

MarketMaker Farms & Businesses in the Spotlight

Premium Farm Raised Grain Fed Beef
Kentucky Grown



Split Creek Farm

Split Creek Farms' beef are pastured their entire lives and free finished on a mix of grains and forages in paddocks. They are never locked up and are free to receive plenty of sunshine and fresh air with free mobility. Their beef consistently grade USDA Prime on the rail or USDA Choice (when requested).

John's Custom Meats tests every single beef carcass sold for e-coli to ensure added safety measures. The beef is dry aged for a minimum of 14 days in a temperature controlled dry-aging cooler, then fabricated into retail ready portions, vacuum packaged, and quick frozen at -20 degrees to lock in flavor and freshness.

They also process a variety of value added products that are all made right in their house. They make what some call the state's best bacon - sugar cured hickory smoked bacon. They make several products that they like to call Naked, because they don't contain any "weird stuff." For example, they make Bologna with an ingredient statement that you can actually pronounce. Their bologna is made from high quality meat from the pork hams of locally grown and raised pork. They make summer sausage, bratwurst, andouille, breakfast sausage (bulk, links, and patties), jerky, etc. They also carry locally grown, raised, processed, pastured poultry and a whole storefront full of Kentucky Proud products.

When asked about MarketMaker, Amy said, "We registered our businesses a couple years ago and I'm very impressed with MarketMaker. It has proven to be quite beneficial in getting us restaurant leads. These connections mean business for us! It also gives us the opportunity to educate the public about raising and processing beef. MarketMaker is a wonderful program with great opportunities."

Visit Split Creek Farms at: <http://kyfreezerbeef.com/default.aspx> and John's Custom Meats at: <http://www.johnscustommeats.com/index.html>



TELL US How You Use MarketMaker – Be “Spotlighted” in our Newsletter



Tell us how you have used MarketMaker. We'd like to hear your story and tell about it in a future **Spotlight**. How have you used MarketMaker to improve your business? Did you find markets for your products by doing a market search? Were you able to connect with a business because you found their listing on MarketMaker? Did you have new business because the customer found your listing on MarketMaker?

Let us know the successes you have had because of MarketMaker. Email your experiences to Sandy at marketmaker@extension.uiuc.edu You just might be our next business “in the spotlight!”

Kentucky Continues to Expand Direct Market Opportunities for Farmers



The University of Kentucky recently hosted a focus group for chefs and foodservice administrators who currently incorporate locally produced food into their menus. Dr. Tim Woods, Extension Professor and Horticulture Marketing Specialist, along with Bob Perry, Chef and Coordinator for the UK Food Systems Initiative, facilitated the event. The objective was to understand what attracted these buyers to local products, explore the learning curve associated with “buying local”, and hopefully shed light on any aspects of their experience that may prevent long term success.

Among the long list of attributes that make local food a desirable product, the most consistent feedback was related to consumer demand, product quality or novelty, and community development. Those who had long term success with local food products were primarily driven by a combination of both economics and principle. Therefore, it would appear that hurdles like a weak distribution channel could be overlooked if the chef had a strong personal desire to buy local. [Read More](#)

Become A Fan...of Facebook!

In the past two newsletters we began discussing the use of social media. As a brief overview, social media is a powerful set of online tools that connect all agriculture industries together, from producer to the consumer. Last newsletter we talked about one of those tools, Twitter. In this newsletter we are going to discuss another one, Facebook. When you hear about Facebook you instantly think of your teenage children socializing with all of their friends. It certainly has replaced all those evenings talking on the telephone like when we were a child. Facebook has evolved not only into a social gathering place for personal relationships; it has also become an effective marketing tool for businesses. With over 180 million users on Facebook, you can see why there are opportunities.



