



Guideline On Operating Neighbourhood Farmers' Market



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This guideline is prepared by Work for a Better Bangladesh (WBB) Trust for the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, in the framework of the Support for Modelling, Planning and Improving Dhaka's Food System (DFS) project funded by the Embassy of the Kingdom of The Netherlands. The DFS Project is being implemented with the support of Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development, and Co-operatives. We are thankful to those, who supported us to prepare the guideline.

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| Project Name | : Establishing Neighbourhood Farmers' Market in Dhaka (ENFMD) |
| Donor and technical assistance | : Embassy of the Kingdom of The Netherlands, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, Bangladesh |
| Implementing organization | : Work for a Better Bangladesh (WBB) Trust |
| Duration of the Project | : May 2022- May 2023 |
| Project area | : Dhaka North City Corporation, Dhaka South City Corporation, Narayanganj City Corporation, Gazipur City Corporation |
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| Photo courtesy | : Work for a Better Bangladesh (WBB) Trust |
| Print | : May 2023 |

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Introduction:

A farmers' market is a public and recurring assembly of farmers or their representatives selling the food that they produced directly to consumers. The market is usually organized on a weekly basis. Ideally it will only include food grown safely, e.g., without harmful chemicals. The market establishes direct connection and ensures mutual benefits between farmers and consumers.

The products available in the farmers' market are expected to be safely grown. In other words, the vegetables available in the farmers' market are grown following good agricultural practices (GAP), ideally favoring the use of organic fertilizer and organic pesticide often using integrated pest management. Thus, the market can be helpful in raising food safety. A farmers' market may provide access to a wide variety of agriculture product, such as safer vegetables, fruits, grains and, under the adequate circumstances, safe fish, meat, eggs, milk, and other dairy products.

Establishing a farmers' market needs specific efforts and steps. Choosing a location, getting the approval of local officials and the support of the local community, identifying farmers who are interested in selling safe food on a weekly basis at the location, etc. After accomplishing the first big step, the ongoing operation of a farmers' market will require to address a number of other areas. In this guidelines, we will walk you through a number of issues that are likely to come up in the operation of farmers' market.

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Management of Staff:

To operate and manage the market, it is essential to have at least four staff (one market supervisor and three market support staff). Market support staff will report to market supervisor. They are responsible to take out the equipment from respective ward councilor's office/ any other place suggested by the councilor (mentioned in the 'how to establish a farmers' market' guideline) and set up the market. At the end of the sell, they will wrap up all the equipment and again keep in place.

Market Setup:

There are several equipment in the farmers' market. Such as:

- **Triple** (a wide plastic sheet): this plastic sheet should be laid down on the street.
- **Umbrella with iron stands:** ten (less or more as per the market) umbrellas should be set up on the triple to be used as shades for the farmers. To mention, there are iron stands for the umbrellas. Each time, the stands need to be attached with the umbrella to use.
- **Stool:** 20 sets of stools, 10 big (to sit) and 10 small (to keep the meter scale) should be given to the farmers as seating arrangement. The number can vary as per the number of farmers.
- **Waste bin:** at least 3 waste bins should be provided to the market for dumping garbage
- **Water jar and glass:** A jar full of water and glass should be provided in the market site for the farmers as well as customers.
- **Bucket:** a bucket full of water should be provided for the farmers to use to wash vegetables/fruits.
- **White board, marker, and duster:** a white board, marker, and duster should be placed in the middle of the market site. Items available in the market and its price should be written on it prior to the beginning of sell. It will help the customers to have an idea about the products and price.
- **Masks and sanitizers:** all the farmers should be provided with masks and sanitizers, especially during cases like COVID-19, to maintain hygiene.
- **Meter scale:** one meter scale provided to each farmer to weigh their produce.



Support to Farmers:

Farmers need to be provided with certain supports, such as-

- Once the farmers reach the markets, they need to be provided with the support of unloading the products from the vehicle.
- Farmers are mostly confined with production work and in the context of Bangladesh, they rarely participate in markets. So, display the produce to attract consumers.
- The farmers will need support to fix the price of the produce and to manage the customers as well in terms of behavior, packaging, and selling.



- Besides, the market support staff should also ensure that all the equipment are set prior the farmers reach to the market site.
- Sometimes, farmers may face some resistance from the school or educational institute or mosque (mentioned in the 'how to establish a farmers' market' guideline) while using the toilet. Such issues need to be taken care of.
- Farmers may face threat from the existing vendors/shopkeepers/local market/super shops. Such issues should be seriously taken and informed immediately to the local ward councilor and police station.
- Respond to the any issue/ complain raised by farmers.

Responding to Consumer Issues:

Along with farmers, customers should be provided with some support:

- Urban customers are mostly habituated to buy from local markets and vendors, who are very skilled in sales. Customers may find it difficult to deal with the farmers and market supervisor and market support staff need to intervene.



- Customers may complain regarding price, farmers' behavior, customer behavior, staff's behavior, waste management, product quality, or any other issue. Necessary action needs to be taken in this regard.

