

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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Making the Most of Signage at a Market

Signage and websites serve as vital tools for farmers markets, increasing visibility, building trust, and nurturing strong connections with the community—both on-site and online. Two major types of signage play critical roles: wayfinding signs and permanent signs.

Wayfinding Signs: Navigational Guides for Every Visit

Wayfinding signs are valuable to help visitors orient themselves, find vendors, and locate market amenities. Because farmers markets can sometimes change layouts or host special events, these signs are easy to move or update.

Purpose: Guide and direct market-goers, helping them find entrances, parking, restrooms, or favorite vendors.

Examples: Arrows pointing to produce stands, banners designating market zones, sandwich boards listing daily specials, or pop-up signs for seasonal attractions.

Impact: Wayfinding signage boosts visitor satisfaction by reducing confusion, supporting accessibility, and welcoming new guests.

PERMANENT SIGNS: ANCHORS OF IDENTITY AND INFORMATION

Some markets are in locations where permanent signs are fixtures, designed to last through seasons and years. These signs establish the market's identity, provide essential information, and reinforce a sense of place.

Purpose: Communicate the market's name, hours, policies, and branding—serving as reliable points of reference.

Examples: Entryway arches with the market's name, sturdy vendor stall signs, directional posts for amenities, and regulatory or safety notices.

Impact: Permanent signs build trust, foster recognition, and help make the market a familiar, welcoming destination for regular and new shoppers alike.

SIGNAGE: ON-SITE VISIBILITY & ENGAGEMENT

Benefits of Effective Signage

Attracts Attention: Eye-catching signs—both wayfinding and permanent—make your market lively and inviting.

Improves Navigation: Signs guide guests to vendors, amenities, and events.

Reinforces Branding: Consistent colors, logos, and fonts on permanent signs build professionalism and recognition.

Promotes Programs: Signs can highlight market services, information, events and features at the market.

Best Practices:

- Use weather-resistant materials for outdoor use.
- Include QR codes linking to your website or newsletter.
- Feature vendor names, produce highlights, and weekly themes (e.g., “Market Find Monday”).
- Keep signs in good repair and replace as needed.



How They Work Together

TOOL	ROLE	IMPACT
Wayfinding Signs	Guide visitors, adapt to changing market layouts	Streamline navigation, welcome newcomers, reduce confusion
Permanent Signs	Establish identity, provide reliable information	Build trust, reinforce branding, provide continuity
Website	Digital presence	Extends reach, supports promotions, and builds loyalty

Together, wayfinding signs, permanent signs, and websites create a seamless experience—helping shoppers discover your market online and enjoy their visit in person, with clear guidance and lasting impressions every step of the way.

Signage EXAMPLES



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