



October 2011

Dear Market Members

Thru rain and mud, no rain then flooding you made it through another season. Congratulations to the hard honest work that you all do. Be proud!

Do plan on attending the Fall Membership Meeting which will be held at the Human Services Building on State Street, November 7th at 7pm, more information to follow. It is very important that you attend the two annual meetings that are held in the spring and fall, as these are key opportunities to become involved, help nurture and sustain your place of business.

Look for your annual membership renewal packet to arrive at your doorstep very soon.

**ITHACA FARMERS' MARKET
STATEMENT OF CANDIDACY 2011
ELECTIONS STATEMENTS**

Current Membership
Ithaca Farmers' Market Board of Directors

Upcoming Term	Type of Vendor	Vendor Category
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Jackie Merwin	3 of 3	Full	Ag
Heather Sandford	3 of 3	Full	Ag
Dennis Hartley	3 of 3	Full	Ag
Steve Kettelle	2 of 3	Full	Ag
Ellen Knapp	2 of 3	Full	Ag
Robin Ostfeld	2 of 3	Full	Ag
Susan Rollings	1 of 3	Full	Craft
Marie Baumgardner	1 of 3	Full	Ag
David Kingsbury	1 of 3	Full	Ag

Listed below are the questions candidates are expected to answer:

- 1) Please describe your participation in the Farmers' Market: Name of Business, Business Philosophy and Products. How long you have been a member, associate or full, etc.
- 2) What is it that you like most about having your business at the Ithaca Farmers' Market?
- 3) What do you feel are the most pressing concerns of the Market at this time?
- 4) Why are you running for the board?
- 5) Name three goals you want to achieve during your tenure on the board?

Here are your willing candidates and fellow market friends. Thanks to you all and Good Luck!!!!

Dennis Caso-Dennis' Ice Cream

My name is Dennis Caso of Dennis' Homemade Ice Cream. I am currently an associate member and have been involved with the market since 1991 though there were a couple of years taken off for different reasons. I enjoy making the ice cream I sell at the market. Making ice cream is a great creative outlet and I take pride in my product.

What is it that you like most about having your business at the Ithaca Farmers' Market?

This is a difficult question to answer because there are many factors which together make the Farmers' market what it is and to list only one might appear to diminish others: The customers, the atmosphere and the music are great; it interesting to talk with other vendors about their products and many of the other vendors are good friends. It is a combination of these that I like most about being a part of the Farmers' Market.

What do you feel are the most pressing concerns of the Market at this time?

I think there are two main concerns, first is keeping a positive image for the market and the second is keeping a positive experience for the customers.

Why are you running for the board?

I am running for the board because I want to help keep a positive image for the market, as well as help to keep the customer experience positive. I also feel that it is important that each group [agriculture, crafts and food] be represented on the board.

Name three goals you want to achieve during your tenure on the board?

There are a couple of things I would like to see looked into to determine if they are feasible: A water fountain in the back of the office (as a food vendor, I do not like to see people playing with and drinking out of the hose food vendors use for water); another water source near the circle area (I have noticed a number of food vendors (including myself at times) near or in the circle who have to carry water from in back of the office to their booths); I also think a vendor hand washing station (aside from the bathroom sinks) would be a good idea.

I would like to add that in the “off ice cream” season, I teach. In the fall, my schedule is Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, however, during the winter semester, which runs from January through March, a Wednesday evening section of the course is added which would conflict with Wednesday board meetings. I don’t have any influence in the scheduling but if I were elected to the board, I would inquire about the possibility of the evening class being switched to a different evening.

Thank you,

Dennis Caso
Dennis’ Homemade Ice Cream

Dennis Hartley-Littletree Orchards

Greetings, I am Dennis Hartley of Littletree Orchards a family farm run by myself, Anna Steinkraus and our daughter Amara Steinkraus. We have been full working members of the Ithaca Farmers’ Market (IFM) for 35 years. Anna was president of the Board and negotiated the first lease with the city at our present location. Littletree put a lot of hours into building the present market along with many many market vendors and volunteers. We sell sweet cherries, tart cherries, peaches, raspberries, lots of APPLES, CIDER, cider doughnuts, cider slushies, apple chips, apple sauce, apple butter and some herbs and veggies.

