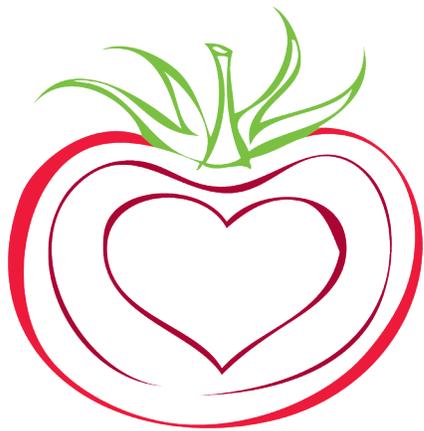

The Value of a Paid Farmers' Market Manager



FARMERS'
MARKETS
of Nova Scotia





Having a paid Market Manager is a key ingredient in the success and sustainability of any farmers' market. *Let's say that again: a paid Market Manager is a key ingredient in the success and sustainability of any farmers' market.* But don't just take our word for it; research, primarily conducted in the USA, repeatedly finds that the long-term success of any farmers' market is directly

related to market management and Manager retention (see Appendix F and Appendix G). Another way to look at it, a Market Manager is an investment and the market will receive a strong return on this investment.

Paying a Market Manager may seem like a luxury that your market cannot afford but we would argue the opposite is true. The first steps to overcoming the financial challenge of moving to a paid Market Manager is to prioritize the expense and to plan for it. Our [Innovative Revenue Streams resource](#) is a great starting point. Keep in mind that among the responsibilities of your Market Manager may well be fundraising, grant writing and building community connections to ensure the market is recognized as an integral part of the community.

Please know that we are not in any way undervaluing the work and ability of volunteers – volunteers are a very important piece of a market as well. Our position is simply that running a farmers' market is not an easy task; it takes skill, passion and a lot of time. It is also valuable work in our communities! Paying a Market Manager ought to be a point of pride – a good job created in your community.

Market Size

There is a relationship between the size of a market (number of vendors) and the time/ expertise needed to manage. Few farmers' markets in Nova Scotia started out with a paid Market Manager and many of the smaller markets in the province continue to operate with a volunteer manager. Based on research findings from the USA, a correlation – and resulting best practices – have been identified between market size (number of vendors) and the management tools used. *Understanding the Link Between Farmers' Market Size & Managerial Organizations* divides markets into four size categories and outlines the management tools needed for success – including a Market Manager (see Appendix F, Table 8 on pg. 16). In regards to medium and large markets (more than 30 vendors), a paid Market Manager

is considered necessary. This study found that volunteer managers can in fact be damaging to a medium or large markets' stability and longevity. While this study suggests a paid Market Managers for small, medium and large markets, it finds a volunteer manager to be a suitable option for micro markets (5-8 vendors).

The Role of a Market Manager

There are more consistencies than differences in the role of a Market Manager from market to market. Responsibilities do vary depending on the size of the market, the organizing structure of the market organization, as well as the managers' personality and skills. For a sample market manager job description, a contract, and other related resources, please see appendices A, B, C, D & E. There is also much consistency in the challenges Market Managers face. Each spring, FMNS gathers Market Managers and organizers together for 6 days (two 3-day sessions) of [training, retreat and networking](#).

Time Well Spent

For every vendor, a market manager should aim to invest 1.25-1.5 hours/week*:

# of vendors	Hours to be invested
10	12.5-15 hrs
20	25-30 hrs
30	37.5-45 hrs [Full Time]
40	50-60 hrs
60**	75-90 hrs (**100-110)
100**	125-150 hrs (**175)

*This formula was created by Michelle Wolf for Farmers' Markets of Nova Scotia.

**As markets increase in size, management complexity also increases.

Appendices

Appendix A: Farmers' Market Manager Job Description

Appendix B: Market Manager Responsibilities

Appendix C: Farmers' Market Management Skills

Appendix D: Market Manager Contract – Example, Wolfville Farmers' Market

Appendix E: Market Manager Evaluation and Review

Appendix F: Understanding the Link Between Farmers' Market Size & Managerial Organizations

Appendix G: When Things Don't Work: Some Insights into Why Farmers' Markets Close

View all appendices, and additional resources, at the following link:

<http://farmersmarketsnovascotia.com/?p=3064>

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