a little time perusing all that is offered - and make a commitment to make use of these resources. Your market will be stronger for it.

Best Wishes for a Terrific Market Year,



Margaret O'Neill
Board President



NEW IDEAS
Fresh Bold Bright





SNAP IN PERIL

In 2018, farmers markets across NY were facing the loss of access to the SNAP program with the potential demise of Novo Dia Group, the company that provided farmers with SNAP processing through a smartphone app, Mobile Market Plus. As the only program authorized by USDA to use a smartphone application to accept SNAP, the loss of Mobile Market Plus would have eliminated New York's farmers markets from the SNAP program until a new solution and new equipment could be provided.

A WORKING SOLUTION WITH NY STATE & USDA

In 2019, Novo Dia Group, shored up with funding from New York's Governor Andrew Cuomo, entered into a partnership with Square that provided them a more permanent solution to maintaining the company. Now SNAP can be processed directly through Novo Dia, with fees covered through the Mobile Market Plus license fee. Debit and Credit processing could go through Square. This meant that for the long term, Novo Dia Group would remain solvent, and Mobile Market Plus would continue for the foreseeable future.

In the Fall of 2019, USDA also announced a new partnership with MarketLink to, once again, provide free equipment to farmers markets and direct marketing farmers to participate in the SNAP program. MarketLink is operated by the National Association of Farmers Market Nutrition Programs. In partnership with Novo Dia Group, MarketLink has a goal to improve access to processing, not only SNAP and debit and credit transactions, but a move into other alternate currencies as well, including WIC Vegetable and Fruit Check program and eFMNP. A pilot project for eWIC began with GrowNYC farmers in the fall of 2019, with hopes to roll out to the rest of the state at a later date.

2019 SNAP SALES

SNAP sales in 2019 showed a small decline over 2018. This is in keeping with reported declines overall in sales and customer counts.

	2019	2018	CHANGE
FARMERS MARKETS	\$2,226,221	\$2,366,887	-6%
MOBILE MARKETS	\$20,244	\$59,012	-66%
FARMERS/CSAS	\$108,875	\$119,514	-9%



SOCIAL MEDIA SNAPSHOT

As part of our work to build a farmers market SNAP program, the Federation performs statewide promotions. Our annual social media campaign includes a minimum of weekly posts on Facebook during the main farmers market season. These posts cover what's new at the market, snapshots of SNAP markets, recipes using local, in-season foods, and how to shop at farmers markets. Most posts have resulted in a great deal of discussions, often resulting in 80+ comments on posts.

FOCUS OF SOCIAL MEDIA DISCUSSIONS

- ✓ Products and recipe ideas
- ✓ Specifics of shopping at farmers markets...including prices, freshness, and quality
- ✓ Conversations about the SNAP program itself - including both for and against providing SNAP to people in need, what constitutes need, and the products that should be allowed under SNAP. While there is always a segment of people that do not believe in SNAP, there were many defending the program, defining who SNAP consumers are and overcoming the negative comments.



SNAP Promotion



LIKE & FOLLOW THESE PAGES ON FACEBOOK

- ✓ SNAP TO MARKET
- ✓ NEW YORK FARMERS MARKET FEDERATION

SNAP INCENTIVE PROGRAM

INCENTIVE REDEMPTIONS ARE UP!

The Farmers Market Federation of NY continues to work with various SNAP incentive programs and their funders as a redemption center for their coupons. Overall, the 2019 redemptions increased over 2018, indicating customers are recognizing that farmers markets are an affordable shopping venue when their SNAP dollars are incentivized with additional buying power. The one exception is a slight decrease in FreshConnect redemptions. This may reflect an increase in areas where Double Up Bucks are being used instead of FreshConnect.

PROGRAM	FUNDER	2019 # REDEEMED	2018 # REDEEMED	CHANGE
NYC HEALTH BUCKS HEALTHY SENIORS	NYC Dept of Health and Mental Hygiene	489,667	387,345	26%
FRESHCONNECT CHECKS	NYS Ag and Markets	230,649	243,675	* -5%
HEALTHY SENIORS	Harvest Home Farmers Markets	24,421	22,354	9%
CNY HEALTH BUCKS	Food Bank of CNY	8,105	7743	5%

* Does not cover markets with
NYC HB and Double Up



NEW COURSES & NEW PLATFORM

The FMM Pro Certification Program was launched in 2016. This was a joint venture with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Broome County and Cobleskill University and funded by the NYS FreshConnect Program. The course teaches valuable management skills to students who are current market managers, potential market managers and others interested in the skills required to operate a successful farmers markets. Since that time, we have had well over 90 students taking the online course, with 21 students who have completed the course to earn their Certificate.

The Federation and CCE Broome County are now in the process of revising the course to be sure that all modules and information shared is kept up to date with current trends, environmental impacts and new information. It will also be moving to a new online platform, Teachable. The new platform is a bit more user friendly for both the course students as well as administration. The new and improved FMM Pro: Farmers Market Managers Professional Certification Program will launch in March 2020.

