



CHAPTER TWO

Vision and Mission Statements for Farmers Market with a Committee

Strategic Planning: Who are We?

New and developing markets often need direction, goals and a chance to develop their identity and values. Answering the ‘who are we?’ question can be challenging. Creating a Vision and Mission Statement will help answer that question.

This process can be an important momentum-building exercise for a new organization.

Established markets that do not have a Vision or Mission Statement can also benefit from this process. It is beneficial for organizations to continually evaluate themselves and their goals.

Strategic planning may seem like a complex task that is only completed by corporate executives. However, farmers markets can benefit from taking time to reflect on their purpose and goals. Sincere and meaningful Vision and Mission Statements can be powerful. They can help focus the group’s energy and resources to lead the market forward.

What’s the Difference?

Vision Statements and Mission Statements may seem quite similar. Yet, they are actually different. Both statements serve a unique purpose for an organization.

The Vision Statement should describe where the group ultimately aims for their organization to be. It describes the long-term vision for the market.

The Mission Statement concentrates on the present, describing who and what the organization is about today. In theory, the Vision Statement should be developed first. This will help guide the present actions included in the Mission Statement (1). A vision and mission statement worksheet is available in the resources section following this chapter to

assist with documenting your markets process.

Developing a Vision Statement

The Vision Statement is a picture of what the market organizers want the market to look and feel like in the future. Self-reflection is an important part of creating a meaningful statement. The process may take time and the final result should be positive and helpful with a “we are going to do this” attitude. All future activities should lead the group towards achieving their vision. To develop a Vision Statement, ask these questions:

- What do we want to achieve going forward?
- When do we want to do it?
- How do we want to do it?

Sample Vision Statement 1

This sample Vision Statement was modified from the Falls Park Farmers Market in Sioux Falls (2).

“The _____ Market was created to provide a cooperative and organized marketing alternative for small scale agricultural and specialty products. We promote local production of agricultural and specialty products and offer opportunities for producers to enhance their marketing skills. We strive to improve the variety, taste, and freshness of products available to customers in our area.

We promote strong, trusting relationships between consumers and vendors by insisting on honesty and transparency in all aspects of the creation of products. We create a space for interaction between the consumer and the producer. We believe that there are inherent benefits for the customer, producer, and community when food is grown, purchased, and consumed locally.

We enhance the quality of life in our area by providing a community activity that promotes a wholesome, social gathering place.”

Sample Vision Statement 2

This sample Vision Statement was from the Portland Farmers Market 2013 Vendor Handbook.

- Local food growers and producers prosper by finding local marketplaces for their products.
- Every resident has access to high quality, nutritious, locally grown food.
- Residents understand the value of strengthening the local economy by purchasing locally grown food.
- Sustainable farming and local food production expand as more people choose to enter these professions.
- Farmers markets grow, nourish, and inspire community.

_____ is playing a central role in creating this food system and in fostering an economically, ecologically and socially sustainable community.”

Developing a Mission Statement

The Mission Statement should be a short, concise statement of strategy. It should focus on the present activities of the market. Identifying the customer is an important piece of information within the Mission Statement. The benefits to the consumer should also be explained. Include the market’s structure; for example, is the market a non-profit, vendor-

owned or a cooperative? Finally, describe where the products at the market will come from.

Ask these questions while developing a Mission Statement:

- Who is responsible for the market?
- What do we do?
- How do we do it?
- For whom do we do it?

Sample Mission Statements

The following statements were collected from market websites or handbooks in 2013.

Brookings Farmers Market – Brookings, South Dakota: “The Brookings Farmers Market, a non-profit organization, was established to provide a community gathering place where local farmers and entrepreneurs can sell directly to the consumer. Our goals are to improve opportunities for all in our community by promoting local economic development as well as social and community building through educational and family- friendly activities (5).”

Falls Park Farmers Market – Sioux Falls, South Dakota: “To promote and encourage the development of local small scale agricultural and specialty products by providing a dynamic “producer only” marketplace to make available their products to the consumers of the greater Sioux Falls area (2).”

Columbia Farmers Market – Columbia, Missouri: “The mission of the Columbia Farmers Market is to provide both the local farmer and consumer a reliable, regulated marketplace for the direct exchange of high quality and safe food. By facilitating such commerce, the market strives to meet the needs of the local consumer while encouraging sustainable agriculture in mid-Missouri (5).”

Now What?

After developing both the Vision and Mission Statement, the organization should share them whenever possible. They can be printed, posted, and shared on marketing materials, social media sites, the organization’s website, and used by the members of the market. The statements serve a two-fold purpose. First, they will guide the organization’s activities. Secondly, they can serve as a communication tool for explaining the purpose of the market to potential sponsors, volunteers, vendors, customers, and community members.

The Vision and Mission Statements may have to be updated as time passes. As the market develops, updated information may need to be incorporated into the statement.

Farmers Market organizations who take the time to develop, maintain and share their Vision and Mission Statements will surely be rewarded for their efforts.

Sources

1. Ebben, Jay. Developing Effective Mission and Vision Statements. Inc.com, 2005. Web. 15 Aug. 2013. (<http://www.inc.com/resources/startup/articles/20050201/missionstatement.html>).
2. Philosophy & Rules 2013. Falls Park Farmer's Market, 2013. Web. 22 July 2013. (http://www.fallsparkfarmersmarket.com/site/about_us_new.pdf).
3. Brooking Farmers Market Rules. Brookings Farmers Market, 2013. Web. 12 May 2013. (http://media.wix.com/ugd//4c13b1_d876e30e4de13890e29e88e5123edc08.pdf).
4. Eat Fresh, Eat Local. Columbia Farmers Market, 2013. Web. 2 May 2013. (<http://columbiafarmersmarket.org/>).



Vision & Mission Statement Worksheet

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Directions: Use this handout to begin drafting your Vision and Mission Statements for the Farmers Market. For more information visit extension.sdstate.edu.

Vision Statement:

Mission Statement: