



Farmer Resources

SFC works closely with farms and food businesses, other market organizations, and government agencies to provide production, marketing and business development learning opportunities.

FARMERS MARKET SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM INITIATIVE

In 2006, SFC established a system to accept Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formally called Food Stamps) benefits at our Farmers' Market locations (formally called Austin Farmers' Markets). To view the 2006 Farmers' Market Food Stamp Initiative press release (in PDF), contact Matt Macioge - matt@sustainablefoodcenter.org.

DISPLAY, SIGNAGE, CUSTOMER SERVICE ASSISTANCE

SFC staff works closely with area farmers to assist with display, signage, and customer service at farmers' markets. We have sponsored numerous workshops and conference sessions on this topic, and have assembled a resource packet and web-based presentation, available for download below:

- SFC Direct Marketing Presentation – Compiled by Tatum Evans, Market Consultant and former manager of Crescent City Farmers Market in New Orleans. Originally presented May, 2006; offers detailed explanations of effective display, signage, and customer service principles illustrated with photos of do's and don'ts.

Contact Matt Macioge - matt@sustainablefoodcenter.org

- SFC Display, Signage, and Customer Service training packet – with information and photo-examples as well as a useful market booth self-assessment.

Contact Matt Macioge - matt@sustainablefoodcenter.org

POSTHARVEST HANDLING INFORMATION

Farmers who sell through direct outlets, like farmers' markets, seek every advantage they can find. While it may be difficult to compete with other outlets on price or volume, many small farmers will have a quality advantage. In order to retain that advantage, farmers should concentrate on preserving

the taste, texture, appearance and other elements of quality that set their products apart. One approach to maintaining quality is through improved postharvest handling techniques.

SFC hosted a workshop on quality control through postharvest handling in 2005. Below are some of the resources that were used in the training packet, as well as links to additional sources of information on postharvest handling.

- **ATTRA Postharvest Handling of Fruits and Vegetables**

This ATTRA publication offers introductory information on postharvest handling, plus details on cultural practices, equipment and handling methods, and sanitation. Available for free download as pdf.

<http://www.okfarmtoschool.com/pdf/postharvest.pdf>

- **Postharvest Handling of Horticultural Products: Keeping Principles in Perspective**

Marita Cantwell, Postharvest Vegetable Specialist, UC Davis.

This is an ideal introduction to specific consideration for postharvest handling planning, including a list of "Ten Important Guidelines for Postharvest Handling" and "Postharvest Requirements for Selected Vegetables and Melons."

<http://sfp.ucdavis.edu/files/144246.pdf>

- **Postharvest Technology Research and Information Center**

University of California, Davis

The Postharvest Technology Center has compiled numerous resources, many of which are available for free download or affordable print versions. Much of the information is based on research conducted at UC Davis and is applicable to small and mid-scale horticulture crop producers here in Central Texas. Visit their library:

<http://postharvest.ucdavis.edu/>

- **Postharvest Resources for Organic Crops**

Trevor Suslow, UC Cooperative Extension Vegetable Crops Specialist, UC Davis

This document offers tips on planning for Postharvest Handling within the broader crop plan. Addresses handling, equipment, control points, and Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs).

<http://anrcatalog.ucdavis.edu/pdf/7254.pdf>

- **Key Points of Control and Management of Microbial Food Safety: Information for Growers, Packers, and Handlers of Fresh-Consumed Horticultural Products**

Trevor V. Suslow, UC Cooperative Extension Specialist, Department of Vegetable Crops, UC Davis

This element of Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) explains the importance of avoiding contamination and provides expert advice on preventing this risk.

<http://ucfoodsafety.ucdavis.edu/files/26427.pdf>

- **Walk-In Cooler Plan (PDF)**

British Columbia Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Agricultural Building Systems Handbook

Temperature and humidity control are key to maintaining quality after harvest. This publication offers design suggestions for building a basic walk-in cooler, complete with electric and construction recommendations.