MODULE 1: FARMERS MARKET MANAGEMENT BASICS

- Defining a Market Manager's Role
- Fair and Enforceable Rules
- Setting Up Operational Systems
- Market Organizational Structures
- Farmer/Vendor Recruitment
- Programs and Services for Farmers Markets
- Risk Management

MODULE 2: MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

- Branding and Marketing Materials that Speak to Your Customers
- Fundraising and Stability
- Crisis Management
- Farm Inspection Program
- Food Safety at Farmers Markets
- Nutrition Programs to Grow Your Market

MODULE 3: ADVANCED BUSINESS PLANNING

- Documenting Market Success
- Friends of the Market and Volunteer Management
- Farmers Market Financials
- Conducting and Interpreting Market Research



FMM PRO
CERTIFICATION



FMM PRO
GRADUATE

SOLUTIONS TO REVERSE THE DOWNWARD TREND: SARE SURVEY & TOOLKIT

Reversing a
DOWNWARD
TREND ⇄

Over the past few years, farmers markets noticed a very real decrease in customer attendance. Farmers were reporting a loss of income, a need to find new venues to sell their farm products and a definite concern for the future viability of farmers markets as a direct to consumer venue.

In 2018 the Federation, along with partners of Cornell Cooperative Extension of Broome County, NOFA VT, Community Involved in Sustainable Agriculture in Western Massachusetts, Maryland Farmers Market Association and Maryland Cooperative Extension conducted a multi-state consumer survey to learn what consumer attitudes were toward local food shopping in general, and farmers markets specifically.

The survey results were analyzed by Cornell University's Charles H Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management. The results were issued in a White Paper authored by Dr. Todd Schmitt, Roberta M Severson and Ekubo Sawaura in August 2019 and archived on the Federation website at www.nyfarmersmarket.com.

Using the report, the Farmers Market Federation of NY, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Broome County and Centermost Marketing created a toolkit that farmers markets and direct marketing farmers can use to adapt their markets practices, strategies and policies in response to the consumer trends noted in the Consumer Survey Report. The toolkit can be accessed from the Farmers Market Federation website by providing contact information to allow the project partners to follow up on how the toolkit was put to use.

KEY FINDINGS OF THE REPORT

- Local food is valued by all consumers
- Convenience is king
- Customer service matters
- Perception that markets are expensive
- Pricing needs to be displayed
- Demand for diversity of items and vendors
- Farmer-customer relationships don't motivate all
- Many intimidated by face-to-face farmer transactions
- Markets should be environmental stewards
- Customers want to feel like VIPs

Funding for this project is supported by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, through the Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program.



TOOLKIT
FOR ADAPTING FARMERS MARKETS
TO MATCH CONSUMER TRENDS



MARKET MANAGER SUCCESSION PLAN

Farmers markets increasingly find themselves in search of a new manager. With a market that has a strong organizational structure and support system, losing a market manager is an inconvenience, but is overcome through the due diligence of a strong market governing structure.

However, many of the markets in New York State are not operating with a strong internal governing body, with many operating under the leadership of one individual who is the market manager, the key decision maker and without any support structure. Those markets can be quite vulnerable if, and when, the manager steps down.

The Federation stepped in to help build guidelines to help those markets search and secure a new farmers market manager. The resource provides a step by step guide on searching for a replacement farmers market manager, with instructions, guidelines and templates. The resource is located on the Federation website.

MARKET HARASSMENT POLICY

Reports from several farmers markets show an increase in harassment incidents at farmers markets. Some are cases between vendors, others are perpetrated by customers against market vendors. The result is that markets have asked how best to handle harassment cases. The Federation responded by created a harassment policy for markets to institute.

The policy is based on New York State's mandatory Sexual Harassment Policy for workplaces. While farmers markets do not, technically, meet the criteria for a workplace under this policy, we do think of them as work places for our farmers and vendors. This is where they are making their living by selling their farm products through the market. The Farmers Market Harassment Policy is a guideline on how to handle harassment, whether sexual or otherwise, at a farmers market.

The guideline recognizes the different market organizational structures, as well as the multiple forms that harassment may take. Definitions are offered, reporting processes and investigations are discussed, and potential responses to incidents of harassment are shared.

In addition to policy guidelines, a training presentation is offered as a way to convey the market's policies to market staff, farmers and vendors, and others participating in the market. Once the policy has board approval, it will be available on the Federation website.

2019 Financials

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS OF JUNE 20, 2019

ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Cash	\$442,317
Investments	\$389,018
Accounts Receivable	\$228,055
Prepaid Expenses	\$815
TOTAL ASSETS	\$1,060,205
LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	
Current Liabilities	
Accrued Expenses	\$8,927
Deferred Revenue	\$64,756
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	\$73,683
NET ASSETS	
Unrestricted	\$986,522
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	\$1,060,205

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES AS OF JUNE 30, 2019

SUPPORT AND REVENUE	
Support:	
Contributions and Grants	\$700
Membership	\$7,093
Total Support	\$7,793
Revenue:	
Government grants	\$275,943
Coupon Service Fees	\$141,762
Program Fees	\$9,542
Interest	\$4,275
Gain on Investments	\$7,339
Total Revenue	\$438,861
TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE	\$446,654
EXPENSES	
Program Expenses:	
Wireless Technology	\$171,948
Training	\$113,758
Total Program Services	\$285,706
Supporting Services:	
Management and General	\$57,193
Fundraising	\$1,577
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$344,476
Excess of Support & Revenue Over Expenses	\$102,178



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