Waste Management:

As mentioned in the 'how to establish a farmers market' guideline, farmers' market is established in an open street. It is very essential that the place is kept as it is once the sell in the market is completed. Otherwise, the market may lose its' popularity. Farmers should take the responsibility of waste that are created from the produce. They should be instructed to wrap those and take back to utilize those as fertilizers. For any other waste, market support staff should manage those with support from councilor office.

Traffic Management:

As mentioned in the 'how to establish a farmers market' guideline, the market is established in such a site, where there is less vehicle pressure. Also, the market time is generally from 7 AM to 2 PM on the weekend and most of the sells are completed within 12 AM, when traffic is at its lowest. Even then, the market support staff should be careful about traffic management to prevent any accident. With traffic cone and rope, a barrier can be made to separate the market site and vehicular movement can be restricted in that zone to safeguard the consumers. Also, if the street has an alternate path, vehicular movement can be diverted for the market time. But all these need to be done with the permission from the local ward councilor office and the local police station.

Timing:

Timing of the market is an essential point as it effects the sell in the market. In the urban settings, many people go out for morning walk very early. They are the most potential customers, and they tend to buy vegetables/fruits on their way home. To get their attention, the market should be organized on time, preferably by 7AM. It will help to boost the sell in the market and to ensure the profit. It is to mention that the timing may change as per weather, especially during winter and rainy season. Also, situation like conflict, pandemic, or any other crisis, should be considered.

Monitoring:

Monitoring is essential to operate the market successfully. All the above-mentioned issues are part of monitoring. Apart from those, several issues should be taken care of:

- The type of products offered in the market should be compatible with the endorsement received from Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) or/and Department of Livestock Services or/and Department of Fisheries to ensure that the distinctive quality of the offer is maintained. For example, endorsement from DAE only should limit the produce to fruits and vegetables.
- It should be ensured that, other than the listed farmers by DAE/DLS/DoF no one should be able to participate in the market. Sometimes, external vendors may try to sit in the premises of the market with their goods, unless they negatively impact the Sell in the farmers' market they can be welcomed to establish nearby.
- It should be ensured that the farmers are bringing products only produced by them. For this, a regular communication with DAE/DLS/DoF should be maintained about the crops and products being produced in the farmers' area. If any farmer does any malpractice, a strict action should be taken against him/her.
- Sometimes, farmers may fail to fix the price of the produce and it can be more than the market price. To solve possible dispute, market staff should intervene and ensure that the price of the produce is not above current general market prices. In any case, the policy on prices should be agreed by the market management committee based on the justification for any premium or discount prices.
- It is important to maintain a monitoring tool to keep track, who are participating each week, type and quantity of the produce, price per unit, etc. It will help to track down the sells per week.
- Due to the interest of urban people to buy safe food, there is a very little chance that, there will be unsold good. If there is any produce left farmers can follow several strategies. They can sell the produce to the community people at discount or, they can sell the produce to nearby hotels, or they can take back the produce to their village. It should be decided by the farmers.



Wrap-up of Each Market Day:

Once the sell in the farmers' market is completed, it is the responsibility of the market supervisor and market support staff to wrap up all the equipment, such as- triple, umbrella with iron stands, stools, waste bin, water jar and glass, bucket, white board, marker, and duster, etc. The equipment should be kept in the designated place.

Regular Communication with Farmers:

It is necessary for the market supervisor to maintain regular communication with the farmers, especially day before the market. It is essential to have an idea if the farmers have any issue to participate in the market. If any farmer has any issue, there should be a plan to select another farmer from the pool to replace him/her. Also, the market supervisor should have an idea about the products that will be brought on upcoming week.

Market Committee:

A market committee is essential to smoothly manage and operate the activities of the market. The market committee should be chaired and co-chaired by the ward councilor and reserved councilor respectively and can have 10-15 members. The committee may include influential person from the community, farmers, consumers, and needs to have female representation. The committee is responsible for:

- recruiting market support staff.
- regular monitoring of the market management and operation.
- rotationally visit the market.
- take regular monitoring update from the market supervisor.
- solve any dispute.
- ensure farmers' amenities, (water and public toilet) and safety.
- ensure customer satisfaction in terms of quality, price, and management.
- promotional activities of the market, such as- meetings, leaflet distribution, or miking, etc.



- define the policy on prices as adapted to the community and any justification for premium or discount prices with respect to general ongoing market prices. This would be discussed and agreed with the farmers.
- to monitor the production practice of the farmers, the committee can visit farmers' fields.
- the committee needs to hold regular meeting (monthly/two monthly) about customer feedback, site change (if necessary), etc.

Conclusion:

The successful establishment of a farmer's market requires a great deal of time and effort. But all this hard work is worthwhile when the market is operating smoothly and can benefit both consumers and farmers. Operating a farmers' market is indeed a challenging task and this guideline aims to provide concrete steps to successfully navigate the issues. With great determination, monitoring, and attitude to embrace challenge, it is possible to make it happen and contribute to a healthier city.