So how can Facebook help a business? As with all social media like Twitter and blogging, you have a unique ability to tell your story and really connect with your customers. Many use these tools to dispel myths that generate on the internet like wild fire. You can give your business a personality that otherwise doesn't come through completely when your product is on a shelf or at a farmers market. Twitter gives a quick real-time snippet of your business, but Facebook gives you the opportunity to do more because it doesn't limit you to 140 characters. You can place pictures, videos, and links, along with comments in your status.

One of the drawbacks with Facebook is the applications that go along with the program. If you aren't interested in taking a quiz to see what Harry Potter character you are most like, it could be a bit overwhelming. Once you realize you can ignore these applications, it becomes much cleaner and easier to use. As a personal user, Facebook is restrictive in the number of people that can view and interact with you. You both have to agree to become friends. However, Facebook helps businesses by allowing them to create fan pages. This permits anyone who is interested in your business to become a fan. When a Facebook user becomes a fan, they will receive updates your business posts, but you will not have to view all of their personal status updates. Facebook gives you the opportunity to place [advertisements](#) on users' pages that might have similar interests.

You can benefit greatly by using both Twitter and Facebook together. There is a nice application on Facebook that allows you to combine your Facebook and Twitter status updates into one. It may seem like a lot of work, but businesses are out there using it in creative ways. [Here is just one example of how producers use Facebook.](#) For more information on how to create an account and fan page on Facebook go to <http://tutorialblog.org/how-to-create-a-facebook-fan-page/> Become a fan of MarketMaker on [Facebook!](#)

Blogging on the Range: Farmers Link to Consumers Via Social Media

Source: Ching Lee, Assistant Editor, California Farm Bureau Federation



Whether he's strolling through the corral, doing payroll at his desk or checking on a newborn calf, Stanislaus County dairy farmer Ray Prock likes to stop by what he calls his "virtual watercooler" to chat about his favorite topic: agriculture.

He does this by logging on to his Twitter account, a social networking Web site that allows users to exchange quick, frequent messages known as tweets. By firing up his computer or turning on his smartphone, Prock can get a glimpse of what people in the global community are saying—and talk back to them.

That's important, he said, because with so much misinformation out there about where food comes from and how it's produced, farmers have a responsibility to speak up and set the record straight. And with social media, they now have a tool to help them reach virtually anybody anywhere at any time. [Read More](#)



Twitter Unites Ag Sectors

Source: Blog written by Mike Deering, Director of Communications, U.S. Grains Council

Agriculture is a broad and diverse industry with a common goal of providing life's essentials for a growing global population. In my opinion, agriculture is the single most important industry to sustaining life on this planet. As extremist attacks plague our industry and threaten food security, among other things, unity within agriculture is increasingly important. As an agricultural communications professional, I often participate in meetings where division within the industry is discussed and creating unity within the industry is a common goal.

Although progress continues to be made, I have never seen anything like the Twitter phenomenon. This little online instant messaging tool is uniting the agricultural industry on all levels. On Twitter, you see fruit and vegetable folks promoting animal agriculture; organic growers supporting conventional growers; corn farmers shouting out in support of livestock producers; and so forth. [Read More](#)

Pumpkin Shortage? Not in Illinois

Although shortages of both jack-o-lantern pumpkins and canned pumpkin in stores have been reported, researchers say there are plenty of both available, particularly in the Midwest.

"Part of the confusion about possible shortages is because there are many different pumpkin varieties," said Bill Shoemaker, researcher at the University of Illinois Horticulture Research Center in St. Charles. "Processing pumpkins for canned pumpkin are great big football-shaped squash, a sort of tan color – not the kind of decorative jack-o-lantern pumpkin that consumers are used to seeing."



Shoemaker said last year there was a serious crop failure for processing pumpkins used in canned pumpkin pie filling – which is currently on the store shelves. This year's crop has been good, but it takes time to get it processed and into cans. "Right now the market is experiencing a gap in the need for canned pumpkin and the current availability of it in the stores," he said. "This year's crop is at the processing plant now. There may be a delay, but this year's pumpkin crop is coming to the rescue just in time." [Read More](#)

MarketMaker Tips & Pointers: How to Find a Business

When searching in MarketMaker you will be able to find a business that sells a particular type of food product. You can query the database for a variety of food-related businesses – Producers/Farmers, Wineries, Farmers Markets, Processors, Wholesalers, Food Retailers and Eating & Drinking Places.

