



FIRST STEPS – A GUIDE TO SETTING UP A FARMERS' MARKET

THE ASSOCIATION

Kent Farmers' Market Association provides support to market managers and increasingly to stallholders. It is run by volunteers, who are also involved in running their own markets around the County. Our focus is on providing practical support and networking for existing and potential markets and market managers and we have a website to help us achieve this.

NEW MARKETS

This advice for setting-up a market is based on our experience and the lessons learnt by market managers when operating their own markets. It is available freely to anyone who has an interest in farmers' markets. We have worked with a number of new markets across Kent and successfully helped them get underway and would be pleased to discuss what's involved if you are interested in setting up a market in your community.

To begin though, we would encourage you to adopt a set of guiding principles to define why you think that the Market will bring benefits for your shopping community, and these could include:

- The creation of a hub in your community. A place for shoppers to meet and buy quality, local food at fair prices.
- The setting up of a low cost retail outlet, enabling producers to obtain a regular cash flow and a fair return for their labour through direct selling and the elimination of middlemen.
- Ensuring direct contact and feedback between customer and producer, so you can be sure as to how produce is grown – food always seems to taste better when you know where it comes from!
- To support more environmentally-friendly production practices, such as organic or pesticide-free fruit and vegetables and less packaging, and rearing of free-range animals, which respects their welfare.



- Encourage healthy eating through the availability of fresh, in season, high quality produce at realistic prices.
- Supporting local economic development initiatives and rural employment by encouraging small business and thus keep money within the local community.

KFMA believe that shoppers really appreciate that there is a difference that farmers markets can make to the local communities; these centre round three areas:

Localness

Kent's Farmers' Markets should predominantly offer produce that is grown, reared, caught or processed from within Kent, Surrey or Sussex. Processed food and drink should contain as many local ingredients as practical. Within thirty-five miles is ideal, but for some, that could include Essex and even Nord Pas De Calais so, as you can see, we need to be reasonable in how we interpret this!

Fair trade and traceability

Stallholders should be involved in and/or knowledgeable about the production of everything they sell. A sensible guide means products must **never** be bought from wholesale markets, or any other source where meat, fruit or vegetables cannot be traced back to the farm where it was raised or grown.

Quality and nutrition

Customers really like and value high quality, fresh produce. It should be produced in ways that conserve the environment and respect animal welfare, (free-range for example). It must also comply with all relevant regulatory standards.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT FOR NEW MARKETS

New start-up markets should consider gathering the following basic information to help them set up and operate as a farmers' market:

Constitution/business plan

This doesn't need to be too detailed at the outset; simple and easy to understand is best, but you will need to do a reasonable amount of planning to get your market underway; as a minimum, you should try and set out:



Also see:
[The Market Plan ▶](#)



- The aims and objectives of the market.
- How the market will be managed and financed.
- What criteria will be used to select stallholders, and the agreement/ registration form to be used with stallholders.
- List of stallholders and produce that will be available.
- Basic information about the market. For example, location, stallholders, opening times, car parks and so on.

Lead person/Market Manager

Ideally you should nominate him or her to be the main contact for shoppers, stallholders and others.

Basic marketing and promotional information

To help publicise your market, produce flyers, leaflets, postcards, an article in the parish magazine and don't forget social media like Facebook and Twitter. Your promotional material should include:

- A description of the market, including what's on offer.
 - Market dates, (for example, day of the week and frequency of market and special events).
 - Location and Postcode of market (used to link to a Google Map to help shoppers find the market).
 - Any pictures showing the market, if already available.
 - Using a website, and social media.

The market manager's job description

This gives a fair indication of the things that should be undertaken to keep the market on a steady course over its initial settling in period. Not all markets will want a permanently designated or paid for manager, this is all down to local



Also see:

[Using the media ►](#)



Also see:

[Market Manager's Job Description ►](#)



circumstances, but the job description highlights the range of activities which need to be maintained on an on-going basis to ensure the market's long term success, regardless of how those activities are allocated.

OBLIGATIONS – LEGAL AND OTHER

Regulations

A farmers' market is a food handling retail outlet, consequently you and your stallholders must be aware of the general rules and regulations that might apply to yourselves as market organisers and the standards that your stallholders will need to comply with, for example, the requisite Food Safety and Trading Standards required by your local council. The market could at some point be reviewed by Local Authority inspectors to ensure that minimum standards are adhered to, and they may make suggestions for improvements, they also have the powers to close the market, but so far, this hasn't been necessary in Kent.

Planning

You may also need to consult on any road closures or if there may be any impact on local traffic.

Ideally, one person in your committee should have sufficient knowledge of the legislation covering each of these areas and should attend a Food Hygiene course (often run by local councils) and then attend requisite refresher courses to keep up to date. It is also recommended that you should have someone attend a First Aid course.

Risk Assessment

As your market is open to the general public you should undertake a general risk assessment in order to identify and eliminate potential hazards. Much of this is common sense but, if you have any doubts, ask for specialist advice.

As a general rule, we would encourage market managers to establish good working relationships with their local councils to ensure that they are operating within the law at all times.

Insurance

All stallholders must have sufficient Public and Product Liability Insurance, and this will need monitoring on a regular basis by the market manager.



It is also essential that your market is fully insured to protect you from potential accidents, and each market manager will need to satisfy themselves that this is in place. It needs to cover those running the market, the venue and any advertising elsewhere, such as roadside banners, which in particular may not be covered by the venue's existing insurance policy.

The Association has negotiated an attractive individual market and County wide insurance package with the NFU (Head Office), which is available to members. For information about this please contact Bob Taylor – bob@kfma.org.uk

The insurance package includes:

- Public Liability (with a £10 million indemnity limit).
- Employers liability* (with a £10 million indemnity limit).
- Money (theft up to £1000 during market hours).
- Property (belonging to the market (up to £2500)).

* This is a legal requirement even if all members of your committee are volunteers they are classified as being 'employed'.



Disclaimer

The information and advice and guidance on this site is provided in good faith, and is for general purposes only, and any reliance you place on such information is therefore at your own risk. Weather conditions and seasonality may impact availability of produce and stall holder attendance at markets, and so we cannot guarantee the accuracy of all information.

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