



You Are What They Think You Are: Selling the Product

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Webinar Questions and Answers

1. How can we get good, honest feedback from our customers?

Good leading question can help you get at the information you want from your customers and help you build your customer relationships; for example:

- Did you try _____?
- Were the tomatoes as good as I said they were?

Other ideas would be:

- An evaluation form that customers can fill out anonymously
- Email or social media conversations

2. Any ideas on introducing an old product in a new light? Ex: Prune juice gets a bad wrap, but it is really a delicious juice... Grape juice stains clothing, but the health benefits as with prune juice should supercede "old" impressions of a product. How would you re-educate?

You can re-educate your customers by giving them new ideas on using your product. Try giving them recipes using your product, or more information on the benefits, ie health benefits, of your product. Finally, the best way to re-educate consumers about your product is through sampling. When customers sample your product they are more apt to buy. They can taste the difference, and are much more compelled to buy when they have sampled.

3. Can you offer any guidance in developing a brand or logo?

First you need to make sure you know who you are trying to reach so that your brand and logo will speak to them. Then your logo and brand should tell your story – who you are. You can do that through the image, the color, the font you use. Each component should reflect who you are; i.e. you are more traditional and that can show through using a Times New Roman font. Your logo should be simple. Too cluttered, too many colors and the use of multiple fonts is not memorable. It's too busy to form a cohesive vision in the consumers mind. Also, you don't need to spend a lot of money on your logo and brand.

4. Do you think branding your farm with a major landmark is less effective than with what is grown?

Branding with a landmark rather than a product is less effective. It does set you apart from others, but at the end of the day its about what you are selling, not where you are located.

5. Should your brand be consistent across all marketing media; i.e. social media, CSA, farmers market?

It is important to keep your brand consistent across everything you do. It is what consumers recognize as your business and links all components of your business together. It is easier to cross sell your businesses and products when consumers recognize them as your brand, no matter whether they are looking at your Facebook page, a newspaper ad, participating in your CSA or stopping at your farmers market booth.

6. Should features and benefits be included on our signs?

You should include some of the features and benefits on your sign. Some customers are shy about asking questions, so this gives them the information they need to know that your products are what they want. Including that information on your sign also helps to grab customers attention as they are walking by your products or market booth. It also helps you to hold customers at your table while you finish waiting on another customer. The one waiting is reading the sign, getting the information they need and will be able to make their buying decisions or formulating their questions while they wait for you. Finally, adding features and benefits to your signage helps to build your credibility and your expertise with your products.

7. Can signage be handmade or should it be professionally made?

You can make your own signage, but it is best if it looks neat, clear and readable. It is easier for consumers, but also looks professional. Shows you care about your business and your brand.

8. Does creating professional looking signage and banners look too corporate to be effective for farmers markets and farm stands?

No, it just makes you look professional. It helps people to read your signs easily and helps you to educate your consumers about your products. Keep in mind that you have a maximum of 5 seconds to capture someone's attention as they walk by your market table. Your signage and your brand are what will capture their attention. So signage is critical to your business and you want the image your signage gives consumers to reflect a professional, who cares about his products and his customers.

9. How do you decide how and what products to bundle or cross sell?

Look at grocery stores for trends. You can see what they are cross selling and you can follow their example, whether in the products they are bundling or in the packaging they are using (i.e. packaging for 1 or 2 people). But some ideas for you would be:

- Sample packs. Bundle something unique or new to your farm with other products to get people to try new foods.
- Give a recipe that uses multiple products on your table.
- Give freezing instructions for fresh foods to encourage people to buy larger quantities

Get creative when you put things together and then tell them how to use the products.

10. You advocate giving recipes and food preservation instructions. But they all have a cost to them. Is the rate of return on these worth the cost?

Giving out recipes does not have to cost much. Just print them off on your computer and you can get 3 or 4 out of a page. So the cost can be minimal. Same with preservation instructions. But when you give your customers recipes for your products you are able to cross sell your products, so if you use a recipe using 4 of your products, you are more likely to sell the customer all 4 of those products, rather than the one they may have been looking at. But when a customer goes home with a recipe that they can use over and over, it makes your business more memorable. Your farm name and logo is on the recipe and every time they use that recipe, they think of you and want to get your products to make the recipe again.