

# Tips for Starting a Farmers Market at Your School

*-insights shared from our first market season-*

## Why?

### FOOD ACCESS AND COMMUNITY BUILDING

Schools are centers of gathering and learning. Jesuit schools seek to nourish the whole person, *cura personalis*--mind, body, and spirit. School-based Farmers Markets promote learning about local food systems through engagement, provide access to healthy foods, and build community awareness. It offers young people with the opportunity to get involved as entrepreneurs and changemakers who will shape community and environmental health.

## Grower Requirements

### LIABILITY, TAXES, AND LICENSURE

Growers should hold responsibility for the safety of their products and following local regulations. It is suggested that growers follow Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) to ensure product safety. Our growers are required to submit a copy of their tribal business license, proof of holding food liability insurance, and to sign an agreement accepting full liability for their products. The seasonal Farmers Market utilizes a special events folder from the state sales tax office to meet local tax requirements.

## Student Involvement

### SUPPORTING STUDENT ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Our students expressed desire for the opportunity to participate in the market! While these booths are educational and technically must be donations-based (given the absence of licensure, insurance, and tax collection), students enjoyed the process of creating model businesses vending items like pickles, earrings, bread, and salsa. In the future, a framework may be created to provide seed money for these student-led ventures to attain licensure, etc., to expand their potential as businesses.

## SNAP/EBT

### AFFORDABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

Offering SNAP/EBT benefits at the market ensures that the healthy, local foods are accessible to all members of your school community. The application through FNS takes a long time, so it is recommended to begin this step *early*. Many options are available to attain a free point-of-sale (POS) device and free or reduced-cost third party processor for your Farmers Market. Be sure to talk to your school business office to verify that you can facilitate these transactions as you will need to collect the funds from FNS and disburse them to the growers.

## COVID-19

### PANDEMIC SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Farmers Markets can be a key part food security during the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic. Many state extension offices have already produced guidelines for markets! Some example measures we have implemented include spacing booths by 12 feet, practicing mask wearing and social distancing, one-way traffic, only permitting growers to handle the food products, limiting the number of people present, and holding the market outdoors.

PLEASE REACH OUT TO KATIE CHUSTAK AT [CATHERINECHUSTAK@REDCLOUDSCHOOL.ORG](mailto:CATHERINECHUSTAK@REDCLOUDSCHOOL.ORG) WITH ANY QUESTIONS!