Fruit & Vegetable Farmers Market

24 West 40th Street New York City 10018

The Rebirth of Farmers Markets in New York City

Fruit & Vegetable Farmers Market

TUESDAYS
137th Street & Seventh Avenue

WEDNESDAYS
Flatbush & Atlantic Aves., Brooklyn

THURSDAYS
101st Street and Second Avenue

FRIDAYS
102nd St. & Amsterdam Avenue
Main & Spring Streets, Ossining, N.Y.

SATURDAYS
59th Street and Second Avenue
Union Sq. at 17th St. & Broadway

* Greenmarket is a Service Mark of the Council on the Environment of NYC

Greenmarket
The Rebirth of Farmers Markets in New York City

by Barry Benepe

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Preface

The quality of life in and around our cities has eroded grievously in recent decades. Our greatest city, New York, has suffered some of the greatest problems. Yet at a time when a series of man-made disasters have struck here, it is good to be reminded of the city's underlying vitality. Here and there, neighborhoods revive spontaneously, vacant lots bloom as community gardens, and now—Greenmarket.

Not long ago, few would have thought it possible. The city is fed by plasticized, ageless produce trucked from thousands of miles away, at a vast cost in fuel and flavor. In a radius of an hour's drive around the city, the farmer was all but extinct, and one by one the survivors were getting offers from developers that they could not refuse.

But a little group of practical visionaries led by Barry Benepe believed they could halt this decline, and reverse it. By their own dedicated efforts, with a little seed money from foundations and not a penny from the taxpayer, they have wrought a minor miracle.

In two seasons, Greenmarkets have become an institution, one of the city's valued assets. To visit one is to smell the fruits of the earth again, to enjoy the revival of life. One recalls the elderly city dweller who, parting the dewy tassels of a fresh ear of corn, cried with delight, "Oh, look at the lovely worm!" The pleasure of the shoppers—slum dwellers and middle-class alike—is matched by the evident pride and satisfaction of the farmers.

It is only a beginning. New York should have, and will have, scores of Greenmarkets, thousands of community gardens and a great number of bakers and other artisans serving their neighbors in newly enlivened public squares.

Farmers' markets exist elsewhere, of course. But few if any are so purposefully aimed at the well-being of nearby farmers and of the community as a whole. Further, because the obstacles here are the same as those in other cities, only worse, the New York experience may serve to encourage and enlighten community leaders elsewhere. It is to be hoped that this clear and accurate report will help them. To them, best wishes and a hearty appetite.

John Hess
Co-author with Karen Hess of "The Taste of America"

59th Street Market

Introduction

On Saturday, July 17, 1976, passers-by at 59th Street and Second Avenue in New York City were surprised and pleased to see a small group of farm trucks selling fresh produce in an empty lot across from the Queensboro Bridge and the recently opened Roosevelt Island Aerial Tramway. What they saw and later experienced, together with many thousands of other New Yorkers, was Greenmarket, the first retail farmers market to take place in Manhattan for several decades.

In such a massive and fast-paced city, the opening of a small farmers market might have remained unnoticed, but Greenmarket's appearance struck an unusually responsive chord. In a matter of a few weeks, the market became not only an unqualified success but a cherished event involving much more than the buying and selling of fresh vegetables.

This booklet tells Greenmarket's story—from inspiration to living reality in the city's midst. Its purpose is to document Greenmarket's birth and development and thereby provide assistance to others seeking to establish similar markets elsewhere. It is hoped that it will stimulate further experiments in the direct marketing of farm produce into our cities and lead to fresher food for millions of people and the preservation and expansion of healthy farm economies in our metropolitan areas.

A Seed Is Planted

Since the end of World War II millions of acres of prime farm land around our cities have been wiped out by housing, highways, shopping centers, and other suburban land development. In the region surrounding New York City alone, over a half million acres have been lost.

Since 1950, a half of Suffolk County's 123 thousand acres of productive farm land has been subdivided. Along the Hudson Valley, once the "Breadbasket of the Revolution," farmers are giving up to development pressures in the face of high taxes, high costs and inadequate access to urban markets.

Between 1950 and 1964 Orange County lost over 26% of its 274 thousand acres of farm land; Ulster, 42% of its 227,000; Sullivan, 42% of its 193,000; Dutchess, 32% of its 304,000; Putnam, 49% of its 43,000; and Columbia, 22% of its 260,000 acres. All told the Mid-Hudson region lost nearly a half million acres or over 32% of its farm land to spreading megalopolis. These losses have hurt those who seek rural values and depend on farms for fresh food.

