

A publication of the



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Kentucky Farmers' Market News

Powell County Market Enters 25th Year

By Janet Eaton, project manager

The Powell County Farmers' Market is one of the five pilot markets testing out the EBT/debit wireless machines for the KFMA.

Moments off Mountain Parkway you can find one of the two locations for the Powell County Farmers' Market. Located in the parking lot of the Red River Museum in Clay City on Tuesday and Thursday mornings the market offers a taste of the great foods the mountains have to offer.

On Wednesday, Friday and Saturday you may find the market in Stanford on East College Avenue.

Roland MacIntosh who lives in the county began selling there a couple of years after it opened. He offers homemade breads, vegetables and agate.

"I'd love to sell everything I grow at this market," said MacIntosh, "but I do go to Lexington Farmers' Market too, especially to sell my agate."

"Most of the folks that shop the market I know personally here and that makes for a pleasant market," MacIntosh continued.

The market is supported by the local Cooperative Extension office, especially the Agriculture and Natural Resources agent, Mike Reed.

Reed is looking forward to working with the new EBT/debit program since he

sees real potential for each vendor to make more sales.

"This program can be a great boon for the market by giving more customers access to fresh, local produce," said Reed. "Maybe this will also help draw more vendors to the market with a wider variety of products."



If vendors decide to offer more value-added products they won't have to go far to get some help. The Powell County Extension office has a certified kitchen on their property for use by local folks.

If processors have more success with their value-added products at the market it may encourage them to "go commercial" with the product. Thus, adding more income in the farmers' pockets.

To learn more about the Powell County Farmers' Market you may contact Mike Reed at (606) 663-6405.

Look Inside For...

- Scales are still an Issue—We need your comments!
- Free hand wash and sampling stations
- The benefits of Sampling at Farmers' Markets

The Benefits of Sampling at Farmers' Markets

By Dr. Tim Woods, University of Kentucky
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Sampling is hard work. There is a lot of planning to meet Health Department compliance and to offer samples in a way that truly entices the customer to try your product. Many vendors give up and choose not to offer samples at all.

An interesting research project is underway this summer seeking to actually measure the benefit of offering samples of different kinds of products. How does sampling impact customer interest in fresh

produce versus cheeses, breads, jams, salsas or various meat products? How does it affect the likelihood to purchase or repurchase? And the bottom line - how does sampling impact the vendor's sales?

The University of Kentucky will be working with a variety of market vendors collecting data from vendors and visitors at different markets this summer to help determine the benefits of sampling. We know sampling is effective in food retailing in general, but relatively little research has been directed to the

farm market environment.

Stay tuned. There is a lot we all need to learn about sampling effectiveness and best practices, what products are most conducive to sampling, and even response differences across markets. This KFMA/USDA project will help us get a much better handle on our sampling efforts.

Feel free to contact me if you have questions or further interest in the project. Results will be made available through the KFMA, the New Crop Opportunities Center, and our UK Extension offices.

Handwash/ Sampling Stations Available

KFMA is helping markets get compliant with the Kentucky Department of Public Health's sampling protocol this coming season. Through grants from the USDA and the Agricultural Development Fund, KFMA is offering easy to use and portable handwash stations and sampling kits to member markets.

"Establishing a sampling protocol that was acceptable to the Kentucky Department for Public Health and doable by farmers was a long hard struggle," said Janet Eaton, former KDA farmers' market specialist. "However, farmers are finding it hard to bring all the required equipment to the market when their truck is full of vegetables, tents, tables and more."

As a consequence, many farmers are not using the

program and increased sales from sampling are not being seen consistently across markets.

Small markets – 10 or fewer vendors – should be able to share the sampling equipment and eliminate the need for individual vendors to bring separate equipment.

The kit is perfect for cooking demonstrations at the market. Some markets will decide to work with their local Extension office so the office retains the kit and Extension folks hold cooking demonstrations at the market. Vendors could then offer samples without separate equipment on the days of the cooking demonstrations.

Successful applicants will be offered funds to hold safe food handling demonstrations that may be cooking demonstrations.

This is all the more reason to work with your local Extension office that may be able to coordinate and organize the cooking demonstrations.

If your market is interested in one of these kits please visit the KFMA website at www.kentuckyfarmersmarket.org and visit the news page to print the request form. These forms are due by May 29.



