

**Workshop Title:**

Farmers' Market Vendor Success

**Speakers:**

Murray Tweedie, Michael Freeman, Amy Smith, Nick Stam, and Tracey Rose

**Executive Summary:**

This lecture was a panel discussion with the leading question of "what will give vendor success?" With diverse perspectives on this discussion topic, the speakers gave many practical methods to improve vendor success.

**Main Notes:**

Topic is tips for vendor success

*Murray Tweedie* from Wild Blueberry Meadows farmed from 7 – 700 acres (1998 – 2016)

- ◆ Unpredictable market – prices fluctuate
- ◆ How is there success in this market? Because they are related to their customers
- ◆ If you don't have a true love for people, the market is not the place for you. People will read you.
- ◆ Relate your story to them so that they feel welcome. The customers at the market are seeking community.
- ◆ Stand and greet your customers. Do not use your cellphone while you are at your booth. Do not eat at your booth. And have a good presentation and kiosk.
- ◆ Be passionate about what you do.

*Michael Freeman* is the manager of Sackville Farmers Market (NB)

- ◆ Use small town markets – they are the only source of fresh local food
- ◆ They have lower vendor fees and less wait and more flexible placement
- ◆ Engage with other vendors so that you can provide a vital secondary service to your customers – where can I find \_\_\_\_\_?
- ◆ Look at kiosk, prices, sector, practices, etc.
- ◆ Tap into the community that it offers – this is visible for customers
- ◆ No/positive competition
- ◆ Check out other markets for ideas and vocational renewal
- ◆ What can you do that no one else can do? What can you bring that no one else can bring?
- ◆ Work with your market manager and make your market manager work for you
- ◆ Be the complainer and advocate

*Amy Smith* of Heart Beet Organics at the Charlottetown Market

- ◆ Display is essential – having an eye for color
- ◆ People buy with their eyes and get excited by the appearance alone
- ◆ If you are going to use a table cloth, think about the effect of the color
- ◆ Clear signage
- ◆ Body language is important – open, welcoming, smiling – you are hosting a party and you are welcoming them into that
- ◆ Don't just know the other vendors but support them – its not just a selfish endeavor

- ◆ Be familiar with the product so that you can share recipe and directly relay information and ideas to your clientele
- ◆ High quality product along with new and exciting products will draw more people into the market

*Nick Stam* the Dutch Baker.

- ◆ At the market since 1981 and has made a living on it
- ◆ Be recognizable and belong – uniform or apron; have your employees looking professional so that the product appears professional
- ◆ Remember your customers – their preferences, their regular order, their name
- ◆ Know who your target customers are, know their financial range, know what products they will be needing and the quantities that will be requested
- ◆ Take responsibility for your failure and success

*Tracey Rose* has natural & ecofriendly soaps and body products in Sackville

Farmers' Market

- ◆ Don't doubt yourself even if you face confrontation
- ◆ Learn to engage with your customer
- ◆ Don't force your product
- ◆ Offer free samples
- ◆ Abide by guidelines for packaging
- ◆ Decide what matters for you and convey this to the customer through packaging/product

- ◆ Decide how you want to define success (doesn't need to be money)
- ◆ Monochromatic display: full, has continuity, incorporate different display heights, seasonal, central display with popular blends or new products, take credit cards
- ◆ Watch and listen to the customers (suggested blends, set-up, etc.)
- ◆ Smaller market provides in unique ways – especially community