In addition, the neglect of railroads by both city and state in making transportation policy has led to less competition in shipping and consequently higher prices. In the past 10 years rail deliveries of fresh produce have dropped off 50% nationwide with a consequent increase in air pollution, energy consumption and noise of giant trailer trucks on our city streets and highways. Delivery of fresh produce in New York City alone since 1963 has dropped over 50,000 rail carloads annually.

Small farmers have been the hardest hit by development pressures, taxes, and increased competition from large scale industrial growers from the South, Southwest, Mexico and the West Coast. Where once there was a thriving interchange between hundreds of small scale farmers and millions of city residents in a lively market place, there is now the plastic sanitized package of grim hard reminders of fruit and vegetables impersonally dispensed in the musak-masked supermarket.

Increasing food prices reflect the increasing transactions by middlemen coming between farmer and consumer: the packers, distributors, brokers, truckers, wholesalers, and retailers. They also reflect the lengthening distances of transport from tens to hundreds to thousands of miles along with the attendant costs of storage,

refrigeration, gassing to force brighter color, waxing to reduce drying, processing, canning, freezing, chemical additives, packaging, advertising and merchandising.

The resulting decline in flavor, freshness, ripeness and taste has led to a shift in consumption from fresh to processed foods and non-foods of all kinds. Corn, for example, is placed on the supermarket shelf several days old, having experienced almost total conversion of its sugar to starch. A consequence of this trend has been a reduction in annual per capita consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables from 414 pounds in the mid 1920's to 240 pounds in 1971. The consumer has become a victim rather than a beneficiary of the food-processing industry, and he has paid twice, first with a loss in food quality and second with the loss of the beautiful rolling countryside so essential to his spiritual well-being.

Why then must consumers and farmers fall victims together to this process? Why not join hands by reviving the urban market place in New York City? Writing in the *New York Times* in 1974, John Hess, the co-author of "The Taste of America," contrasted the difficulties that both farmers and buyers were having at the Hunts Point Terminal Market with the great success of the retail farmers market which gave an economic boost to downtown businesses in Syracuse, N.Y. Other cities across the nation were establishing such markets with equal success. The time did indeed seem ripe for New York City if the remaining farmers in the region were to be saved.

Fruition: The First Market

For two years, Greenmarket existed only as an idea. But early in April 1976, I submitted a written proposal to private foundations for financial support. Originally written as a feasibility study, the proposal gradually evolved into a detailed $36,000-dollar program for establishing an experimental weekly market in Manhattan during the coming summer. An early "seed money" grant of $800 from the America the Beautiful Fund provided time for both fund-raising and finding a non-profit organization interested in sponsoring the program.

In April, an agreement was signed with the Council on the Environment of New York City, a privately funded, tax-exempt organization affiliated with the Office of the Mayor and actively involved in

59th Street site

urban gardening and environmental education projects in communities throughout the city. Under the agreement the Council adopted Greenmarket and appointed me as its project director with the responsibility for fund-raising and project development, including investigation of potential market sites, locating farmers, and looking at farmers markets in other cities.

The first major break-through in funding came in June with a $10,000-dollar grant from the J. M. Kaplan Fund. Soon after, the Fund for the City of New York gave $5,000, followed by an additional $10,000 from the Vincent Astor Foundation. With these generous expressions of confidence and support, efforts to bring Greenmarket to life were able to move ahead in earnest.

After reviewing many locations for the proposed market, a city-owned lot was selected at 59th Street and Second Avenue on the East Side of Manhattan. While small (200′ x 55′), this lot appeared to be ideally situated. It was located between a relatively high density, middle and upper income residential community and a busy shopping district, only a block from Bloomingdale's and Alexander's department stores.

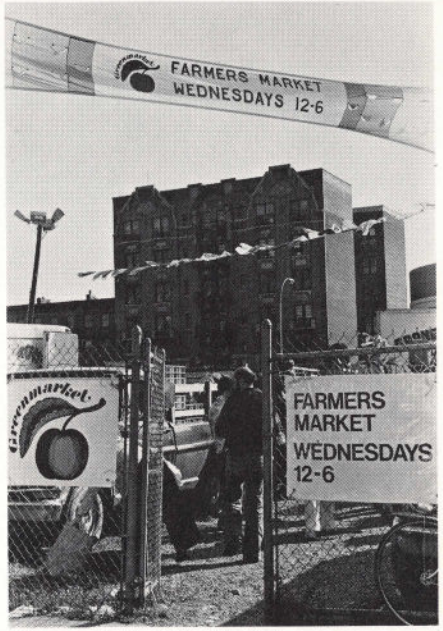
Because the lot was city-owned, adjoined two community planning districts, and was used jointly by the Police Department and a subway contractor, intensive and rapid negotiations were necessary to secure permission for its use in time to market local produce harvested in late July. These discussions involved an intercommunity task force, two community planning boards, four neighborhood and business organizations, an interagency task force, nine city departments and the Mayor's Office. Happily, after careful presentation of the market's purpose and guidelines, pledges of cooperation with agencies' requests, and generous assistance from

many public officials (especially Consumer Affairs Commissioner Elinor Guggenheimer), the project was finally granted all the necessary clearances for an opening in mid-July.

