

Tool Box



Extension
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Funding for this project was provided by the United States Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Marketing Service Farmers Market Promotion Program.

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Farmers Market Guide to Radio Ads

Radio

FARMERS MARKET How-To Guide

Crafting Effective Radio

Farmers markets are vibrant centers of local commerce, connection, and culture. Bringing together growers, artisans, and shoppers, these markets serve as essential pillars for communities seeking fresh, sustainable, and locally-produced goods. While social media and print materials play crucial roles in spreading the word, radio advertising remains a powerful—yet often underutilized—tool for amplifying a farmers market’s reach. This guide offers a thorough roadmap for creating compelling radio ads that not only attract visitors but foster enduring relationships with your community.

WHY CHOOSE RADIO?

Wide Local Reach: Radio stations broadcast directly into homes, cars, and businesses, engaging an audience that may not frequent online spaces.

Community Connection: Local radio is trusted and familiar, with announcers who often know and care about the region they serve.

Cost-Effective Marketing: Compared to many digital options, radio offers affordable packages, making regular promotion possible even for modest budgets.

Immediacy and Flexibility: Radio ads can be produced and updated quickly, letting you highlight new vendors, events, or seasonal produce.

SETTING GOALS FOR YOUR RADIO CAMPAIGN

- Increase overall attendance at your market
- Promote special events or seasonal openings
- Spotlight unique vendors or new product offerings
- Encourage participation in programs (SNAP, WIC, senior vouchers)
- Grow awareness about your market’s community impact

Chose one or two clear objectives for your radio campaign. This focus will ensure your message is clear, actionable, and memorable for listeners.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR AUDIENCE

Before crafting your ad, consider:

Demographics: What new customers would you like to attract? Craft a message to appeal to your target audience.

Listening Habits: What local stations are popular? When is your target audience most likely to be listening—mornings, afternoons, or weekends?

Values and Motivations: Are listeners motivated by supporting local agriculture, finding unique products, or family activities?

Aligning your message with your audience’s interests increases resonance and response.

KEY ELEMENTS OF AN EFFECTIVE RADIO AD

Clear Identification: State the name of your farmers market and its location early in the ad.

Event Details: Specify days, times, and any special themes or programs.

Unique Selling Points: Highlight what makes your market special—heirloom tomatoes, local honey, live music, or chef demonstrations. **Vendor Highlights:** Personalize your message by having your vendors tell their unique stories from your market community.

Call to Action: Encourage a specific response—“Visit us this Saturday!” or “Bring a friend for a chance to win!”

Contact or Info Source: Share a website, phone number, or social media handle for more information.

CRAFTING YOUR MESSAGE: TIPS & TECHNIQUES

Keep It Concise: Most radio spots are 15–30 seconds. Make every word count.

Be Conversational: Use warm, friendly language as if you’re inviting neighbors to a gathering.

Use Vivid Imagery: “Taste sun-ripened peaches” or “hear the strum of a local bluegrass band.” Bring the market to life for listeners.

Rotate Content: Change up your ads weekly to feature new vendors, produce, or events—this keeps your message fresh and listeners engaged.

Feature Real Voices: Record clips with market managers, vendors, or customers. Genuine stories add authenticity and a human touch.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT RADIO STATION

Research local stations: Which ones have community news, local music, or morning shows?

Ask for a media kit: Stations can provide data on listener demographics, reach, and advertising rates.

Negotiate packages: Seek multi-week discounts or bundled ad options for cost savings.

A good station has staff who are often well-connected and can point you toward or work with the right people when seeking sponsorship for radio advertising.



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SAMPLE SCRIPTS

Family-Friendly Invitation (30 seconds): “Looking for fresh flavors and family fun this weekend? Come to the Greenfield Farmers Market every Saturday from 8 to noon in the heart of downtown! Meet local farmers, enjoy homemade treats, and let your kids explore our free activity zone. Visit greenfieldmarket.org for details. See you Saturday!”

Vendor Spotlight (20 seconds): “At the Riverbend Farmers Market, taste the difference with Sarah’s organic sourdough and Tom’s famous heirloom tomatoes! Join us Sundays from 9 to 1 in the community park. Discover local goodness at riverbendmarket.com.”

Seasonal Feature (15 seconds): “Sweet corn is here! Celebrate summer at the Hilltop Farmers Market—Saturdays, 7 to noon, Main Street Pavilion.”

MAXIMIZING YOUR AD'S IMPACT

Best Times to Air: Run ads during peak listening hours—typically morning (6–9am) and afternoon (3–6pm) commutes.

Consistency: Air several times per week for at least a month for best recall.

Track Results: Use promo codes, special offers, or “mention us on air” for a discount to measure response. Beyond promo codes and on-air mentions, you can gauge radio effectiveness by monitoring spikes in market attendance immediately after a campaign airs. Set up simple surveys at your entrance asking, “How did you hear about us?” or include a brief question at checkout. Track website analytics for increased visits following ad broadcasts, especially if you reference your website in the spot. Social media polls and direct feedback from vendors and customers can also offer valuable insights into which ads increase the number of visitors and sales.

Cross-Promote: Pair radio spots with social media, flyers, and email newsletters for a multi-channel approach.

FEATURING VENDORS: BUILDING COMMUNITY THROUGH YOUR AD

Featuring your farmers market vendors in radio advertising not only personalizes your message but also strengthens the sense of community. By sharing the stories, names, or products of your local producers, you can create a connection with listeners.

Authenticity: Highlighting real vendors brings a genuine voice to your ads.

Recognition: Vendors who are mentioned feel valued and supported.

Local Pride: Shining a spotlight on the local producers celebrates the region’s agricultural businesses, inspiring listeners to “shop local.”

HOW TO FEATURE VENDORS EFFECTIVELY

Spotlight Unique Products: Feature seasonal specials, rare varieties, or homemade goods that set each vendor apart.

Share Vendor Stories: Offer brief anecdotes about a vendor’s background, farming practices, or contributions to the community.

Invite Vendor Voices: Include vendor testimonials, or have them narrate part of the ad themselves to add warmth and credibility.

Promote Vendor Partnerships: Highlight collaborations, such as vendors teaming up for special bundles or organizing themed market events.

Highlight Seasonal Goods: Rotate featured products—“Sample Maria’s wildflower honey, fresh from the fields this week!”—to keep the content timely and engaging.

Express Gratitude: Publicly thank your vendors for their dedication and hard work.

Encourage Participation: Invite listeners to meet producers in person and learn about sustainable practices firsthand.

CREATIVE COMPENSATION FOR MUSICIANS THROUGH PROMOTION

Leveraging Radio and Community Ads When Budgets Are Tight

When financial resources are scarce and payment for live performances is not possible, providing musicians with promotional opportunities via radio ads and community spotlights can be a meaningful alternative. By featuring artists in short audio segments, sharing their stories, and inviting them to contribute greetings, jingles, or behind-the-scenes content, markets and event organizers can help musicians reach new audiences and grow their fanbase.

LEGAL AND PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Always obtain permission from vendors before featuring their names or stories in ads.
- Ensure all product claims are accurate and comply with advertising laws.
- Respect copyright when using music or sound effects.

Radio advertising can be a dynamic and community-building tool for farmers markets. By crafting authentic, engaging messages, spotlighting the real people behind the produce, and strategically partnering with local stations, your market can cultivate new relationships and thrive in the hearts—and kitchens—of your neighbors. Tune in, speak out, and let your market’s story be heard across the airwaves.



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