

Marketing Specialty Cut Flowers
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For over ten years, Michael and Jonathan have worked their way around the farming and cut flower industries to expand their knowledge for a solid foundation in the Specialty Cut Flower Marketplace. Join Michael and Jonathan as they share their experience with marketing Specialty Cut Flowers.

WHERE WILL I MARKET MY CUT FLOWERS?

There are many markets for selling specialty cut flowers and you need to find the markets that best fit your lifestyle, personality and your farm goals.

Subscription Services: A flower only CSA or Flower Club is a new idea for many consumers. Subscriptions can be promoted to home owners, offices, salons, B&B's and are great to promote as birthday, anniversary or holiday gifts. We had an opportunity to offer our shares along side a fruit and vegetable CSA from a nearby friend with good success. Select the right amount of weeks to fit your growing season that also allows you some flexibility.

Roadside Stand: Location is the biggest deciding factor in how successful a roadside stand will be. A busy street versus a low traveled country road can make a huge difference. Beyond physical location you will need an inviting location with a clean and attractive stand. Our farm shared property with a vegetable farm and we found we had better sales if both of us had a well stocked stand. Our second season the vegetable farm was not very active in the stand so we saw a big decrease in sales at the stand.

Event Flowers: A moment in the market place for locally grown flowers has brides, grooms and event planners seeking out our product. If you have a design background and the patience to deal wedding parties and event planner this may be a good sales avenue for you. Just keep in mind this is very time consuming relative to the planning, designing and set up of the flowers, so make sure you are not giving too much for too little. A lower maintenance option is buckets of loose flowers or selling of bunches of flowers for the D-I-Y customer.

Farmers Market: Farmers' Markets offer many opportunities to farmers, but can be used in many different ways. Some farms use a market for simply that marketing and building relationships. Other growers who focus on sales to florists may use a market as a way to move large quantities of flowers or flowers that are not at the quality florists are looking for. For our farm we did not have the flexibility for a weekend market and weeknight markets in our area are not busy enough to make the time worth while for us. As business people we really tried to push away from the low prices of our competitors and found that even with our higher pricing, that is something to keep in mind when selling at markets. Home grown does not mean cheap. We encourage everyone to look at vendors selling flowers at your market, this will help to set yourself apart from your competition. The more unique and noticeable you can make yourself the better.

Retail Florist: This is the market place we are looking to make the main focus of our business. With retail and wholesale background we are familiar with the needs of florists. Local growers

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can offer a quality and variety of products that florists would love to work with but do not have easy access to. It can take some time to get into florists to build the business to business relationships, but we found that by servicing two to three florists in a day we could make more money than sitting at a market for 4 hours a week. The key to selling to florists is quality and consistency.

Wholesale Florist: Selling to a wholesale florist is a market where you generally need large quantities of similar product. For a farmer with limited time, this allows you to move a large quantity of product. This marketplace will bring you the least amount of money per stem compared to the others.