A Review of Marketing Options & Market Trends for Agricultural Producers

2015 Pitahaya Production Seminar San Marcos, CA

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What is Marketing?

- Marketing can be defined as a transaction for profit, a sale.
 - ✓ Static, making a sale is a one-time event.
 - ✓ Focus on making largest number of sales possible.
- Marketing is everything you do to promote your business, from conception to regular sales to loyal customers
 - ✓ Build relationships, loyal customers
 - ✓ Relies on word of mouth advertising
 - ✓ More sustainable, lower costs

What is Marketing?



Adapted from D. Thilmany and K. Curtis's "Marketing and Promotion Resources: Leveraging Existing Programs and Resources" http://cals.arizona.edu/arec/wemc/nichemarkets.html.



What is a Marketing?

- ◆ 4Ps marketing mix seen as too product oriented
- A fifth "P" needed & added to represent people or personnel
- Others suggest the model should be consumer oriented and adopt a 4Cs marketing mix:
 - ✓ Place = Convenience
 - ✓ Price = Cost to the User/Buyer
 - ✓ Promotion = Communications
 - ✓ Product = Customer needs and wants

Myers, G.S. (2014) Ag Marketing 101. University of Maryland Extension (UME). Keedysville, MD.

What is a (Your) Market?

- ◆ A well-defined group of people willing to buy your products or services
 - ✓ Defining your market is critical for marketing process
 - ✓ Analyze your potential market and identify groups or market segments you can target
- The market segments identified should guide marketing strategy:
 - ✓ Undifferentiated...treat all segments the same
 - ✓ Concentrated...focus on one particular segment
 - Differentiated...looks at whole market, recognizing the significance of each segment
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Market Research Anyone?

- Executive Summary
- Current Situation
- ◆ Competition and issue analysis
- Marketing objectives
- Marketing strategy
- Action Programs
- Budget
- Measurements
- Supporting Documents

Marketing Channels/Options

Direct Marketing

- ✓ U-Pick & AgriTourism
- ✓ Farmers Markets
- ✓ Roadside Stands
- ✓ Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)
- ✓ Internet sales
- Restaurants
- Independent & Small Retail Food Stores
- Institutional Markets
- Aggregators/Grower Marketing Coops
- Produce Brokers
- Food/Produce Distributors
- Produce Packing Houses
- Wholesale/Terminal Markets

NCAT Marketing Tip Sheet Series

This publication contains 13 tip sheets, each of which describes a particular marketing channel and notes some of the considerations associated with that approach to marketing. Each tip sheet also provides additional resources about that marketing channel. These tip sheets are available to download from the ATTRA website as a packet, or individually.



Source: NCAT/ATTRA https://attra.ncat.org/ University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources

Tips for Selling with: Agritourism and "Pick-Your-Own"

key point

Agritourism combines agricultural sales with on-farm activities that involve the customers. These can include hayrides, mazes, pumpkin patches, farm tours, a bed and breakfast, or other endeavors.

"Pick-your-own" or "you-pick" operations allow customers to wander out into the fields or orchards to pick their own apples, berries, pumpkins, or other crops. Customers check in at the farmstand when finished and pay by weight or volume. This can be a fun activity, especially for kids, and can sometimes allow customers to get larger volumes at lower prices.

Advantages

- Good way to attract customers willing to pay for an educational and engaging experience.
- Good way to diversify your farm business.
- Good way to advertise your farm and your other enterprises.
- Opportunity to educate the next generation about agriculture and rural communities.
- On-farm stores are an ideal venue to sell valueadded products, such as jams, baked goods, etc.

For this market you can expect:

- · Lower volume of product
- Higher prices per unit







Considerations

- You may have less privacy. People will be walking around your farm.
- You should be prepared to interact with a wide range of people.

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Tips for Selling at:

Farmers Markets

Farmers markets are temporary retail establishments typically held outdoors, where farmers come to sell their produce at a specified place and time. Farmers markets are growing in popularity across the country and can be a good entry-level selling place for beginning farmers.

Advantages

- You may receive more money per unit, since you sell directly to customers.
- You generally have flexibility in the variety and volume of products you take to market.
- No standard pack or grade is required, but your produce should be good quality.
- Direct contact allows you to find out what your customers want.
- You have the opportunity to build a loyal customer base, including local chefs.

Considerations

- The volume of sales will vary with the popularity of the market. Thi deliveries to other outlets in the area to increase your sales and effi
- Labor costs can be relatively high (time and travel to and from mark)
- If you sell at several farmers markets, schedules can be demanding.
- To sell at popular farmers markets, it helps to have unique products.



For this market you can expect:

· Lower volume of product

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Higher prices per unit







Tips for Selling at:

Roadside Stands

Roadside stands are physical structures located on a farm or along a nearby road where farmers sell produce, meat, eggs, dairy, or other products from the farm. The stands can be as simple as a small open-sided display with payment on the honor system, or as elaborate as a small arocery store.



