

# Broadway Farmers Market

## A Year of Success

This year's goal for the Farmers Market was to bring in a variety of vendors and increase public awareness of the benefits of shopping at a local farmers market. Previously we had feedback that the community thought the vendors were yard sale or flea market vendors, and that there wasn't a good variety of product. Signage, social campaigns and special events helped us increase awareness and bring in new customers.

## Income \$1237

- Vendor Fees Collected: \$820
- T-shirt, Hat, Hoodie Sales: \$417
- Grants and Donations: \$0

## Expenses \$1847

- Print Advertising: \$200
- Banners: \$400
- Software Fee: \$360
- Wooden Nickels: \$501
- VAFMA Conference: \$287
- Food Conference: \$99

## Annual Budget \$2000



## 2015 Market Season

The focus of this Market year was on Marketing the Market... social media, print advertising, and event promotion of the market. We ramped up social media with increased presence on Facebook and Twitter, and with new accounts on Instagram, Pinterest, Yelp and TripAdvisor. Vendors were educated in the importance of maintaining their own social media pages for their business, and the Market page shared whatever posts the vendors had about what they were bringing to the market each week. 118 customers signed up for weekly e-newsletters containing information about upcoming market dates, products available and in season, highlights about the vendors, a weekly recipe, and information about upcoming events.





## Vendors this Season

We had a large percentage of returning vendors from past seasons, and many new additions to the market lineup!

### Returning

- Wayside Produce
- D.L. Shipp Farm
- Ryan's Fruit Market
- Simply Basic Nutrition
- Brenda's Pimento Cheese
- The Baker's Dozen Donuts
- Coote's Store Farm
- Mountain Valley Nursery
- Irish Path Farm
- Basinger Beef
- Bountiful BlueRidge
- Lani's Lemonade
- Ben Martin Sweet Corn

### New Vendors

- Broadway Berries
- The Cupcake Company
- His Child's Bakery
- Grillizza Grilled Pizza
- Junior Pig Co. BBQ
- Foodie Experiment
- SymOpt Farm
- Staff of Life Bread
- Paugh's Farm
- Wick & Flame Candle Co
- Silver Express Woodworking
- Olives & Honey
- Dilly Billy Pickles
- Green Gardens
- Shen Valley Artisans Coop

For social media reach, we made sure to follow relevant trends, using hashtags and "National Day" posts like "National Donut Day". Our Facebook reach increased from 1147 last October to 1473 on November 22nd. Instagram grew by 90 followers this season - many of them from Harrisonburg or national organizations. Through a photo contest, VA Foodie featured us on their website launch under the "Grow" tab.



### Community Spots

This year we introduced a free spot each week dedicated to a community civic or non-profit organization. Groups who took advantage of this spot included the county Voter Registrar, The Shenandoah Valley Soil and Water Conservation District, The Shenandoah Valley Solar Cooperative, The SPCA, Paws for Pits, Life Church, and The Broadway-Timberville Cub Scouts.

### Major Projects

There were two major projects identified by vendors and customers last season. The first was to host more "themed" events and have musicians at the market. The second was to be able to accept SNAP (food stamps) and debit/credit cards.



We held a number of highly promoted theme events this season, including Kid's Day, Dog Days, Trick-or-Treat at the Market, and a collaborative Holiday Market with the John C Myers PTA. Vendors also participated in the Autumn Days Craft Festival.

