

# Establishing a Worksite Farmers' Market

*In order to increase employee access to healthy food options at work, the Network for a Healthy California—Worksite Program is encouraging employers to implement this easy-to-use guide that shows you how to set up and maintain a farmers' market at or near your worksite so that you and your employees can conveniently shop for fresh fruits and vegetables every week.*



## BEFORE YOU GET STARTED

If you are interested in setting up a farmers' market at or near your worksite, here are a few things to consider before you get started:

- Assess whether your worksite or a nearby location, like a community park, has enough space to accommodate a farmers' market. Your location should have enough space for the farmers to park their trucks and drop off their loads. There should also be enough space for each farmer to set up their 10'X10' booths, and for customers to easily and safely walk among the vendors and other customers.
- Make sure you have a large enough customer base to support a farmers' market. As a general rule, a minimum of 300 regular customers is needed to support a very small farmers' market, which has five farmers/vendors.
- Determine whether the farmers' market site has:
  - Electricity and water in compliance with local codes and laws;
  - Disabled person and health code compliant restroom facilities within 200 feet for use by customers and vendors;
  - Adequate storage for market supplies and equipment;
  - Adequate parking, if the customers include people from the community;
  - Enough trash receptacles to handle the volume of farmers' market trash; and
  - Appropriate zoning. Check with the local zoning board, planning department, or other organizations that may have jurisdiction over the site to make sure the farmers' market is located in a legally feasible place.

## GETTING READY TO OPEN THE FARMERS' MARKET

Once you've determined that a farmers' market is right for you, here is what to do:

- Organize a worksite team to help walk through the steps in setting up the farmers' market.
- Determine whether you want to go with a farmers' market association approach or work with local farmers directly to set up a farmers' market.
  - With the farmers' market association approach, contact your local farmers' market manager to discuss your interest in organizing a farmers' market at your worksite. The manager and his/her farmers' market association can help to coordinate most of the logistics associated with market operations, including obtaining the license and permits and securing the appropriate number of local farmers. Your role at the worksite will be to provide space for the market and to promote it. To identify a farmers' market manager near you, go to the California Federation of Certified Farmers' Markets Web site at [www.cafarmersmarkets.com](http://www.cafarmersmarkets.com).
  - If you do not have a farmers' market association in your area, you can work directly with one or more farms to supply produce for a farmers' market. Typically, the farm representative will coordinate most of the external logistics, such as handling insurance issues, while the worksite will provide the space for the market. To find a list of farms near you, go to <http://guide.buylocalca.org/> or contact your local Farm Bureau.

- Determine when you want the farmers' market to open for business, the day and times of operation, and when you want the farmers' market to close for the season. Farmers' markets typically operate from early May to the end of October, are open one day per week, and stay open to the public for four hours per market.
- Determine the number of fruit and vegetable farmers that are right for your farmers' market size and customer base.
- Determine whether you want to have hot food vendors, sell flowers, sell non-produce items, and have entertainment. A farmers' market manager can help you secure these vendors.
- Develop a list of farmers' market rules. Review and select from sample rules at [www.davisfarmersmarket.org/info/DFM\\_Rules.pdf](http://www.davisfarmersmarket.org/info/DFM_Rules.pdf). If you are working with a farmers' market manager, he/she will typically draft the rules for you.
- If you expect to have low-income customers shop at your farmers' market, consider accepting Food Stamps/Electronic Benefits Transfer. To find out how to accept Food Stamps/Electronic Benefits Transfer at your farmers' market, visit [www.ebtproject.ca.gov/farmers.aspx](http://www.ebtproject.ca.gov/farmers.aspx).
- Ensure that all permits and licensing documents have been completed.

### PROMOTING THE FARMERS' MARKET

Once your farmers' market is ready to go, here are some good ways to promote it:

- Let your employees know when the farmers' market will open, the day and times of operation, and when the farmers' market will close. Use email, flyers, posters, word-of-mouth, and/or your company's intranet to share this information. If feasible, also promote the farmers' market in the

nearby community to increase your customer base. Visit [www.networkforahealthycalifornia.net/fitbusinesskit](http://www.networkforahealthycalifornia.net/fitbusinesskit) for sample materials.

- Send weekly emails or flyers to employees reminding them of the farmers' market.
- Set up promotional activities like food demonstrations and sampling at the farmers' market to give employees the opportunity to taste different kinds of fruits and vegetables.
- Have employees submit their favorite recipes featuring farmers' market products and distribute the recipes to all employees.
- Develop an employer-sponsored coupon program where employees are offered a discount off their next farmers' market purchases. Visit [www.networkforahealthycalifornia.net/fitbusinesskit](http://www.networkforahealthycalifornia.net/fitbusinesskit) for a sample.
- Offer a prize, like a t-shirt or apron, to the employee that buys the most produce from the farmers' market during a one-month period. You may need to create a simple tracking card that collects each participant's monthly produce purchases.

