



# Doing More With Less: Partnerships That Make Your Farmers Market Programming Possible!

Leah Nichelson, *Camas Farmer's Market*



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# THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIP

The best market programs are built together!  
Partnerships bring fresh ideas, shared resources and meaningful connections that make programming stronger and beneficial for everyone involved.



# About Me

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Currently managing 25 events per year, and a seasonal market!



# About This Session

By the end of this session, participants will:

- Understand how to build mutually beneficial partnerships
- Identify new potential community partners
- Learn ways to expand programming through collaboration
- Leave with a simple framework for sustainable partnerships

# What Does Your Market Need?

*Before you start to form new partnerships,  
ask yourselves:*

- 1. What is missing in your current programming? Music, health education, gardening, cooking demos, children's activities or something else?**
- 2. What are obstacles does your market face that inhibit these programs?**
- 3. Who are your current community partners, and how are those partnerships working for your market?**

*10 minutes for breakout discussion and share*





# Leveraging Your Network

- **Have a planning session with board and staff to discuss their networks and identify potential programming partners that match your current needs.**
- **Start with small, clear asks. Celebrate the no's!**
- **Communicate expectations and responsibilities early and often.**
- **Think collaboration, not transactions**

# Keeping Partnerships Sustainable

## Be Clear About Roles

- Lay out the expectations in the ask
- Be flexible but firm about your needs

## Check in Regularly

- Touch base often
- Ask for feedback, and take it to heart

## Know When to Walk Away

- Sometimes partnerships fail. But they always have something to teach you!



# Programming Partnership Success Stories from Camas!



# The Tod and Maxine McClaskey Culinary Institute

## The Program

- Weekly Chef Demos from Clark College Culinary students.

## The Benefit

- Students complete their required externship credit. Shoppers get education on how to use market produce, plus a tasty sample!

## Market Lift

- The market pays for the Chef Demo permit from the health department, a \$50 weekly reimbursement for ingredients, provides the tent and tables, and the disposable paper products.

## Partner Lift

- Students provide all cooking equipment, ingredients, and sanitation equipment. Students manage health inspections, service, and clean up.



<https://www.clark.edu/academics/programs/dept/culinary-institute/>

# Student Internships

## The Program

- Internships through Camas High Schools and the University of Washington Ecology program

## The Benefit

- Students complete their required internship credit while building and executing new programming for the market. Projects have included a composting program, Kid's Connection curriculum and marketing campaigns.

## Market Lift

- The market helps coordinate the project, and mentors the intern for the length of the internship.

## Partner Lift

- In addition to their project, the students are required to take on social media content creation management as well as photography responsibilities.



# Washington State University Master Gardeners

## The Program

- WSU Master Gardener Volunteers attend each market to share their expertise with shoppers.

## The Benefit

- Volunteers fulfill their mandatory volunteer hour requirement, and our shoppers can get all their gardening questions answered. They also bring kids activities, and share content for our newsletter.

## Market Lift

- The market provides the tent and table.

## Partner Lift

- WSU Master Gardeners coordinate all scheduling, as well as generating gardening articles for our newsletter.



# Kids Connection Programming Partnerships

## The Program

- We partner with nonprofits, churches, and small businesses for all of our Kids Connection activities.

## The Benefit

- Nonprofits and churches are able to fulfill their missions, businesses are able to connect with and serve their community. We benefit by not having to generate and staff the activity.

## Market Lift

- Connect with and coordinate with the partner, provide the tent and tables.

## Partner Lift

- Generate the idea within a framework that we provide, gather and provide supplies, staff the activity.



# Ripple Wellness

## The Program

- Ripple Wellness partners with the market for our Opening Day Health and Wellness Fair

## The Benefit

- The event allows 15 local health and wellness businesses to attend the market on opening day. It brings energy and vibrancy to the market, and lets the community find new health providers.

## Market Lift

- The market coordinates the businesses on opening day, and provides marketing and promotional support.

## Partner Lift

- Ripple Wellness recruits and secures all the participating businesses. They also collect booth fees from each business, to pass onto the market.



# Partnership Possibilities!

## Food & Farm Education

- Local conservation groups
- Local 4 -H groups
- Local chefs and culinary educators
- Community kitchens
- Seed libraries and garden clubs

## Kids Activities & Family Engagement

- Youth clubs and student leadership groups
- Libraries and summer reading programs
- Parks and recreation departments
- Early learning and preschool programs

## Health & Wellness Programming

- Public health departments
- Nutrition education programs
- Wellness clinics and providers
- Fitness instructors and studios
- Senior and active aging programs

## Arts, Music & Community Connection

- Local musicians and music programs
- Art teachers and student art groups
- Cultural organizations
- Community performance groups



# Thank You!

*May your partnerships be powerful,  
and your programming be plentiful!*