Preparations now intensified. Participation of metropolitan area farmers was actively sought using a variety of approaches involving governmental agencies and private organizations concerned with agriculture in the region. Many calls to individual farmers were made during which the purposes of the market were explained and effective ways of operating it discussed. Guidelines covering fees, produce origins, and selling practices were prepared and distributed along with application forms and descriptive information to prospective sellers. Site equipment such as signs, decorative umbrellas, benches, and storage facilities was arranged for, and personnel to supervise and assist market operations were hired. Finally, an extensive publicity effort was initiated to secure widespread coverage by newspapers, magazines, and radio and T.V. stations.

At 7 A.M. on July 17, 1976, seven plant, fruit and vegetable growers from Long Island, New Jersey, and upstate New York counties arrived at the site in pick-up trucks and vans laden with fresh-picked produce which they began to unload and display as a small but eager crowd began to form outside. Promptly at 8 A.M. the gates were swung open to these early arrivals who entered to find spread before them a colorful corridor lined with crates of such early summer crops as juicy sweet corn, vine-ripened tomatoes, crisp lettuce and other greens, and aromatic peaches at the peak of their ripeness.

Hanging baskets of zebra plants, ferns, coleus, and begonias added to the lushness of the scene, as shoppers crowded around the displays, chatted with the farmers, and hand-selected their produce for weighing on the hanging scales. Prices were somewhat less than those typically found in groceries and supermarkets, with three pounds of tomatoes or peppers or a dozen ears of corn selling for one dollar. Small crowds of shoppers lasted throughout the day, and by early afternoon nearly all of the morning's bounty was gone. Expressions on the faces of the tired farmers and departing shoppers told the story: in a small but definite way the market had proven itself to the people it was created to serve.



Entrance to Brooklyn Market

A typical Saturday at 59th Street

Middletown, N.Y. vegetables at Union Square Park

shoppers per day. Farmers accustomed to small crowds at their roadside stands were amazed and pleased to be surrounded by throngs of customers for hours on end, while the market shoppers were equally astonished to find farmers from the country selling a variety of fresh-picked seasonal produce right in the middle of the city.

Two More Blossom

The market attracted not only shoppers and farmers. Would-be co-sponsors saw the Greenmarket as a possible stimulus to declining business in two other areas of the city. The City Planning Department asked the Council to consider locating one market at Union Square in lower Manhattan and another in downtown Brooklyn.

At the first of these new sites, in a parking area adjacent to 17th Street and Union Square Park, the Council worked closely with Community Planning Board Five and the 14th Street Union Square Area Project ("Sweet 14"), a group representing local institutions and businesses. While attempts were made to schedule this market for a Friday to better serve the predominant working population in the surrounding area, Greenmarket was ultimately obliged to operate on Saturdays in order to receive approval from the Police and Traffic Departments. This meant reliance on residential areas several blocks away and pulling shoppers from 14th Street 3 blocks to the south. Nevertheless, within several weeks of its August 30th opening date, the Union Square market was attracting up to 15 farmers (some with a second truck at 59th Street) and a medium-sized crowd of shoppers, many of whom came to avoid the uptown market's crowds. While the trucks took longer to empty at Union Square, the farmers were generally satisfied with the turnout and their day's income, and voiced a willingness to return in 1977.

The other site selected after consultation with the Downtown Brooklyn Development Association (DBDA) was placed in a portion of a large parking lot near downtown Brooklyn situated at a major intersection of streets and public transportation lines, not far from both low-income and redeveloping "brownstone" neighborhoods. Rental of the space was negotiated directly with the Brooklyn Academy of Music, the site's owner. DBDA loaned a table and chairs and assisted with publicity efforts. Opening on September 1st, this market has been nearly as successful as the 59th Street market. Fifteen to eighteen farmers come every Wednesday, many

of whom also attend the other markets, including two black sellers representing farms in New Jersey and North Carolina.