A compact handwash station makes it easy to have hand wash facilities at your market.

WE NEED YOUR COMMENTS—Scales

Last year KFMA board members met with representatives from the Kentucky Department of Agriculture's Division of Regulation and Inspection to discuss requirements for scales at farmers' markets. As of now farmers' market vendors are under the same requirement for scales as larger entities such as Wal*Mart.

From the latest Kentucky Farmers' Market Manual here are the current regulations----*Scales must be for legal trade and made for commercial use. A legal-for-trade scale will be marked with a serial number, a model number, Have class III designation on the identification plate or seal and all scales must have an NTEP (National Type Evaluation Program) certificate of conformance. The scales must have been manufactured after July 1, 2003 to have this certificate.*

Scales suitable for farmers' markets will have a 1/2 ounce or smaller or .01 pound or smaller increment.

Scales marked "Not Legal for Trade" are not acceptable. Baby scales or kitchen scales are two types of scales that are not legal.

There is no problem with hanging scales as long as they meet all of the criteria. Vendors selling scales should be able to inform the purchaser that a scale is handbook 44 compliant. There are some hanging scales that do not meet these criteria, so get the assurance from the vendor in writing.

It is the responsibility of the scale owner to have the device inspected and maintain the accuracy of the scale. Scales should be inspected annually.

It is illegal to conduct business in the state with an unapproved scale. Inspectors from KDA's Division of Regulation and Inspection are charged with ensuring that this law is enforced. These inspectors can and will shut a vendor

down for the use of illegal scales.

Another requirement that creates a problem is that there can be no external adjustment mechanism. This leaves vendors with little option other than to buy a new digital scales. Since many of us are trying to attract more vendors to our markets the cost of scales along with tent, tables and other equipment make potential vendors think twice about trying out markets.

During our meeting with KDA officials we discussed the possibility that a market would post a sign that the scales at the market were not certified and that consumer should consider all transactions as between them and the vendor. This would be sort of a buyer beware situation. KDA officials asked us to poll the membership of KFMA to determine if this was something farmers' markets might be interested in.

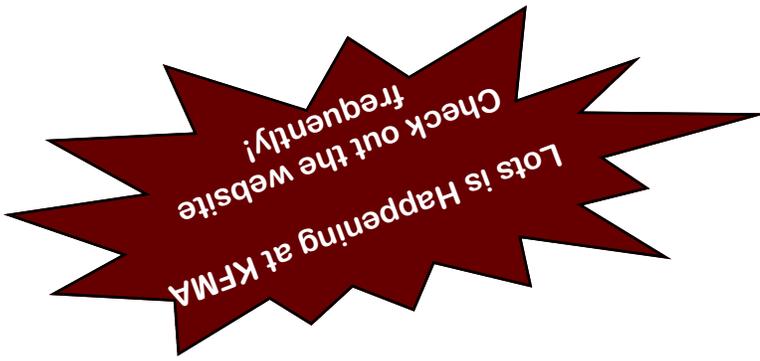
Inspectors have inspected farmers' markets and have shut down vendors. If it hasn't happened in your market consider this issue as if your market had to pass this inspection right now. Who would get shut down?

PLEASE give us your comments on this issue by e-mailing us at info@kentuckyfarmersmarket.org or by dropping us a note at:

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**We Need Your Comments
on This Issue**



Kentucky Farmers' Market Association
c/o Stephanie Wetzel
431 Hackett Pike
Richmond, KY 40475

On The Web

Check out —

- Pre-application for next round of EBT/debit project
- Application for FREE hand-wash station and sampling kit
- Information on applying to accept EBT cards

FMPP Update

The USDA grant work is progressing well. All five pilot markets have completed their applications to the Food and Nutrition Service to be food

stamp retailers. Four have received their approval with the fifth market to follow soon. The Franklin County Farmers' Market has received their wireless machine and hopes to offer the service when they open in May.

KFMA is developing a distribution protocol for the next round of machines through the Agriculture Development Fund.

In order to determine interest in these machines a pre-application is available on the web site to determine how many markets might qualify.

Check the web site frequently for updates.

**ENCOURAGE OTHERS
TO JOIN KFMA TO
SUPPORT A UNIFIED
VOICE FOR
KENTUCKY'S FARMERS'
MARKETS!**

E-mail to
info@kentuckyfarmersmarket.org
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