



Did ewe know?

Ontario's lamb & goat industries are poised for remarkable growth.

Consumer demand for Ontario lamb and goat far outstrips the supply thanks to changing demographics, retiring producers and declining inventory.

Goat meat accounts for over 60% of red meat consumption around the globe.

Canadians consumed 63% more lamb between 1997 and 2007, and will consume 44% more by 2020.

Source: Ontario Wants Ewe, Emerging Trends & Opportunities in Ontario's Lamb & Goat Industries
http://ontariolamb.ca/images/Lamb_WP_%20Final_%20MK_Jan17FINAL.pdf



Did you know?

Lettuce belongs to the sunflower family.

Etchings in Egyptian tombs suggest cultivation dates back some 4500 years.

Thomas Jefferson grew 19 varieties of lettuce in his garden.

The darker the leaf, the more nutrients: romaine is 6 to 8 times richer in vitamins A and C than iceberg.



Add value to your display by turning it into a learning opportunity.

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Value: One Additive that's Always Welcome

What do you do to go "above and beyond" and create added value for your customer?

As a market manager, what steps can you take to make life easier for vendors, market-goers and community partners?

As a vendor, what little extra will make someone's market day that much better?

How does your market create a positive community experience?

What's your market's value?

Far beyond pricing, dollars and cents, there's the not-so-small matter of how your farmers' market gives back to the local community in a tangible, targeted and conscious way. Projects and events that support the community and market partners influence and enhance peoples' perceptions of your market's value to the neighbourhood.

The Carleton Place Farmers' Market launched this year's season by hosting a first-ever community garage sale in tandem with opening day. Funds raised from table rentals for the garage sale were donated to the local hospital, garnering a photo op and local media attention. Linking the market with community health is a natural tie-in, and promoting it as the "first-ever" suggests a similar launch for next year. If the market board decides to support the hospital next year, they can build on their relationship with the hospital foundation, growing a partner into a firm promoter for the benefit of both organizations.

According to market manager Catherine Joyce, vendors from the Gore Bay Farmers' Market participate in a local "Kids Can Grow" program on Manitoulin Island. Vendors visit a grade school on the local reserve, mentoring native youth to grow and sow; at harvest time, the youth are welcomed to the farmers' market where they sell the produce they've nurtured. Similar involvement with a Community Living class at a local high school was also very well-received.

Connecting youth and food literacy

Below are links to two resources connecting youth and food literacy. Perhaps there are some ideas that your market can adapt and act upon. The *KIDS CAN GROW* program originates out of the University of Maine, using the local 4-H clubs as community partners. *ADDED VALUE* is a non-profit organization that actively engages teenagers in southern Brooklyn in the food cycle.

KIDS CAN GROW:

<http://www.umaine.edu/umext/york/MG/WhatIsKCG.htm>

ADDED VALUE:

<http://www.added-value.org/overview-of-added-value>

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ADDED VALUE project

THE MANAGER'S OFFICE

Consider Offering a Cooking Class.

While many markets feature cooking demonstrations, have you considered an actual hands-on cooking class? Last year in Baltimore, the Sotto Sopra Restaurant held a Farmers' Market Cooking Class from 8 am to 3 pm. Participants met at the restaurant, then walked to the market with the chef and purchased the produce needed for the classroom, learning about selection, storage and cleaning in the process. The menu for the day was determined by the market selection, and at the end, everyone enjoyed a shared meal paired with wine. Participants were asked to wear rubber soles and sign a release form. The fee was \$70 per person, up to a limit of 12.

You may have several local chefs who would like to be involved. Participants would get a "taste of the market" while gaining skills and knowledge. Now that's value!



Value - cont'd from page 1

Mixing it up and shouting it out

On a broad scale, growing the mix of vendors provides exceptional value to the shopper who is looking for more than fresh vegetables. Give the consumer as many reasons as possible to stay as long as possible.

According to John Graveson, manager of the Thunder Bay Country Market (see profile on the next page), the board puts a lot of thought into its market mix, consciously keeping non-produce vendors to 25%, although you'd never know it by looking at the market website! Vendor produce and products are featured in nine different categories. With 70 vendors, Thunder Bay's website is a one-stop-shop highlighting market variety, featuring vendors and telling consumers exactly what to expect. The pictures are primarily food-focused, generating a familiar rumble in the gut and a knee-jerk "I want that" response.