[Begin Your Search](#)

Steps to Find a Business

- From your state's MarketMaker homepage, click on **Begin Your Search** on the left side of the page.
- Under **Find a Business**, click the down arrow to the right of the **Select Business Type** and select the type of business you want to search for.
- Select the specifics about the business that you want to find. The specifics are different dependent on the type of business you are looking for. Once selections are made, **Submit** your request for information.

A search results page will appear listing all of the businesses that fit the specific criteria you are looking for. The table includes several things:

- **Business Name, City and State**
- Business **Website** and **Email** connection, if available
- Action column – **MapIt** and **Detail** icons
 - **MapIt** (world globe icon) – shows the location of the business in map view
 - **Detail** (magnifying glass icon) – provides more specific information about the business
- **Map All** button – located above the results table. This option allows you to map all of the results listed.

By mapping all of the results, you can see where the businesses are located all at once. From the map, determine an area that best suits where you are looking for businesses. To zoom in, click and drag a box around the area.

New Farms & Businesses on MarketMaker



Since the September newsletter, over 130 new farms and businesses have registered on MarketMaker. Some could be from YOUR state! To see the new registrations, visit the **What's New in MarketMaker** webpage at <http://national.marketmaker.uiuc.edu/whatsnew.php>. Here you will be able to find specific information on each of the businesses like the type of business they are, the contact person, where they are from and much more. Click on their business' name and you will see their complete profile. Make sure to also click on "Last 30 Days" beside the table's title to see all of the registrants since our last newsletter.

On this webpage you will also be able to see the latest MarketPlace listings, most viewed MarketMaker Businesses and the latest MarketMaker News.



[MarketPlace Buy & Sell Forum](#) is where farms and businesses can place an ad for products/services they have to sell or products they want to buy. There is no cost to post an ad. The following types of ads are currently listed on the Forum:

Looking to Buy

- Organic Frozen Fruit
 - Greenhouse Frames
 - NY Raised Meat and Poultry
-

-
- Grain for Animal Consumption
 - Hull-less Oats; Oat Dehulling & Rolling Equipment

Looking to Sell

- Meat – Beef, Goat, Lamb, Chicken, Pheasant, Prawns/Catfish (18 ads)
- Eggs (5 ads)
- Vegetables – Pumpkins, Winter Squash, Tomatoes, Broccoli, Cabbage, Garlic, Pinto Beans, Potatoes (30 ads)
- Fruit – Apples, Blueberries, Muscadine/Scuppernong Grapes, Frozen Fruit (6 ads)
- Baking Mixes & Flours - (3 ads)
- Sauces – BBQ Sauce, Fresh Salsa, Jams/Jellies (3 ads)
- Alfalfa Hay (2 ads)
- Wine
- Chocolates
- Other Miscellaneous

Services

- Farmers' Markets
- Lodging
- Consulting/Marketing Services
- Aquaculture Equipment
- Jam Maker needed
- Post Harvest Plastic Bins
- Farm Tour

To check out the specific ads, go to the [MarketPlace Buy & Sell Forum](http://www.marketmaker.uiuc.edu/marketplace_buy_sell_forum) website and click on the specific area or ad you are interested in. The web address is http://www.marketmaker.uiuc.edu/marketplace_home.php

Contact Information

Email: marketmaker@extension.uiuc.edu

Web: <http://national.marketmaker.uiuc.edu>

National MarketMaker-Main Headquarters

University of Illinois Extension, 4550 Kennedy Drive, East Moline, IL 61244

If you do not want to receive this newsletter, visit our [Unsubscribe](#) page or reply to this e-mail with "unsubscribe" as the subject line.