<http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt/publist/Leaflets/FruitVeg/330-20.pdf>

FARM-BUSINESS PLANNING

SFC has provided several farmers with an opportunity to work directly with a business planning professional to develop a comprehensive farm-business plan. Below is a list of valuable resources that can be used for business planning.

- **Building a Sustainable Business: A Guide to Developing a Business Plan for Farms and Rural Businesses, Sustainable Agriculture Network (SAN) of the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program (SARE)**

This guide brings the business planning process alive to help today's alternative and sustainable agriculture entrepreneurs transform farm-grown inspiration into profitable enterprises. Sample worksheets lend a practical perspective and illustrate how real farm families set goals, researched processing alternatives, determined potential markets, and evaluated financing options. Blank worksheets help the reader develop a detailed, lender-ready business plan or map out strategies to take advantage of new opportunities.

<http://www.sare.org/Learning-Center/Books/Building-a-Sustainable-Business>

- **Evaluating a Rural Enterprise, ATTRA**

This publication is for people who already live in rural areas and want to add new enterprises to their operations. New farm enterprises today are often non-traditional – everything from adding pastured poultry to a beef operation to starting a bed-and-breakfast in the barn to making a cornfield maze to attract tourists.

<https://attra.ncat.org/attra-pub/summaries/summary.php?pub=277>

- **Enterprise Budgets – Planning for Profit, British Columbia Ministry of Agriculture and Lands**

The BCMAL Planning for Profit Enterprise Budgets consists of the following sections: key factors affecting profitability, marketing alternatives, cash flow timing, rules of thumb, enterprise budget, cash flow table and graph, sensitivity analysis table and the buildings, machinery and production system costs. More recent budgets include aspects of risk management and marketing. The information is provided as a tool for projecting costs and returns for farm enterprises and as a general guide for planning individual farms. The sample budget should be used as a guide only and should not be used for business analysis without adjustments to current prices for inputs and products. Each farm should develop their own budget to reflect their production goals, costs and market prices.

<http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/busmgmt/budgets/index.htm>

- **Business Planning, Network Services & Consulting Corporation**

When it comes to building, whether it is a house or a business, it is a lot easier to prevent problems with planning than to deal with them once they have already happened. If you are thinking of starting and building your own business, the only way to prevent problems later on is to use proper planning techniques today. The most effective and least expensive time to plan your business's future is before it has begun. And if you have already started your business, there is no time like the present to start planning for the future. The tips on this site will help guide you through the architecture phase of starting your business, enabling you to create a blue print for success

<http://www.enetsc.com/WomeninBusiness.htm>

- **Business Plan Basics, Small Business Administration**

A business plan precisely defines your business, identifies your goals, and serves as your firm's resume. The basic components include a current and pro forma balance sheet, an income statement, and a cash flow analysis. It helps you allocate resources properly, handle unforeseen complications, and make good business decisions. Because it provides specific and organized information about your company and how you will repay borrowed money, a good business plan is a crucial part of any loan application. Additionally, it informs sales personnel, suppliers, and others about your operations and goals.

http://www.sbaonline.sba.gov/smallbusinessplanner/plan/writeabusinesplan/SERV_BUSPLANBASICS.html

- **Templates for Your Business, SCORE**

SCORE "Counselors to America's Small Business" is a source of free and confidential small business advice for entrepreneurs. Download business templates and get SCORE advice

<https://www.score.org/resources/business-planning-financial-statements-template-gallery>

- **Building An Agribusiness or Small Business Plan, Texas Department of Agriculture**

The Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) developed this guide by drawing on the experience of many public and private business assistance programs. This business plan model can be used as both a guideline and a workbook as you prepare your business plan. The worksheets in the appendix can be completed, removed and used as part of your individual business plan.

<http://www.greenriver.edu/businesscenter/Documents/AgricultureBusinessPlan.pdf>

- For further assistance with your business plan, contact the Texas Department of Agriculture Rural Economic Development division at (512) 936-0273, or call the Texas Department of Agriculture/Texas Department of Economic Development Rural Assistance toll free line at (877) 428-7848.