For ideas and inspiration, visit:
www.thunderbaycountrymarket.com/index.php?pid=1

Tools at Your Fingertips!

FMO is creating a virtual toolbox to make your life easier. Expect one or two new tools per newsletter. Let us know what information and tools you would find helpful so we can ensure that what we're offering is in keeping with what you're looking for.

This month's tool is available as a checklist, compiled from tips on adding value found in this issue. Go to www.farmersmarketsontario.com. Click on **Member Login** in the Tool Bar. Click on **Admin**, select **Member Library**, then select **Checklists**.

Consumers Values

Beyond quality, market consumers look for information, selection, convenience and farm-based services. Here's how vendors across Ontario fulfill those values.

Information – If you're selling at market, you're in the food literacy business. Using clear labeling to distinguish between produce grown from seeds with or without fungicide is a service customers appreciate. Brochures with ideas for how to prepare produce, as well as newsletters, blogs and websites also fall into this category.

Convenience – Some farmers deliver CSA boxes, or take them to market for a central pick-up. In winter months, Christine Stevenson of Ashburnham Farm Gaelic Garlic uses a weekly newsletter to announce which day she'll do meat deliveries: the results make placing orders on people's doorsteps worth the effort! On another note, locally prepared meals are appreciated. Hoskin Farms Market offers locally prepared meat pies made from farm beef. The Fish Shop offers stuffed trout, ready for the barbecue!

Selection – Consumers will stay with you long past the market season if they learn they can also go to you for poultry, eggs and meat throughout the year. If you're not a mixed farm, you can keep them interested by expanding on your existing product line and offering more varieties or by featuring a new product based on your farm ingredients.

Farm-based Services – People love to visit the farm, whether to pick up a CSA box, or to shop at the farm-gate store. Consumers are looking for farm experiences through agri-tourism, culinary tours, pick-your-own operations, classes and even children's birthday parties. For example, the Dancing Bee Apiary offers everything to do with bees, from honey products to beekeeping classes, pollination services and the sale of queens and nuclear colonies.



Profile: John Graveson, Market Manager



John Graveson has managed the Thunder Bay Country Market for the past 12 years. Governed by the vendors association, John shares guidelines with new vendors, acts as a liaison with market partners, visits farms and vendors for verification, and walks the aisles on market day.

He views his role as one of troubleshooting. "You need to think on your feet, solve problems on the fly and resolve or prevent disputes between vendors." The market board consciously attracts a broad variety of vendors, while keeping the mix 75% agriculture-based. For John, it's crucial to remain nonpartisan and avoid conflict of interest. While he's not a vendor, he gladly steps in when a regular can't attend. "If people are looking for kettle corn or eggs, we'd better have someone selling them!"

THE VENDOR'S STALL

Information Adds Value.

Take a moment each market day to look at your stall and consider how to improve signage, labeling, brochures and feedback forms.

If you sell heirloom vegetables, what do you tell people about them? When it's appropriate to save seeds for next year's crop, why not provide a card with instructions? Use signs to cue people in to flavour distinctions between varieties and suggest uses. If one pepper is grown from organic seed and another from a hybrid seed treated for disease and insect resistance, consumers appreciate your efforts to inform them—and often purchase the hybrid because you've shown that they can trust you.

Do you visually inform them of complementary services at the farm? If you're thinking of expanding your range of products, create a small survey to get their input. Conduct a trial of a food product you're developing with a taste test and feedback form. Information is a two-way street!

FMO in action: Something new with a familiar ring



Opening Bell

The ringing of a bell to open the farmers' market is an age-old tradition. Market clerks would walk through the market ringing a hand-bell to signify that the market was open for business. Several Ontario markets have adopted this custom, purchasing bells that FMO sources in Minnesota. Linda Cook, manager of the Ottawa Farmers' Market, uses the bell to save her voice. "I ring it at 5 minutes to 8 as a warning to clear the vehicles out and get ready; again at 8 am for opening, and at 3 for closing." Bells are available from FMO, including shipping and taxes, for: \$10 (4 inch) and \$12 (5 inch).