How did all this come about? The following section describes the steps taken. While each locality will have its own specific requirements this description may be a useful guide to those wanting to establish similar urban farmers' markets elsewhere. Although the steps are organized sequentially, most actually took place simultaneously and required anywhere from a few days to a few months each.

Establishing Greenmarket: Necessary Steps

Permits, Regulations, and Community Support

The city-owned sites necessitated permits or approvals from, or consultations with, a large number of city agencies, including the departments of Real Estate, Transportation, Traffic, Highways, Consumer Affairs, City Planning, Police and Economic Development as well as several Community Planning Boards, local business and other community groups. In dealing with each agency, careful attention had to be paid to securing preliminary support from community groups and supplying all requested (and some unrequested) information. Such support in the form of letters and public testimony was carefully nurtured every step of the way through close consultation with neighborhood associations and individuals.

The large amount of time and effort spent developing local support was very important, not only in terms of securing the necessary approvals, but also in successfully answering objections within the community. These objections, based on fears of intrusions of "undesirable people", increased traffic congestion, and the creation of a "honky-tonk" atmosphere, were voiced by a small but vocal minority of community residents. Ultimately, an *ad hoc* group called "Friends of Greenmarket" collected the signatures of more than 1100 East Side residents supporting the market.

Site Selection

Due to the multiple aims of the Greenmarket project, sites for the markets were selected according to economic, social and environmental factors.

East Harlem Market

Because the economic success of the first market was paramount, the first site at 59th Street and Second Avenue was chosen with this in mind. Accessible to subway, aerial tram, bus and by foot to thousands of nearby residents and adjacent to a major shopping district, this market enjoyed instant success. It was also popular with local businesses. 40% of the 33 businesses along 58th and 59th Streets interviewed in October, 1976, reported an increase in business from Greenmarket. 85% actively supported it with the remaining two divided between no opinion and opposed.

The next two sites, suggested by private and city agencies, were started to revitalize declining areas in Manhattan and Brooklyn. While these locations returned less in fee income than 59th Street, the Brooklyn market has prospered. Additional sites which opened in East Harlem, West Harlem and the upper West Side in 1977 are primarily geared toward low income communities. A seventh site opened in late August, 1977, in downtown Ossining, N.Y. as a stimulus to local business.

Other considerations included site ownership, rental, visibility, appearance, environmental impact and possible combination with other events or uses such as the vegetable gardens alongside the site in East Harlem. The West Harlem site is the first to use a closed street. The upper West Side site is the first unfenced lot. While a fence may be an unsightly barrier, it keeps shoppers out until all trucks have safely entered and produce is displayed. It provides

better security, permits accurate counts of consumer attendance and a place to mount signs. Vines have been planted to screen the chainlink fence at 59th Street.

Site ownership is also a factor in site selection. While the privately owned Brooklyn site required payment of rent, the two publicly owned sites in midtown Manhattan, while free, required long, difficult and costly negotiations.

The Union Square site suffers from lack of visibility. People within 200′ of the market can only see the fronts of trucks. Permanent signs, which were not permitted, are considered essential. A site with well defined surroundings and existing trees is desirable. None of our sites had these qualities though Union Square has a Palladian park pavilion backing up the market.

In an effort to discourage automobile use sites were selected accessible by foot and public transportation, thereby minimizing air and noise pollution and vehicular congestion attributable to the markets. Socio-economic characteristics of the communities surrounding proposed sites were also considered in an effort to provide different ethnic and income groups with access to farm fresh produce suited to local tastes.

Waldo Park Brass Quintet plays at Brooklyn Market.

Site Design and Equipment

The first three markets provided an opportunity for different layouts. The fenced corridor plan at 59th Street, with head-on parking by pick-ups and vans on one side and parallel parking by 6-wheel trucks on the other, is an efficient and controllable arrangement. At Union Square, all trucks occupy an unfenced parking lot and back up to a sidewalk adjoining the park pavilion. In Brooklyn, trucks share a large fenced parking lot with trucks forming a large open rectangle, giving a feeling of a market "square."

The surface texture and physical settings of the three markets also vary. The sand surface at 59th Street is country-like, particularly since it is bordered by ailanthus trees, recently planted vines along the fence, and a Buisman elm at curbside. The large shade trees and pavilion adjacent to the Union Square market counteract its otherwise harsh asphalt and concrete surfaces. Two new Buisman elms and flowers planted by Greenmarket in large concrete pots provided by the Highway Department have also improved the appearance. The crushed stone surface at the Brooklyn site is preferable to asphalt.