At Littletree we work hard to achieve a sustainable way of farming. Our orchard uses a low spray and Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program, which includes pheromone disruption, sticky traps and trap monitoring.

IFM is a great venue to sell your product. Yes there are ups and downs but the vendors and the customers all enjoy themselves. The quality and array of products is mind boggling. We have a customer base that comes from far and near that love us. And of course it’s important that the market continue to generate income for members.

Pressing problems?--Parking, Vendor space, a little more weatherization and clarification of market rules

My years as a Board Member have been very rewarding. I have been and if elected will continue to listen to your concerns and thoughts and bring your voice to the Board. As a Board we work to make better policies and rules for the greater good of the members. I would like to continue that good work on your behalf.

How about a traffic light that works for the market? Now that would be a good thing. Find a way for the berms to be made as in days of old, beautification, flowers. Remember when it was a pleasure to look out into the parking lot. Our bldg. & grounds do a great job BUT they need HELP with their projects. We need more vendors to step up to the plate to make the market have the potential that is there.

And last but not least-----VOTE-----of course a VOTE for DENNIS HARTLEY would be nice but more important VOTE----Thanks

Jolene Lyon-Mt Pleasant Woodworks

Dear Vendors:

My name is Jolene Lyon and I am a craftsperson at the Ithaca Farmer's Market. I own Mt. Pleasant Woodworks and take great pride in working with my hands, creating wine bottle stoppers, jewelry boxes, bud vases, and more. Many of you, however, will probably best remember me running around with slips of paper in my hand every Saturday and Sunday for the "What's New" publication on the market website.

I am an associate and have been a member of the market since 2007. This is something I also take great pride in. The market has become my "storefront" and my business has flourished. I also enjoy the sense of community that the market offers. I work long hours, like the rest of you, and sometimes it can get lonely. I've made many wonderful friends here, so I want the market to continue to be the absolute best it can be.

And on that note, I have some concerns. I graduated from Cornell University in 1999 with a Bachelor's Degree in Business Science – I specialized in marketing and economics. I see businesses all around me – farm, food, and craft –not making the money they should be making. I watch the news: the economy is in a slump. But it doesn't have to be *for us!* Focusing on fixing the parking lot, using biobags, and whatnot is good, but at a time like this, we need to be focusing on increasing attendance. If I had to list three major goals I'd like to accomplish during my time on the board it would be: attendance, Attendance, and ATTENDANCE. More people walking through our market translates into more sales and increased revenue for us. And there are several ways to draw people in: contests, special events, parties, and more. And we can do all this, with little cost to ourselves!

One example of a low-cost, attendance-boosting technique is called cross-marketing. Breaking down the definition: we'll scratch your back if you scratch ours. There's plenty of local, non-competing businesses – take the local cinema – that might offer free tickets as a prize in one of our contests. They'll post a flyer at their business announcing our event while we thank them generously and *publicly* for the tickets throughout the duration of the contest. Everybody wins and at pennies on the dollar compared to traditional marketing.

Now let me turn the table for a minute: do *you* have a suggestion to increase market attendance? Maybe you have a great idea but aren't sure who to tell or if they'll even listen. Tell me! I'll listen! If it's a solid idea and enough people want it, I'll research it a little more and present my findings to the board. My email box is always open and I'll set up a time every week when people can call me. *Together* we can make the market The Place to Be!

In closing, I can only add that I am very grateful to be a member of the Ithaca Farmer's Market. It is truly a unique and inspiring place full of hardworking and creative people. Thank you!

Always,

Jolene M. Lyon, Artist
Mt. Pleasant Woodworks

Jackie Merwin, BLACK DIAMOND FARM

Black Diamond Farm joined the Market as a full ag member in 1998, coming to market with a bunch of “weird” apple varieties that no one was familiar with. Those “weird” apples, now called “heirloom,” are the calling card of our small farm that also raises peaches, plums, pears, grapes, cherries, and blueberries. Our business philosophy: provide uncommonly good, responsibly grown, high quality fruit, get to know regulars and their tastes; be open, friendly, and interactive with people who want to get to know the farmer. Give free tastes. Make it a fun experience.

