


Promotional Plan



As you work through the Promoting Specialty Crops as Local curriculum, this document will give you a place to record take away points from each module. Once completed, this document will provide you with key points to promote your farm and/or products. Use this document as a resource to get started improving your communication and marketing today, so that you can connect with your customer's tomorrow.

Module 1: What do people think about locally grown food?

List the consumer perceptions of local food discussed during Module 1 that are most beneficial to remember when marketing your local food products.

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Remember, there is no concrete definition for local food. List your current products that you sell locally along with a short justification for why you consider these products local. Consumers may choose your local products over others if you can provide some kind of justification as to why it is "local."

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Module 2: Why do people buy local food and where do they buy it?

Create a list of positive messages/descriptions associated with your local products that could motivate consumers to purchase your products.

What are the main barriers that are deterring sales for your local products, and what are the strategies to break down each of these barriers?

Barriers	Strategies
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List the markets/locations, you currently do not sell to, that could be beneficial to source your local products to in the future. In addition, record any plans that you can use to establish a deal with those markets/locations.

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Module 3: What are the best words and images to use when communicating with consumers about your locally produced food?

Create a list of positive words or phrases that you would like to be associated with your business and products.


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Create a message that you would like to use when advertising your business and products.

Remember that a message:

- Is short and easy to understand
- Does not use jargon or abbreviations
- Can be repeated without being redundant
- Can be used as a catch-phrase, tag-line, or slogan
- Can be used in a summary
- Is focused
- Is positive
- Is boiled-down
- Is targeted to a specific audience

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Module 4: How do you get your message out to consumers?

Creating your brand:


What are the main goals for your business and brand?

What is the identity of your brand? Your identity should be represented in every aspect of your business, and customers should be able to recognize your identity without being explicitly told what it is.

Who is your audience? It is vital to understand what kind of audience is most likely to purchase your products and market specifically to that group. The expanse of your audience may depend on your product.

What is unique about your product, and what can you offer that your competitors cannot? Remember to consider your product, how you produce it, marketing avenues, and all aspects of your business to help you differentiate your product.

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Develop a branding slogan and logo to support your business. You may need to hire a graphic designer or artist to develop your logo, however you should make note of how you would like it to look.

What actions will you engage in to market your business and brand? Remember to include an evaluation for your brand shortly after you implement these actions. It is easier to make adjustments early on than trying to change somebody's opinion of your brand after many months or years. How will you prioritize your goals? How will you increase awareness of your brand?

What media channels will you use and what steps will you take to establish those channels.

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Module 5: How do you talk to consumers about your locally grown food? – Part 1

Identify any and all aspects of your business that may require proactive risk communication (ex. Pesticide use, GMO, etc.) Create a plan on how you will overcome any possible public relation issues related to risk. Include how you plan to develop trust with consumers and how you will use transparent and two-way communication techniques. Also, include any third party organizations you can partner with to help you handle any future risk communication matters.

Refer to these tips for guidance:

- Acknowledge the public as a partner and involve them in the situation.
- Early involvement of the community fosters a feeling of openness, trust and genuine concern.
- Disseminating data to the public and beginning their involvement before making decisions is preferred and demonstrates your trustworthiness.
- Failure to share information and gain involvement early may generate feelings that you wish to hide information cause the public to exaggerate the risk and hold negative feelings toward your business.
- Carefully design your plan for communications as early as possible.
- Develop your objectives and seek the aid of those with skills in presentation and interaction with the public.
- Your specific objectives should include actions such as disseminating information, motivating appropriate action by individuals, or responding to the situation.
- Just like achieving transparency, effective risk communications requires two-way communication.
- The conversation should begin with you listening to those individuals who may potentially purchase your product.
- Listen with an open mind unclouded by your opinion.
- Remember that situations requiring risk communication may be emotional for individuals and be prepared to deal with public feelings.
- As mentioned before, the public's trust in your business will help you overcome issues requiring risk communication.
- Establishing this trust and credibility prior to the need for risk communication strengthens your position when that trust may be threatened.
- The trust and goodwill of the public is an essential resource for your business.
- Foster trust through sharing information about your expertise, admitting any mistake you may make and honestly discussing risks promptly.

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Module 6: How do you talk to consumers about your locally grown good?

Make any modifications to the story you created in Exercise C of this module. Remember, a well-developed story should include expressive details, multiple obstacles, logical progression, and a worthy goal.

Your story can be shared in a variety of ways. You may choose to share your story through a media channel (TV, print, web, etc.), but it can also be told through conversation with your customers. Your story can even be shared if customers come to your farm and can visualize your content more easily.

Create a plan for how you want to share your story.