Equipment items necessary for market operations include 8′ round and high, custom-made brightly colored umbrellas, 6′ long folding tables for distributing literature, benches for tired shoppers, identifying signs and sailcloth banners, storage huts, and heavy-duty plastic shopping bags bearing the Greenmarket logo. The logo, designed by Anne Gayler, is important not only for project identity but is a trademark of a very specific service: the sale of fresh produce sold by the farmers who grow it. There are too many so called "farmers markets" which sell the usual Hunts Point wholesale produce imported from all over the U.S. and Mexico and the Caribbean. The logo, which appears on stationery, cards, shopping bags, t-shirts, posters, signs, advertising and publications, is registered as a New York State Service mark and has a U.S. patent pending.

Market Fees, Guidelines, and Management

Space rental fees charged to farmers cover only 35% of the total expense of operating the markets. Foundation grants cover the balance. Fees, based on truck size and market location, currently

range from $15 for a small van at Union Square and the uptown sites to $60 for a 6-wheel truck at 59th Street.

Greenmarket guidelines permit only good-quality, locally grown produce to be sold at the markets, either grown by the farmer (who must be certified by the County Extension Agent) or purchased from neighboring farms. This is the most difficult guideline to adhere to and requires close monitoring. The one southern black seller was exempt from this requirement as long as produce was direct from the family farm. Other requirements include the posting of reasonable prices, use of scales approved by the New York City Department of Consumer Affairs, a sign identifying the farm by name and location, and cleaning up of the selling space at the end of the day. Enforcement of these guidelines is the major responsibility of the market manager at each site.

Market Scheduling

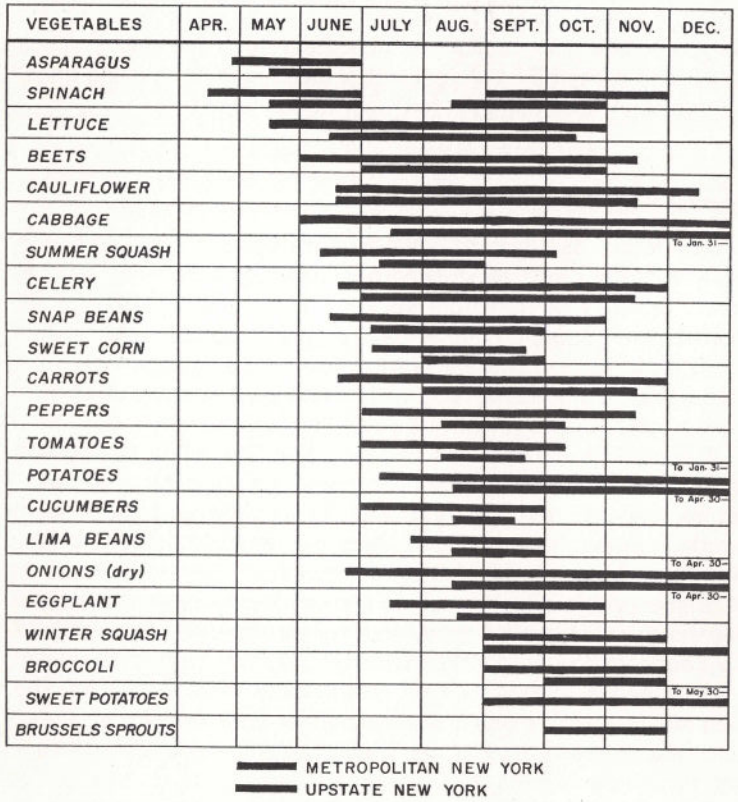
Under normal circumstances the markets open in June, with such early summer crops as strawberries, asparagus, spinach, lettuce, peas, radishes, apples from storage, honey, maple syrup, cider, homebaked goods, and flower and vegetable bedding plants. This is a crucial time to prevent farmers from bringing in crops grown or purchased out of their locality by admitting them only when their own crops come in.

The markets close in late October, at a time when most green vegetables are no longer available and only apples, root vegetables, squash, cabbage, and other hardy varieties remain. Such produce draws fewer shoppers than the bountiful summer crops, and fewer farmers remain to sell them.

Where possible the choice of market days is made to provide for the greatest convenience, and therefore participation, of both farmers and shoppers. The traditional Saturday market day works well in the 59th Street location and reduces traffic problems. The Saturday market at Union Square suffers from the closed stores and businesses nearby. If the Traffic Department finally agrees it will be shifted to Fridays.

The choice of Wednesday for the Brooklyn market was made to provide Saturday market farmers with an additional market day in the city, and other markets will continue this trend by operating on Tuesday (West Harlem), Thursday (East Harlem), and Friday (Upper West Side & Ossining).