What do I like about having our business at the Farmers Market? First, it’s great deal to be able to share overhead costs with all the other members. If each of us had to have our own store, we would each need to pay all the rent, upkeep, advertising costs, insurance, etc. ourselves. We would need to provide staffing for more than just 2 or 3 days per week. Our Market is a great way to do business as a cooperative. Second, our Market has been highly rated by so many magazines as a first-rate public space. We have been called a “produce slam dunk.” As part of the Advertising Committee for the past 10 years, I get to write and record ads telling everyone what a great place this is.

Our most pressing concerns stem from our phenomenal success. The infamous traffic jams are an outgrowth of our success. The shortage of booth space is due to so many people wanting to start their business at our Market. **The huge challenge is how to strike a healthy balance between supporting our existing members on the one hand, and helping incubate new businesses on the other.** Recently I’ve been hearing from veggie farmers that there are too many farms selling vegetables, and it’s often not worthwhile for them to come to Market. Do we need “diversity” considerations when admitting new ag members? How big can we get without losing what everyone cherishes about our Market? It’s not easy to figure this stuff out, but we do need people with good common sense, experience, and clear vision to help steer this ship.

During my 3 years on the Board, some issues I’ve worked on:

- As part of a small working group, we envisioned and made happen a Market website that’s more exciting, better to navigate and is easier for “normal non techie” people to make frequent updates.
- As part of another small working group, we tackled the vagueness and inequities in the work hour system and came up with what we hope are some significant improvements.

Some of the things I would like to achieve if re-elected:

- The plastic bag policy is a step in a good direction, but needs further tweaking to be workable. Produce vendors are most affected and know the most about their bag needs.
- The lines for the bathrooms are really long, especially if you’re working your booth alone. I share other members’ views that we need a vendor bathroom.

Years ago, on another Board I was elected to, I realized there was a learning curve period. I now feel pretty grounded on the IFM Board, and with a better foundation under my belt, would like to serve one more term to help steer the Market into the next decade.

John Reynolds-Daring Drake Farm:

My name is John Reynolds and I own Daring Drake Farm, along with Shannon O'Connor and our daughter Idunn. Daring Drake is a diverse fruit farm that includes a unique mix of berries, a full range of tree fruits, nursery and a flock of laying ducks for egg production. We strive to grow an assortment of high quality fruits that covers the entire growing season in the Finger Lakes. We have been a full member at the market for the last three seasons and we participated as Easy Entry vendors for a few years before attaining full membership. I have joined and participated in the Agricultural committee at the Farmer's Market since the beginning of the 2011 season.

The Ithaca Farmers' Market allows us to cultivate a loyal customer base for our fruit, while introducing "new" fruits to an array of casual customers. We enjoy having the one on one exchange with market patrons, which are missing from selling wholesale.

The opinions I have on the most pressing concerns at the market have developed from our time as members, previously as customers and through talking with many local people. Parking is a big concern for almost all customers. The number of people that have shared their desire to attend the market on a regular basis, but have been deterred by the parking situation is enormous. Attracting a larger share of loyal local shoppers should be a priority for a sustainable future market. Many of the "newer" farmer's markets near Ithaca are siphoning customers due to this issue. The Ithaca Market could encourage more participation through addressing this concern.

The steady increase in fees and costs associated with participating in the market needs to be addressed. Some costs incurred by the market are fixed and little can be done to change these, however some expenses could be adjusted to make sure we, the members, our getting the most value for the dollars spent.

I would also like to see us partnering with outside groups to encourage more under represented communities to attend markets on a regular basis. I feel a farmer's market should strive to reflect the local population that it serves.

I'm running with the goal of strengthening the market that clearly has a sturdy foundation from the hard work of the previous board members, our market managers, vendors and customers.

The three goals I want to accomplish include pushing for a referendum system for the general membership, when large changes are made to the existing rules of the market. The board should draft the rule change, but allow the membership a vote to accept or reject the proposal. Increasing local patrons at the market is a high priority. The final goal would include evaluating the expenses of the market to determine if the cost is worth the benefit. If we could tackle some of the concerns listed above, I would feel my tenure on the board was a success.