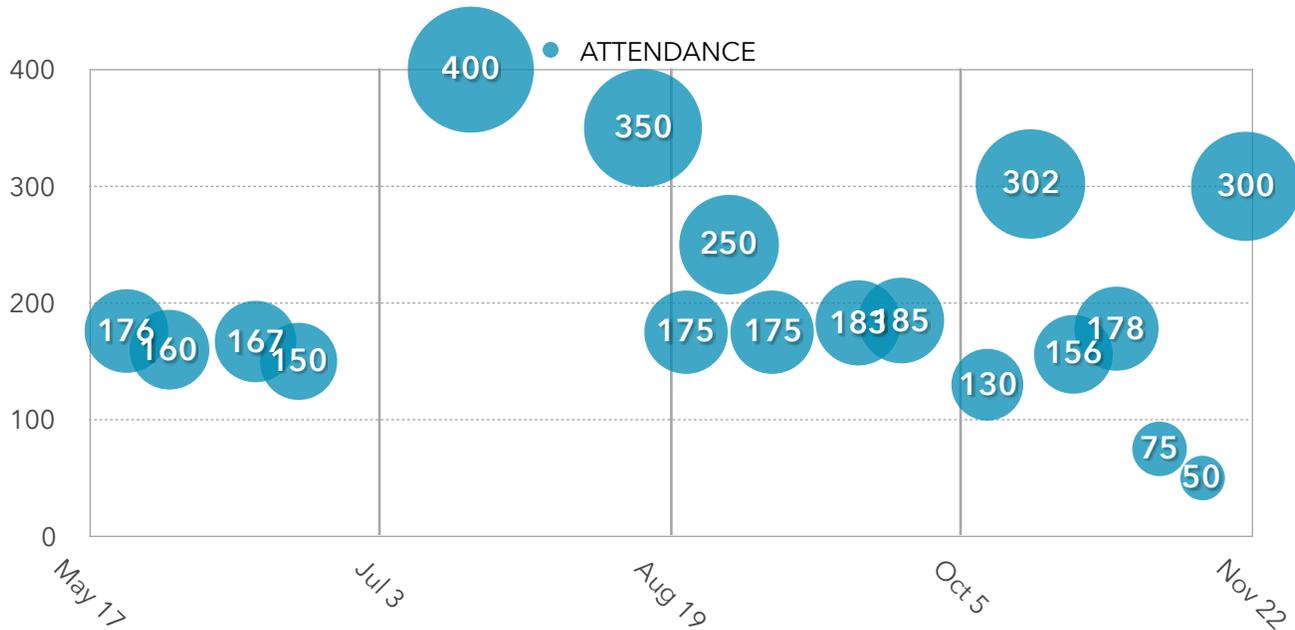
We finally received approval from the USDA Food and Nutrition Services to accept SNAP benefits for fresh food and produce at the Market. The next step achieved was to obtain free equipment and payment of



wireless fees through the Department of Social Services. We then ordered the wooden nickels to be used as purchase power from customer to vendor. While we only had one SNAP customer this past season, we are focusing on outreach this coming season, and are working with FNS and food hubs to advertise our location to SNAP users.

### Customer Attendance

Perhaps the best way to measure our success was with customer counts. A few weeks into the season I began keeping a tally of each adult customer who walked through the Market during operating hours. On special event days, we saw more than 300 customers. On regular market days, in the height of the season, we saw between 150 and 250 customers each market day. The season significantly dropped off in November, causing the vendors to agree that we should end earlier in the future.



## 2016 Market Season

Customers have asked for more vendors with jewelry, crafts, cheese and honey. With the use of our existing software Manage My Market; and involvement in the Virginia Farmers Market Association and Fields of Gold, we will focus on recruiting vendors of products not already being sold at the market.

Vendors have asked for park benches, a covered pavilion, and on-site storage for tables, canopies, and chairs. We will continue to look for grants to make this happen. As part of the Shenandoah Regional Market Managers group, we should also be eligible for regional grants to purchase marketing and promotional materials in order to bring in new customers.



We would also like to bring a Little Free Library to the market, with a custom charter sign and a listing in the National Little Free Library registry.



We have plans for semi-permanent signage instead of banners, marked street-side parking, and possibly a painted crosswalk to the gravel lot across from the Market. These will help customers identify the space as a Farmers Market and establish more of a professional business atmosphere, despite the lack of brick-and-mortar. I can work with the Planning Committee to be sure these types of additions fit in with the overall Town ambiance.

Our marketing strategy will continue to be on social media and newsletters. A pre-planned content calendar is in the works, with pre-planned social media posts ready-to-share.

### Volunteers of the Market

I have had offers from several regular vendors to help with marketing, planning, idea-sharing and working at the Market. Based on success in other markets like Lynchburg and Williamsburg, we will welcome these offers with open arms and create a “Market Volunteer” program. This will allow the Market Manager to focus on working with vendors and assisting customers on market days, while a volunteer helps at the Market Info table (selling promotional items, handing out literature and signing customers up for the newsletter).

### 2016 Market Season & Events

In 2015 we extended the season a month in the beginning, and two at the end. This year we will cut back a month at the end...running from Mother’s Day weekend to Shop Hometown weekend. We will have 7 major events, tentative dates shown at right.

### Virginia Farmers Market Association Membership

I have been elected to the board of directors of the Virginia Farmers Market Association, and as the regional director for the Shenandoah Valley area markets. With this membership, we should have access to cost-sharing resources and be able to pool our ideas and vendors for a more wide-spread community based purpose. Great things have happened in Broadway this past year - the years to come are just as promising!

*CeCe Dodd*, Market Manager

[facebook.com/BroadwayFarmersMarket](https://www.facebook.com/BroadwayFarmersMarket)



### 2016 Market Event Dates:

- May 7th: Season Opening
- June 26th: Market Kids Day
- August 13th: Market Dog Days
- August 1st -6th: National Farmers Market Week
- September 10th: Autumn Days
- October 29th Market Trick-or-Treat
- Nov 5th: Shop Hometown, Season Closing