

**2015 ACORN Conference & Trade Show  
Delta Prince Edward Hotel, Charlottetown, PE**

**Workshop Title: Farmers' Market Merchandising & Display**

**Speaker(s) & their title(s):** Michelle Wolf – certified coach, workplace education trainer and Director of Training for Farmers' Markets of Nova Scotia (FMNS)

**Executive Summary**

Presentation will differentiate your business at your market, online, everywhere. You need to appeal to your customers and attract them to your space. Have your products labeled and priced. Use table cloths. Have business signage up behind you where people can see it. If using canopies get your business name on the canopy. Don't forget to tell your story with your signage – benefits sell, features tell. Never miss an opportunity to tell your story. Avoid clutter. Avoid empty spaces. Your table should be neatly abundant throughout the market. Don't forget your own appearance. Think about your market uniform and how you want to present yourself as well.

**Detailed Notes**

In direct marketing sales are a function of product, presentation and the producer. Presentation is important.

You have to attract people to your vendor space. You need to appeal to your demographic that are shopping at your market.

Think:

- Business signage for your space
- Tablecloths
- No visible clutter
- Work in the three dimension of your space – go vertical
- Don't leave empty spaces

Avoid clutter on your table. Use symmetrical lines to help people orient themselves within your space. Don't leave too much space between products. Less can be more.

Have a sense of abundance at your table.

Take into account your market uniform: your appearance and consistency among workers does matter.

Think about your lighting – canopy colour can create unattractive lighting; back lighting can make it hard to read signage.

Colour of your background will matter – bin and basket colour will either highlight or hide your product. Contrast is important.

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Never put product at foot level – it will be lost.

Keep the sense of abundance throughout the market, consolidate if you need to.

Pay attention to the lifecycle of your sales over the market and figure out how you will adjust as you sell out of product.

Sometimes you don't need bins or baskets if you can stack and display in an attractive manner.

Table cloths do matter. Table cloths can be sewn to fit over your table in case of wind. It is another opportunity to brand your space and product. Use it to tell what you do. Plain is better.

Ensure your signage is easy to read. Sell by unit, bunch or bag, much easier for people to understand. List your prices and/or put in on the package. Help eliminate doubt.

Chalk boards – wash them throughout the season and update them so we can still read them.

Put a label on it or have prices displayed at visual height. Label varieties, names, benefits, and what can you do with it (e.g. selling plant transplants: include pictures of what people will be growing).

Have signage be your backdrops: Have your name there along with your business name, make it personal.

Done well your signs are as important as your product.

Don't sit and look bored at your space. Be on your feet and attentive. With direct marketing, you need to lay it all out on the table, this is your store.

Merchandising and display can allow you to charge more for your product. It will speak your price point.

Signage – your brand and your product matters more than your name. Tell your story. It will bring people to your booth. Get people loyal to your product not your name. How can you use the prime spots on your space, website, boxes, etc. to sell what you do, not just your name?

Samples – no messy plates, no Styrofoam bowls, how you sample matters. You need to restock, keep things clean and use nice dishware.

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Farmers' markets are about safe and healthy food. It is a lifestyle and value choice. How can we reflect that in our space? What can we do to be a model for the lifestyle and reward customers?

Follow food safety rules as well.