FMO News: First the good news



Congratulations, Pembroke!

Four years of fund-raising and hard work has paid off for the enterprising people at the Pembroke Farmers' Market. In 2006, they built a market shelter to protect vendors and shoppers from the elements with the help of \$10,000 donations each from FMO, Farm Credit Canada and Giant Tiger, Pembroke. Today the Pembroke Farmers' Market is officially debt-free, having paid off their \$265,000 mortgage. (More on this in our next issue.)

Attention Fruit & Vegetable Vendors!

OMAFRA has a new **Retail Sign & Label Toolkit** available at the following web address: <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/food/inspection/fruitveg/retailsign.htm>

The toolkit includes templates and examples, and is designed to take the guesswork out of preparing signs and labels for Ontario-grown produce. You can order it in alternate formats by calling 1-877-424-1300.

Farm Management Resources

The Canadian Farm Business Management Council offers management resources for your farm business at <http://www.farmcentre.com/Home.aspx>

Face of Farming Photo Contest

The Canadian Federation of Agriculture is holding a photo contest on the theme "the face of farming." The winner will receive \$500 and a trip to the CFA 75th Anniversary banquet. For contest guidelines, application and technical requirements visit <http://www.cfa-fca.ca/whats-new/coming-events/75th-anniversary>

FMO News: Now the bad news

Vendors Beware!

On June 5th, a vendor was robbed at the North Bay Market. Two people distracted her while a third stole her cash box. With nine reported incidents of theft last year, and two more this year, please remember to take precautions. (Boz Toic of Bosco Farms suggests vendors wear a carpenter's apron to hold their paper money and keep only coins in the cash box.)



TIP OF THE MONTH

This month, we have two contributors: Arlene Hummel, a vendor at Powassan Farmers' Market (who was our contributor last month) and market manager, Rob French.

Together, Arlene and Rob came up with the following (closely related) suggestions for making the market experience better for their customers.

Rob's carry-out service tip:

"When customers purchase heavy produce from you, offer to help carry the produce to their vehicle."

Arlene's storage service tip:

"After the sale of a large [order] I offer to keep it until the customer finishes shopping. I get a first name...and phone number in case they forget and leave the market without returning, so I can contact them and arrange for pick-up."



Arlene's tip makes a whole lot of sense for vendors like her, selling heavy produce like potatoes and cucumbers. Consider it if you do, too—or if you sell apples or melons or anything else that's heavy to lug around. Otherwise, your customers might get tired and decide to leave the market early.

Share your tips here: Email us your ideas along with your name, address, market's name and (if applicable) a photo. Not only will we give you credit—we'll send you some FMO merchandise as thanks!

MyPick™ Verified Local Farmer™ Profile: Cassa Del Sol Farms & Greenhouses, Cassandra Mogelin & Trevor Johnson



"We buy our meat and eggs locally, and in turn those farmers support us and spread the word to local consumers," says Cassandra Mogelin of the thriving greenhouse and farm produce business she owns with her partner, Trevor Johnson.

Cassandra and Trevor each earned a Diploma in Agriculture from the University of Guelph before purchasing their 44-acre farm. Their small, self-sufficient venture soon grew to include greenhouses, a market garden and three sons.

Trevor runs the farm while Cassandra works the greenhouses, cultivating a reputation for specialized service, custom orders and happy clients.

Upcoming Market Events

London Covent Garden Outdoor Market

All-Local Barbecue from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

July 31st, 2010

8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

London Covent Garden Outdoor Market

Bernardin Canning & Preserving Demo from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Sept. 4th, 2010

8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Post your market events on the FMO website.

If you don't have your member log-in and password, please email us at: fmo@farmersmarketsontario.com.

Next issue:

Sept. 15

Theme:

Harvest Abundance

Submissions:

Deadline is Sept. 1

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Learn about the MyPick™ program at MyPick.ca

Over to you. Please tell us:

1. What are your principal challenges as a vendor or manager?
2. What would you like to ask another manager or vendor?



Supported through the Ontario Farmers' Markets Strategy, part of Growing Forward, a Federal-Provincial-Territorial initiative

