

**Participating
 States:**

- Alabama
- Arkansas
- Colorado
- Florida
- Georgia
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Iowa
- Kentucky
- Louisiana
- Michigan
- Mississippi
- Nebraska
- New York
- Ohio
- Pennsylvania
- South Carolina
- Texas
- Washington, D.C.

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In the News...

**National Farm to School Network
 and MarketMaker give you the opportunity
 to improve our children's school menus**

Every child deserves access to nutritious food. With more than 30 million children eating school cafeteria meals daily, it's imperative that we promote healthy, balanced eating habits to help prevent obesity and other health-related disorders in our youth.



The National Farm to School Network is trying to do just that by connecting local producers with local schools in an effort to put healthier, fresher, and more flavorful foods on the school menu. The goal of Farm to School is to improve children's diets while promoting healthy eating, teaching nutrition and garden-based lessons in fun, new, and creative ways, and supporting the community and farmers by encouraging schools to 'buy local'. You can learn more at: <http://www.farmtoschool.org/>.

MarketMaker is doing its part to assist Farm to School efforts by linking local producers with educational institutions. You can be a part of this movement, too.

If you are currently a registered MarketMaker user, simply log into your MarketMaker profile and find the 'Methods of Sale' area under the type of products you offer. By checking the 'Farm to School' box, buyers are able to search for your business as they seek out healthy food purchases for local educational institutions.



Photo credit: National Farm to School Network

Not a registered user yet? Go to food-marketmaker.com and click on your state. Once on your state's page, click on 'Register Your Business'. You will be taken to the registration page where you can begin to enter your business information in detail. Remember the more detail, the more searchable you are and the easier your business is to find.

New Agritourism Website in South Carolina!

Locating a “U-pick”, farm stand, corn maze, or pumpkin patch in the Pee Dee region of South Carolina is now just a few clicks away thanks to a new online resource launched by Clemson University.

The Pee Dee AgriTourism Passport incorporates Google Maps to enable users to locate on-farm lodging, produce stands, and other agriculture-related businesses.

The website divides an array of businesses into easy to follow categories, such as wineries, seafood, festivals, farmers markets, lodging, and museums. Users can see the businesses on a map then click individual locations to access the vendors’ websites.



Blake Lanford, Clemson Extension agent in Horry County with the Clemson Institute for Economic & Community Development, who developed the program for the PeeDee, said the AgriTourism Passport is an innovative tool that connects Pee Dee businesses with the public and creates a network within the industry.

The program is integrated with S.C. MarketMaker which leverages this resource and facilitates development of similar websites in other tourism regions of South Carolina.

“MarketMaker and the AgriTourism Passport were developed as a means of sharing information about food and farm-based businesses with the consuming public”, said R. David Lamie, Extension specialist at the Clemson Institute for Economic & Community Development, who is leading the MarketMaker project in South Carolina.

By collaborating with the MarketMaker platform, similar versions of the Agri-Tourism Passport developed by Clemson could be adopted by other states that have statewide Market Maker websites.

“The AgriTourism Passport also provides the opportunity for collaboration with state and regional tourism and agriculture-related agencies to help broaden the program’s reach statewide and was developed with that goal”, said Lamie.

“The end-game is to boost agritourism in South Carolina and help local farm-based businesses prosper,” Lamie said.

Check out the Pee Dee AgriTourism Passport website at:

www.peedeeagritourism.org



140 Characters of Opportunity

By Michele Payn-Knoper

Twitter. It’s likely to be voted most likely to leave you scratching your head. After all, how much can you really say in 140 characters? And what on earth are all these weird twists on words, like Tweets, Twubs, Re-tweets, Tweeps and Tweet-ups? Isn’t all just “noise”?

Twitter may just represent one of the most powerful existing social media tools – and arguably, the most powerful tool for agriculture. Twitter allows you to:

1. Listen louder – see thought patterns and trends.
2. Engage in a conversation with people looking for information related to food, feed, fuel and fiber.
3. Immediately access breaking news, information, technical data and research.
4. Develop relationships to benefit your business.

The secret to Twitter is in the community and the conversation. It’s a great place for farmers and others involved in agriculture to engage in productive dialogue, which requires listening. The 140-character limit forces us to hone in on the essence of what really NEEDS to be communicated. And you learn very quickly what’s important to people and what’s not. Read Michele’s full article at: <http://www.causematters.com/news-and-media/140-characters-of-opportunity/>



GREAT IDEA!

Submitted by: **LIZ BILLINGS, MSU Product Center**

Two million Michigan residents participate in the SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) and an additional 1.5 million are eligible. That’s precisely why Toril Fisher is using MarketMaker to reduce the prevalence of hunger in Michigan. According to Fisher, “the ‘SNAP diet’ is essentially a ‘peanut butter and jelly diet’ that doesn’t provide enough funds to purchase fresh fruit and vegetables.”

That’s where Michigan’s food pantries come in, acting as the last safety net for the hungry. Over 1,000,000 people obtained food from food pantries and the Emergency Food Network last year. Fruits and vegetables are the cornerstone of a healthy diet, and for most of those people the only fresh produce that they eat comes from the Food Bank Council which services over 3500 food pantries, shelters and soup kitchens in the state.

“The Michigan agricultural community is like none other,” says Ms. Fisher, “they really have a sense of community and a willingness to help that is unmatched.” When they have excess produce or produce with slight cosmetic blemishes, they call the FBCM and donate. Over 6 million pounds was donated last year.

Ms. Fisher met with Tom Kalchik of the Michigan State University Product Center, who introduced her to MarketMaker’s capabilities. Ms. Fisher began using MarketMaker to identify farms within 50 miles of its member food bank’s warehouses and proactively contracted with several of them to provide over 6 million pounds of produce through the Michigan Farm To Food Bank pilot program.

MarketMaker enabled Ms. Fisher to easily achieve her goal of identifying regional farms that could provide member food banks with specific types of fresh, whole produce with a minimal ecological impact. The program worked so well that Ms. Fisher is using MarketMaker again this year to expand the number of participating farms by 50% and her ultimate goal is to have every member food bank have at least one farm under contract to provide fresh produce.

NEW ADDITION!

MarketMaker recently added Food Banks to the database. Find them in the ‘Buyer’ profile. Registrations welcome!

AND...

EBT/SNAP, WIC, and Debit/Credit Card are now offered under ‘Method of Sale’ in ALL profiles.

Also check out ‘Hoop House/High Tunnel’ in attributes in the farmers profile and ‘Sprouts’ in the Vegetable category.

MarketPlace Buy & Sell Forum

Post ads for products and/or services you have to sell or want to buy. The Buy & Sell Forum is available to you at no cost. See detailed ads at: www.foodmarketmaker/main/marketplace.

BUY
9 listings

SELL
63 listings

SERVICES/EQUIPMENT
9 listings

TRANSPORTATION
0 listing



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Do you have an idea that might benefit another farm, fishery, or business? How have you used MarketMaker? Did you find markets for your products by doing a market search? Have you connected with another business on MarketMaker? Have customers found you because of your listing?

Tell us how you have used MarketMaker - we’d like to hear your story! Please submit ideas or articles to: marketmaker@extension.uiuc.edu.

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