



# Twitter 101

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Farmers Market Federation of New York

## What is Twitter?

Twitter is a microblog, or a website where you can connect with others by using small blurbs. In 140 characters or less, you can share your thoughts, what you're doing, an article you read, and anything else you desire. If used correctly, Twitter is a fantastic way to spark others' interest, and start conversations about your business.

## Common Terms

It is important to understand Twitter language. Below are some key terms to remember.

**Twitter Handle:** The name you choose to represent your twitter account. The Twitter handle for the Farmers Market Federation is NYFarmersMarket. FYI: Twitter is case sensitive.

**Tweet:** The 140 character blurb you write. Can be used as a verb. Ex: "Can you send me that link? I want to tweet about it."

**Followers:** People that are interested in your tweets, and your organization. If a person follows you, they will be updated on their homepage every time you tweet. You can follow people you are interested in as well.

**Retweet:** Forwarding a message to your followers with or without additional remarks

**@ replies:** We use the @ symbol to respond to another person's tweet. For example, let's say a person follows NYFarmersMarket, who recently tweeted about an interesting article they found online. The person can respond to the market by tweeting "@NYFarmersMarket very cool article! Thanks 4 posting!" NYFarmersMarket will see this response on their homepage.

**d or dm:** Direct messaging for private messages only seen by you and the recipient.

**# Hashtags:** For tracking or joining specific topics or events. If someone's post is about growing local foods, they may hashtag by writing #localfood. You will then be able to see everyone else who has talked about local food, can start following them, and potentially gain followers.

## How Can Organizations Use Twitter Effectively?

Twitter is a clever way to promote your business. Instead of tweeting about your life, you can tweet about your interests, and follow others with similar interests. There are organizations on Twitter that directly relate to farmers markets: the USDA, Slow Food, The Farm Bureau, the list goes on. Twitter gives you the chance to interact with these organizations, and through them, you can find consumers that are interested in eating local. If you Tweet well, before you know it, you will not be looking for consumers—they will be finding you.



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## Tips for Getting Started

**Twitter is a commitment.** Once you start, you must be tweeting at least once a day to keep followers interested, and to garner new followers.

**Start by following.** Follow people on twitter to get a better feel for how it works. Take note of which tweets interest you—they are good examples to mimic.

**Engage in conversation.** Using the “@” tool will help you form relationships with new consumers and organizations. People will be more likely to care about you and your tweets if you show interest in them first.

**Sign up.** Use the Twitter tutorial to begin your journey.

The screenshot shows the Twitter profile for @NYFarmersMarket. The profile header includes the logo, the name "FarmersMarket", and the handle "@NYFarmersMarket New York". The bio states: "Farmers Market Federation of NY is an org that supports eating local, and helps maintain and improve the management of farmers markets in NY." with a link to "http://www.nyfarmersmarket.com/".

Statistics for the profile are: 14 Tweets, 69 Following, 18 Followers, and 2 Listed.

The "Following" list includes 69 users, and the "Followers" list includes 18 users. The "Similar to You" section lists "Organic\_Granola" (Ambrosial Granola), "wendywas" (wendy wasserman), "fromartz" (sam fromartz), and "grist" (Grist.org).

The timeline shows a tweet from @NYFarmersMarket: "Thanks for all those who attended facebook webinar today!! Next one is this Thursday at 7! Learn about #socialmedia" posted 4 minutes ago. Below it is a tweet from @USDAgov: "Pres. Obama Signs Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 Into Law http://go.usa.gov/4fs #CNR".