APPROXIMATE MARKETING SEASONS FOR FRESH VEGETABLES FROM NEARBY GROWERS



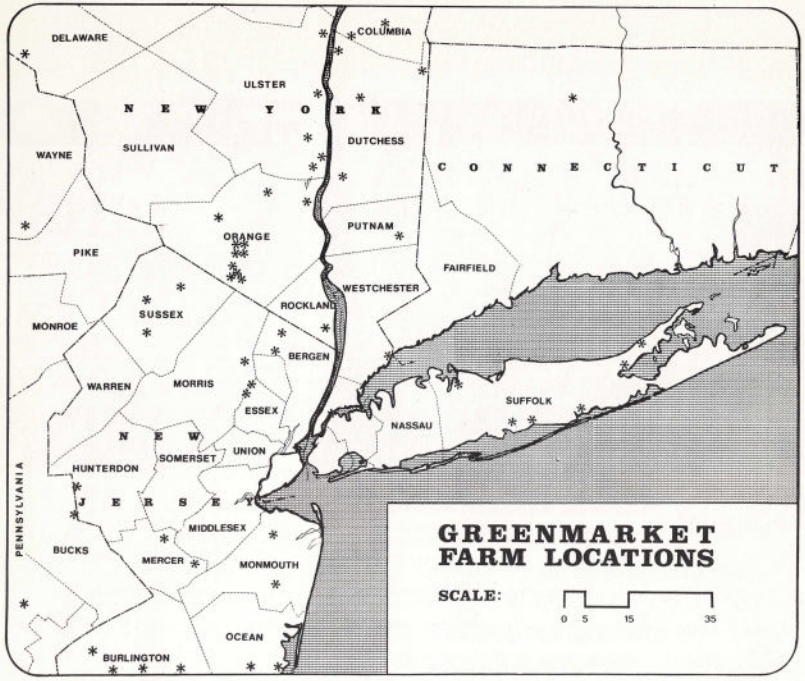
Source: New York State Cooperative Extension Service

Publicity

A well located market in the heart of human activity needs little publicity. However, the uneveness of local response and the relatively large size of the markets (16-24 farmers) require around 4000 people or more a day to sustain sales. A strong publicity campaign is necessary to sustain this amount week after week. We have been fortunate in obtaining news coverage from six major TV networks, radio, weekly and daily newspapers, and some national magazines. This came as a result of repeated mailing out of carefully prepared releases to over 100 local and regional media outlets and constant phone follow-ups. Advertising was kept to a minimum though subway advertising for the six markets is being considered.

The Farmers

Metropolitan area farmers were actively sought for Greenmarket through both direct and indirect approaches. Initially, working relationships were established with agricultural specialists at Rutgers and Cornell Universities, who provided important contacts in the agricultural community and suggested ways of effectively publicizing Greenmarket. Following this, contacts were made with more than thirty county extension agents in New York and New Jersey, who agreed to write and talk to farmers about the project. We then



sought help from regional and state wide agricultural associations, who agreed to publish notices in their monthly newsletters. Finally, we telephoned hundreds of farmers whose names appeared on lists of roadside stands and pick-your-own operations published by State Agriculture Departments and the Cooperative Extension Service, or who were suggested in turn by other farmers. Caution is required in selecting roadside stand operators. Some are not farmers and are prone to bring out of season produce shipped in from distant areas.

Because it was recognized that farmers markets are not likely to interest large-scale growers, calls were concentrated among small and medium-scale farmers, many already involved in direct marketing. Part-time and "backyard" farmers were particularly sought in order to stimulate the growth of new farms. The sixty or more farmers who participate at one or more sites or times come from all parts of the New York Metropolitan Region and beyond. They include a number of "black dirt" vegetable growers from the rich muckland soil areas of Orange County, 4th generation fruit growers with orchards overlooking the Hudson River, a Chinese vegetable farmer from far eastern Long Island, a wine grape grower

from the Finger Lakes District of western New York State, organic farmers from New York and Pennsylvania, a honey producer from the southern part of New Jersey and a plant grower from New York City itself.

Most of the growers have farms of thirty to sixty acres which they have operated for between four and twelve years. Several own large, ancient homesteads that have been under continuous family ownership for more than 160 years. They generally bring a wide variety of homegrown produce, selling it from long tables placed alongside their trucks. The smaller-scale farmers tend to bring chiefly either the most popular vegetables like sweet corn, tomatoes, peppers and greens, or specialized crops such as asparagus, strawberries, rhubarb, grapes, pears, apples, honey, and apple cider, and set up crates behind their pick-ups to serve as display and sales counters.

