



Front Porch Event – Fast Facts

Title: **Farmers Markets**

Event Date: Thursday, December 7, 2023, Supporting slides and Fast Facts Summary can be found at <https://www.uslavender.org/front-porch-event-farmers-markets>.

Featured Presenter: **Julie Haushalter - White Oak Lavender Farm & Tina Schooler – Raider West Lavender Farm**

Facilitators: **USLGA Education & Research Committee, Barbara Cesiro & Mary Pilotte**

Tech Lead: **Jenny Connors**

Event Goal: Farmers markets can be a beneficial sales outlet for lavender farmers. Hear from two distinctly different USLGA farms that utilize farmers markets to promote their unique products. Learn tips and tricks to have greater financial impact, with less effort, hassle, and unforced errors at your first market event.

Terms used during the event:

- **Rack cards:** A term used for promotional materials that are staged in a small clear rack. The cards share [farm, product and contact information](#). These are displayed and distributed at high-traffic events such as farmers markets, hotel lobbies, chamber of commerce/tourism sites, etc. Essential information included on rack cards are farm name, website, map to location, and brief offering overview. A clean, clutter-free look is most impactful.
- **Token:** A small gift or give away item, to leave customers or prospective customers with a positive encounter and something that carries brand/farm and contact info.
- **White labeling:** According to [Investopedia, white labeling](#) is “products [that]are made by one company and packaged and sold by other companies under various brand names. Benefits of white labeling include the ability to offer a wider variety of products faster, without having to develop internal expertise for each product/category.

Key Points Summary:

- Farmers markets as a sales outlet offer an opportunity to add revenue, engage the local community, test market products and more.
- Pulse poll #1: **63% of the FPE audience does NOT sell at farmers markets**, with 37% currently utilizing the outlet.
- ***Pro Tip***- Eye contact, smiling, and having a token to offer market guests along with an attractive/inviting booth with visible signage are keys to success at a farmer’s market.

- Pulse poll #2: **What products do you sell (or plan to sell) at the Farmers Market?: 96% Lavender fresh/dried, 79% Essential Oil, 75% Culinary lavender, 61% Home products, and 29% Plants.**
- Several **techniques can be used to increase sales** at farmers markets including: Offering product guides/uses, conducting demonstrations, using signage to direct foot traffic, creating frequent buyer programs, and bundling products for a “bow and go” quick gift purchase.
- ***Pro Tip***-Repeat customers already familiar with your product love product demonstrations and frequent visitor cards to earn future discounts or free product. As the saying goes- *it is less costly to keep an existing customer than to cultivate a new one.*
- For farmer’s markets to be successful for your farm, you must **know the expenses you will need to cover**, keep good track of your sales, and try not to spend too much of your revenue on other booth products.
- **Different Farmers markets have different goals**, patron desires, etc. All however are community oriented and having a consistent presence matters to build rapport and brand awareness. Do you have what your market goes desire?
- ***Pro Tip***- Community building begins with being a good vendor neighbor, participating in various Farmer’s Market programming/initiatives/dates, and then reaching out to customers/market goes between markets to keep interest high.
- Pulse poll #3: **Are your local farmers markets offered seasonally or year round? 85% Seasonal, 15% year round.**
- **Having the “right” equipment is key** to having a smooth, safe and reduced struggle day at the farmers market. Key items include: expanding/collapsing wagons, folding tables, non-glass display items, and a vented roof sunshade canopy (improved safety).
- **Market safety and understanding local market rules** are an important priority. Understand what you are/are not allowed to do at the market (taste testing, sign size requirements, vendor ID/insurance, set-up procedures, etc.). Likewise, the threat of bad weather (and or high winds) at Farmer’s markets is real, so have the proper equipment (sand bags/weights, etc.) and a plan for quick tear down.

Q&A Summary:

- Attendees had specific questions regarding terms used during the event. **See TERMS section** of this document for summary of terms used.

Q: If it takes more than one person to comfortably work a market, how do you pay friends or hired help?

A: Pay can be in the form of an hourly rate, with or without a sales bonus.

Other Session Notes:

Attendees – 37