



PARTNERS FOR PROFIT

THE FARMERS' MARKET NEWSLETTER FROM

HARRIS® SEEDS

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EDITOR'S NOTES

Sue Mears

Farmers' Markets continue to grow in size and number across the country (and around the world). They're becoming "destinations" for consumers concerned with **food security issues, supporting the local economy, and healthy eating.** We at **Harris Seeds are proud to support the age-old concept of Farmers' Markets, and we encourage you to keep growing!**

PLUGS & LINERS FROM HARRIS SEEDS

Chris Soluri

Over the last 127 years, growers have become accustomed to high quality, Harris Seeds vegetable and flower seed introductions. Yet, some of our new products and additions sometimes go unnoticed.

Did you know that **Harris Seeds can supply your growers with seed and vegetative plugs and liners?** With thousands of varieties listed in our new **2007 Ornamentals Catalog**, there's no reason why your growers can't find exactly what they are looking for!



The **BIG NEWS** is your growers can realize as much as a 41% discount on their order with **Raker** - one of America's premiere providers of plugs and liners. For more information on this **new Harris Seeds Plug and Liner Discount Program**, call us toll-free (800-544-7938) and ask for a customer care representative, or visit us on the web: www.harriseseeds.com.

RESOURCE LINKS

Sue Mears

www.attra.org - Downloadable and printable, the information on this site is **reliable and up-to-date for vegetable, cut flower, bedding plant, and fruit growers.** Encompasses beginners (Market Gardening: A Start-Up Guide) to experienced growers, **conventional and OG.**

DISPLAY IDEAS

Macy Brady

Dazzle Your Customer's Senses!

Why are Festivals so entertaining?

What is it about them that so captures our emotions?

Why do they make such a lasting impression?

The answer is they appeal to each of our senses so effectively.

To attract more buyers to *your* next Market create a **festival**-like atmosphere that will capture their *full range of senses.*

- 1. Sight:** Decorate with colorful banners, flags, signs, balloons and planters that will create eye catching visual appeal.
- 2. Hearing:** Play music that coordinates with what you sell: Latin music with hot peppers; tomatoes and salsas; classical music with wine and cheese.
- 3. Touch:** Bring an interesting farm animal for people to pet.
- 4. Taste:** Include a cooking demonstration and offer samples for people taste.
- 5. Smell:** Place your most fragrant flowers, produce and herbs in an upfront and accessible location. Never underestimate the influence of nose appeal.

MARKET SPOTLIGHT

Sue Mears

Guadalupe Valley Growers' Market, Seguin, TX



Sponsored by the Downtown Historical District of Seguin, TX, and located in the historic central park where original settlers gathered to sell and trade farm wares, the Guadalupe Valley Growers' Market continues to serve the community for its second season.

Only local, home-produced items are offered by the 7 vendors who supply the Market. **Produce, honey, flowers, artisan cheeses, and baked goods** are provided for sale each Saturday morning from March through November, and **attendance has doubled since the Market's inception.**

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PROBLEM SOLVERS' CORNER

Macy Brady

Visit other Markets' Websites

Having trouble attracting visitors or vendors to your Farmers' Market? You may find solutions to your dilemma right on the internet. **Check out the websites of surrounding Markets to learn how to promote your own.**

Learn how other Markets cross-promote with local charities to increase awareness. Link up with a local food bank or food rescue and sponsor a "Food Drive" at the Market. It is a win-win. The event will support the cause, drive traffic to the Market and will get you a **FREE** mention in the local Newspaper.

Consider the different ways other Markets distinguish themselves. See if they have a creative logo or a unique program that persuades customers to return week after week; for instance a money-back guarantee on all purchases or cooking demonstrations by local chefs of local restaurants.

- www.ithacamarket.com
- www.readingterminalmarket.org
- www.northmarket.com

MARKET TRENDS

Macy Brady

Crafts at the Market

The controversy continues – do craft vendors **enhance or inhibit** your Farmers' Market? Among the several benefits, offering an expanded variety of products will **attract additional customers**, many of whom might not otherwise attend. In addition, farmers who add crafts to their offerings could **increase sales and profits**.



[Photo from www.ithacamarket.org]

Cynics warn that craft vendors **compete with growers for limited market space** or that they create an **overcrowded and unpleasant flea market atmosphere**, complete with customers haggling over prices. Also, the market runs the risk of introducing vendors who do not produce their own product. Ultimately craft vendors **may undermine the unique homegrown ambiance** of a Farmers' Market, where fresh produce and flowers traditionally dominate.

In the end, compromise is probably the best option. A Farmers' Market that offers a broad variety of product, both crafts and grown products, but one that strongly maintains its homegrown quality roots, will have the greatest potential for success.

CREATE YOUR OWN EVENTS

Sue Mears

Scarecrows and Garden Dolls at the Market

Here's an event you can sponsor at the Market anytime during your season, and you can successfully use it as a **Market fundraiser**.

Invite your Market customers to "**Make a Garden Doll (or Scarecrow) Day**". Garden dolls and scarecrows are attractive, useful, and entertaining in the garden or on the porch all year, and creating them at the Market can **increase attendance** for this fun community event. **Encourage your local community to sponsor a competition for Garden Dolls and Scarecrows for homes and businesses in the area, and time your Market event to precede the competition.**



You'll need:

- Bales of **hay or straw** to stuff the dolls.
- **Old clothes** (get creative – use men's, women's, children's, even dress-up formal gear) from donations, used clothing stores, rummage sales. Encourage customers to bring their own togs for dressing the dolls, too.
- **Scarves and neckerchiefs, old eyeglasses, shawls.**
- **Hats** – these really give the dolls some character.
- **Twine** for tying off the arms and legs.
- **Instructions for making scarecrows**, from internet sites or the local library.

Advertise well in advance, and consider having the participants make reservations for the event. Then you can plan your materials more accurately. **Add your own personal Market touch to this event: give each participant a felt heart to stuff inside the doll or scarecrow.**

FOR YOUR GROWERS

Mark Greene

It is still not too late to get in one more planting for a fall harvest! Here are several quick finishers for your fall market.

Summer Squash, Zucchini and Cucumbers – Most varieties start producing from seed in 50-60 days.

Baby Beets – Try harvesting **Kestral** early for great baby beets.

Beans – **Concesa** is a great variety that starts yielding in 55 – 60 days.

Lettuce and Greens – Plant and harvest salad mixes and baby greens mixes for quick sales at the market.

Sunflowers – Varieties like **Pro Cut Bi-color, Chianti, and Sunrich Gold** are fast finishing cuts with great fall colors.