Since each farmer usually sells almost all of his produce by the end of the day, his return depends largely on the amount of produce he brings to the market. Gross returns range from less than $300 to more than $1200 per market day, up to 2½ times more than he would obtain on the wholesale market.

After the first season's experience many of the farmers believe that Greenmarket can mean the difference between their economic survival and bankruptcy. In their view, such markets represent the only alternative to an increasingly unprofitable wholesale market system. Other farmers see the markets as a beneficial supplement to their income from wholesale operations or roadside stands. Small-scale, part-time growers view them as inducement to expand their small acreages. Many of these farmers, as well as those for whom the market proved critical, stated that in years to come they

Black dirt farm land, Goshen, N.Y.

The John Labanowskis weeding their onion fields.

will grow larger and more varied crops exclusively for Greenmarket.

The economic incentive has not been the only one. Having long possessed a variety of negative images of city life and people, many of the farmers were surprised and moved by the warmth and appreciation expressed by shoppers. John Labanowski, a "black dirt" farmer from Goshen, New York, summed up this new attitude as follows:

"Before this year, I could care 2¢ about going to New York. Now I look forward to coming. Heck, there's a lot of nice people there."

The Consumers

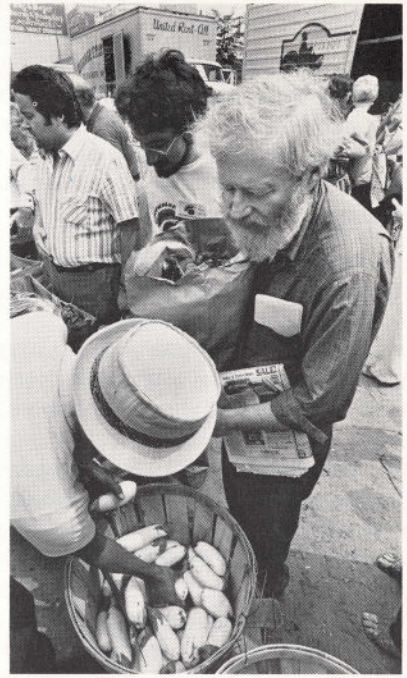
City shoppers reacted with spontaneous expressions of joy and excitement to the sights, sounds, smells, and old-time social ambience of the open market place. The country-like atmosphere and the easy-going manner of the farmers seems to encourage a relaxed attitude on the part of many shoppers. Strangers would find themselves in conversation about the food, the farmers, or any manner of subjects, and friends arranged to rendezvous and shop together. The farmers, delighted to find a generally warm and appreciative crowd of people, returned the good feelings in kind by answering questions, giving cooking advice, and telling anecdotes while weighing purchases.

"It's a marvelous experience . . . Everybody's smiling . . . A wonderful way to start my Saturdays . . . I'm finally discovering what real vegetables smell like."

"Wonderful . . . We don't have to go to the country . . . Makes the neighborhood more of a neighborhood . . . It smells *like the country! . . . I feel like I'm in another time!"*

"It's terrific meeting people from other places . . . We like the farmers . . . Haven't ever seen such good, fresh produce . . . Nice people!"

Greenmarket shoppers come from all parts of the city, reflecting its blend of ethnic, racial, age, and income groups. A majority of shoppers walk or ride a bus to the markets from their homes in nearby neighborhoods, while others take subways from distant sections of the city. Many purchase a variety of produce from different sellers; others have become regular customers of one or two farmers. Some people have even visited their favorite farmers in the country after the markets closed for the season.



The Taste of the Market

In its freshness and seasonal variety, the produce sold at Greenmarket reflects its reliance on regional farms engaged in mixed crop agriculture. The list of those local crops seasonally available at the markets is a clear indication of the tremendous potential of this region to provide our tables with a cornucopia of fruits and vegetables.