Thanks for your consideration. John

Susan Verberg – Verberg Photography

Hi, my name is Susan Verberg and together with my husband Rolf I run Verberg Photography which specializes in local and European natural and architectural scenes. I prefer quality over quantity and offer traditionally processed c-prints finished with high quality archival materials and custom framing. Being a street vendor is in my blood – I sold handmade jewelry as a teenager, did street art shows within a year and have had a veggie stand at home and joined the Trumansburg Framers Market where we sell our homestead surplus eggs, veggies & fruits. We joined the Ithaca Farmers Market as associate members right after we moved to the area in 2001 and have enjoyed our participation ever since; even while hauling garbage or folding a million B&B mail packages!

Why Market works so especially well for my business, and my fellow artisans, is that this market generates a constantly revolving customer base; new students & parents from IC and CU, well educated and well to do employees of the universities and it's affiliates and not to forget the tourists come to our lovely and gorgeous Fingerlakes area year after year. What I personally love about Market are the friendships with my fellow vendors and with our community, whom love what we have to offer and keep coming back for more! And to have such a wonderful building to be able to set up in and sell from on a weekly base is like having a storefront without the cost restricting overhead.

Having been an associate vendor my entire Market career most of my immediate concerns are associate vendor related. The Market has gone thru many different stages from when I joined up 10 years ago, has gone thru many changes, mostly for the good, but there seems to be a growing disconnect between the voting full membership and the non voting associates. As an associate artisan it's becoming difficult to develop business to its fullest potential; there is less and less space "at the top" and less and less space in the pavilion.

My reasons for running for the Board is that after 10 years of market vending, dealing firsthand with it's pressures, and witnessing vendors leave market because of it, I'd love to put my knowledge and experience to a good use and help figure out ways to relieve some of this and open up possibilities to growth for all of us.

I think it's past time associate vendors are seen as a welcome and participating part of our Market community and get the right to vote. It would be great to have an active role in maintaining and help making even better this wonderful Market – and really, we can run for the board but not vote? I have great ideas from practical points of view to help alleviate associate pressure, like Saturday stall sharing, and would love to work out a solution to our "wandering" musicians, like repurposing the gazebo to a music pavilion like the Trumansburg Farmers Market has very successfully done.

I plan to be at market for many years to come and look forward to offer my problem solving skills and business experience to create the best Market Experience the USA has yet to offer, for both our vendors and our customers!

Donald Weed-Schoolyard Sugarbush

Participation in the Ithaca Farmers Market: My participation in the market started as an easy entry vendor seven years ago offering only maple syrup in plastic jugs and a variety of glass. My son, Daniel, and I became full members in 2005.

Business information: Our business, Schoolyard Sugarbush, began as a home school project twenty-two years ago. Today, Schoolyard Sugarbush is a family business producing one of the widest varieties of pure maple syrup and maple products available in the US. Our Pure maple products are certified organic with NOFA-NY. As a certified organic producer our business goals have to be planned out years in advance and we have consistently achieved the goals set several years ahead of schedule. Our mission is to provide consistent high quality pure maple products for our customers and assist fellow producers to succeed in a viable and sustainable maple enterprise.

What I like about participating in the IFM: 1)-sales{ We are able to have a more consistent income from a seasonal crop.}, 2) The opportunity to interact with a variety of consumers and receive their input concerning our products and the ability to learn of their willingness to come back for repeat sales time and time again for quality maple products!

The most pressing issues for the IFM at this time: 1)Parking capacity, 2)Vendor Capacity, 3)The balance of agricultural participation and craft/food vendors and helping all vendors to remain profitable.

Why I am running for the BOD: 1) I want to do my part while I have capacity, 2) I believe I can help provide continued positive direction through my experience with other markets, my marketing background with maple products and New Hope Mills, and my experience working with other non-profit organizations.

My Goals: 1) Help committees interact and thus cause the market to thrive., 2) Help to achieve a friendly spirit between vendors, the board, and staff., 3) Help the IFM grow through a time when smaller urban markets are competing for patrons.

Huge thanks and appreciation for:

Dennis Hartley-2 terms, incumbent.

Jackie Merwin-1 term, incumbent.

Heather Sandord-1 term.

their time served on the board.