Advantages

- You have potential for high profit margins because you sell directly to customers.
- You have low advertising costs, since you just need a few signs.
- You may have low overhead costs, depending on how elaborate the structure is. Some farm stands are very simple, even unstaffed, running on the honor system, where customers leave money in a secure container.
- You have no transport costs.
- No standard pack or grade is required.

Considerations

- Location is critical. Good locations have high traffic and high visibility, v nesses, easy parking or turn-off lanes for customers, etc.
- Signs should be easy to see, giving drivers plenty of time to slow down an
- Make sure that local zoning ordinances allow roadside markets. Check with other roadside vendors about where to obtain permits.
- You could have high overhead expenses to develop, operate and staff the facility.



· Higher price per unit





Tips for Selling through:

CSAs — Community Supported Agriculture

CSA is a system of direct marketing where consumers pay the farmer at the beginning of the growing season for a weekly box of fresh fruits and vegetables. A CSA "share" is harvested and delivered to customers over a period of several months. CSAs may include meat, grain, flowers, or valueadded products such as bread or cheese, in addition to fresh produce.

A core philosophy of the CSA model is that customers (or "members") truly support their local CSA farm by sharing the risk each season. This means that even if there's a bad harvest, the members still pay the same amount for the season. Members are willing to do this to ensure that "their" farm survives over time as a healthy food source and connection to the land for the local community. A CSA farm has the opportunity to cultivate a very loyal customer base.

For this market you can expect:

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- · Lower volume of product
- Higher prices per unit





Advantages

- Customers pay up front, which generates operating capital.
- The major marketing push is completed before the season starts, leaving more time to farm during the growing season.
- CSAs can build loyal customers who may be willing to share the risks of farm Farmers must earn that loyalty by growing high quality products.
- No standard pack or grading is required.



Considera

CSAs requi to maintain of crops.



Tips for Selling on: The Internet

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The Internet is a communication and marketing tool that can provide exposure to a large number of potential customers. The Internet can be used to advertise your farm with pictures and maps, take orders online, show product availability, keep in touch with your existing customers, and support other ways of selling, such as CSAs or farmers markets. Farmers can have an Internet presence through their own website or by using a website run by a third party.

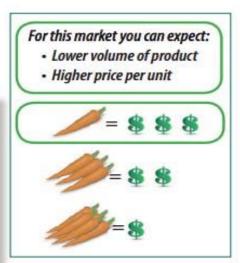
Advantages



- You can let a lot of people know about your farm, its history, product line, and location.
- You save time marketing and selling, since your website or web presence is always available to customers.
- A basic website can be developed with minimal instruction.
- Third-party websites can be used to provide web presence with minimal investment of your time or resources.

Considerations

- There is less personal connection between customer and producer over the Internet.
- An Internet presence requires regular maintenance.
- The Internet can be used to take and process orders, but this requires a more sophisticated website than one that simply advertises your farm and products.
- Know your closest, least expensive, most reliable shipping options. Can they ship cold?





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Marketing Channels/Options

♦ Direct Marketing

- ✓ U-Pick & Agri-Tourism
- ✓ Farmers Markets
- ✓ Roadside Stands
- ✓ Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)
- ✓ Internet sales



- ◆ The skills needed are different (people skills)
- Management intensity is much higher
- Your story becomes as important as the produce you are selling
- Only you can decide if direct marketing is for you based on your goals and your plan

key point

Tips for Selling to: NCAT Marketing Tip Sheet Series Restaurants

Restaurants are businesses that provide full meals and drinks, and try to offer a unique atmosphere and menu for customers. Some restaurants, especially locally owned ones, now want to feature dishes using local produce. This presents a good marketing opportunity for farmers to sell to them directly.

Advantages

Chefs value fresh, high-quality products.

Considerations

- Expect small order size and frequent delivery.
- Chefs value top quality produce.
- It's important to provide the buyer with a weekly availability list.
- Chefs may require a consistent supply of particular items.

Tips

- Be consistent. Chefs expect a product will be delivered if they put it on the menu.
- Build a relationship with the entire staff. Chefs move frequently.
- Chefs are on a tight schedule and generally require deliveries when they're not busy, such as before 10 a.m. or between 2 and 5 p.m.
- Introduce new products by dropping off free samples with your regular deliveries.

For this market you can expect:

- · Low-to-medium volume of product
- Higher prices per unit









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Tips for Selling to: Grocery Stores

Grocery stores typically buy large volumes of fresh and processed foods as well as other household items, reselling their products to individual consumers. Grocery stores are appealing because they sell everything customers need at one convenient place. Depending on the size of the town, these stores may have more than one location. Very large grocery chains operate stores across broad regions of the country. Many grocery stores are now interested in selling products grown by local farmers.

Advantages

- You may be able to sell larger volumes.
- The store may buy a range of products once you have introduced your first product.
- There is potential for a long-term relationship with the store, especially if you build a brand identity for your farm.