tomatoes: plum, cherry, beefsteak, yellow
peppers: bell, red, banana, fryers, hot, green gells
cucumbers and pickles; eggplant
corn: yellow, white, butter and sugar, golden bantam
string beans: green and wax; lima beans: fordhook and pole; peas
cauliflower, broccoli, broccoli rabb, collards, mustard greens
celery, kohlrabi, rappinni
lettuce: iceberg, butter crunch, romaine, chicory, boston, bibb,
spinach, endive, escarole, swiss chard, dandelion greens, arugula
herbs: dill, basil, fennel, anise, savory, mint
coriander, parsley, curly parsley
cabbage: green, red, savoy; brussel sprouts
Chinese vegetables: snow peas, white eggplant, wintermelon,
white radishes, yardlong beans, Chinese cabbage, bitter squash
onions: spanish, red, white, yellow; scallions, leeks
beets, carrots, parsnips, radishes, turnips
potatoes: white and red skinned; sweet potatoes (yams)
peanuts: raw and boiled
squash: butternut, yellow, white scallop, zucchini, acorn, hubbard
pumpkin; cocozelle
strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, cherries
peaches, nectarines, plums, prune plums, wine grapes, quince
watermelon, sugar babies, festivals, canteloupe, muskmelon
pears: bosc, bartlett, red clapp, green clapp
apples: red and yellow delicious, macintosh, macoun, rome,
cortland, northern spy, black twig, baldwin, stayman, winesap,
idared, McCort, greening, green lodi, quinte (early red)
apple cider, grape juice, honey, maple syrup, eggs
bread: white, oatmeal, whole wheat, raisin, banana nut, zucchini
lemon nut and pumpkin; cinnamon buns, cookies, doughnuts
bedding plants, flowers, hanging plants, dried grasses, bittersweet,
gourds, indian corn.

Most, though not all, produce is fresh and ripe, the best greens and corn having been picked during the preceding 24 hours. The success of the market rests on maintaining good quality and reasonable prices which have been generally halfway between retail and wholesale.

The Future of Greenmarket

Greenmarket has already accomplished much of what it set out to do. It has brought food fresh from the farms which most agree is tastier and cheaper than the usual produce. Corn is sweeter and juicier than that available elsewhere. Tomatoes are also juicier, larger and redder. The contact between farmers and residents is warm and friendly, much to the surprise and pleasure of both. An oasis has been created in the city, that brings the rich taste, odor, and feel of the countryside. While only time and future research will tell, early indications are that farmers have also improved their position. It is also hoped that the markets will stimulate the growth of new farms and urban gardens close to and within the city. Vast areas of rubble covering the Bronx and Brooklyn are even now benefiting from an urban gardening program made possible through an appropriation obtained by Congressman Fred Richmond of Brooklyn, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Domestic Marketing, Consumer Relations, and Nutrition.

In addition, the Direct Marketing Act of 1976, also co-sponsored by Congressman Richmond, will provide financial assistance to direct marketing from farmer to consumer in 1977-78. Both sources of funds will be channeled through the Cooperative Extension Service at the land-grant colleges of Cornell and Rutgers in New York and New Jersey. Once tests being currently conducted at Cornell on the level of hazardous heavy metals in urban grown vegetables determine if they are safe to eat, Greenmarket may become the outlet for a new generation of urban farmers. Through Greenmarket, farmers are also beginning to wholesale to restaurants. At least one of the farmers has benefited by his association with Greenmarket by initiating regular sales under contract to the 14 restaurants managed by the International Hilton Company at the World Trade Center.

Greenmarket has the capability of branching out as communities express their interest and willingness to make arrangements

for securing sites and local support. We hope to become more a part of the city planning and building process, to help shape and beautify spaces for human activities. Most urban space has been too rigidly defined, over-specialized, and consequently, wastefully used. Farmers markets are only one of the many varied human activities needed to enliven public spaces. These spaces in turn must be planned and designed to bridge homes and civic life, leaving room for a community voice and their actual development and use.

Smaller cities outside New York City have expressed an interest in such markets. Middletown and Poughkeepsie started markets in 1976 and a Greenmarket was opened in Ossining in August 1977. Greenmarket stands ready to assist other communities to set up their own farmers markets.

Hindsight

Greenmarket is still in an experimental stage. Some lessons we have learned, and have yet to follow completely, include the following:

Setting Up: Allow 8 months lead time to find farmers and select sites.

Site Selection: Pick a site on the same day as and as close to existing activity as possible. Have a permanent location, storage, toilets, and signs which can be left up all year around.

Farmers: Check out each applicant as thoroughly as possible through the Cooperative Extension Service and make visits to the farms. Time his entry to coincide with his harvest. Restrict entry to farmers who sell only their own produce or produce purchased directly from known farmers the day before the sale.

Produce: Consistently poor produce should be the basis for exclusion from the market. Leaf produce should be cut the day before the market and kept cool and moist overnight. Farmers should report acreages planted and these should be checked by visits during the growing season.

Manpower: As can be seen from the above, at least one full time and several part-time staff people will be required to administer a program, depending on the number of markets. A person with energy, tact, and organizational ability is necessary to sustain the program. The challenges are varied but worth the effort, not only in the material accomplishments, but in the human contact with farmers and consumers.

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