Considerations

- Liability insurance that covers claims of up to at least \$1 million is required.
- The first sale may be difficult because grocery stores have a limited amount of shelf space, already have regular HEALTHY FOOD SYSTEMS

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For this market you can expect:

- Medium-to-high volume of product
- · Lower prices per unit









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HEALTHY COMMUNIT

HEALTHY CALIFORNIANS

key point

Tips for Selling to: Institutional Marketing Tip Sheet Series Marketing Tip Sheet Series

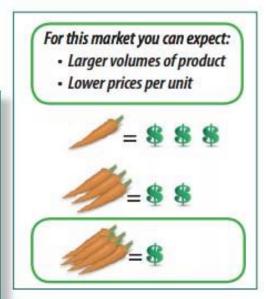
Institutional markets are entities such as cafeterias in state and local government buildings, schools, universities, prisons, hospitals, or similar organizations. These institutions are becoming more interested in buying local food, which provides a new marketing opportunity for a medium to large-scale farm.

Advantages

- You can sell large volumes of many products.
- There are many possible sales outlets, such as business cafeterias, schools, hospitals, prisons, day-care centers, senior centers, community colleges, and universities.

Considerations

- While you can sell a larger quantity, expect a lower price.
- Requires good communication between buyer and seller.
- Some institutions expect a more processed product.
- Liability insurance is required.
- Institutions usually pay within 30 days.
- The health department requires that vehicles delivering produce to institutions must remain at a certain temperature.





Tips for Selling to: Aggregators/Grower Marketing Coops

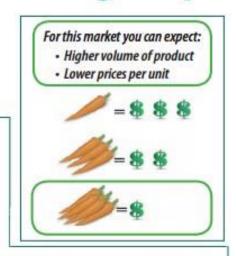
Aggregators are agricultural businesses or cooperatives of growers that consolidate and distribute agricultural products. They typically support regional growers of diverse sizes and experience, and sell products to local or regional markets. The consolidation of multiple farms' products can help supply fresh product for distributors and other wholesale customers and is not limited by grower size.

Advantages

- In contrast with other wholesale markets, you can sell large or small quantities of product through this marketing channel.
- Your products may still retain your farm identity and may be marketed locally or regionally.
- Aggregators will often work with growers to provide on-farm technical support, harvest and pre-production planning to meet market projections.
- Aggregators often serve as the marketer and distributor, which allows the grower to focus more time on farming and may reduce the marketing and distribution costs of the individual grower.
- Aggregators and marketing co-ops can help buy packaging materials, labels and marketing materials through group purchasing, which can reduce the individual grower's materials costs.

Considerations

 You can sell a larger quantity, but expect a lower price per unit.





Transferring produce from the cooler for delivery to local schools in Davis, Calif. www.caff.org



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Tips for Selling to:

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Produce Brokers

A produce broker is a salesperson who has access to any seller in the food chain, including packing houses, processors, agribusinesses, and mid- to large-scale farms. Typically they work with large-scale farms. A broker will help arrange the logistics of getting your product from your farm to their buyer, often taking commissions based on a percentage of the sale. Their success depends on their reputation and they spend years building relationships.

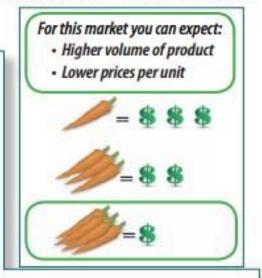
Advantages



- Brokers have relationships with many buyers and can arrange a sale more easily than the farmer can.
- Brokers generally have a better understanding of the market conditions and prices than the farmer does.
- Working with a broker allows you to focus on production, rather than sales.
- Brokers can arrange transportation, either from your farm or from a terminal market.

Considerations

- Brokers prefer to deal with larger volumes, but it is not a requirement.
- While you can sell a larger quantity, you should expect a lower price per unit.
- Research your broker and their reputation. Farmers can sign an agreeement with a broker that clearly delineates lines of fiscal responsibility.
- It is advantageous when would a with business to have sleen





Resources

Tips for Selling to: Produce Distributors

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Produce distributors are businesses that aggregate product and resell it in small or large quantities to their customers. Distributors may be an individual with a van or a company with a fleet of eighteen-wheelers. A distributor's primary relationship is purchasing directly from farmers, although distributors can also buy from brokers or packing houses.

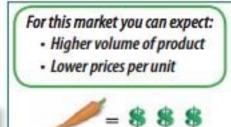
Distributors sell to a range of customers, from individual restaurants to institutions such as hospitals and schools. Since local food has come into higher demand, some distributors have made the effort to focus their business on providing local produce to their customers.

Advantages

- key point
- Distributors can handle large volumes of product.
- Distributors can contract for a particular product for the whole season.
- Farm product identity could be retained in this wholesale market if the distributor focuses on local products.

Considerations

- While you can sell a larger quantity, expect a lower price per unit.
- Distributors typically pay in 30 days. You must determine how that will affect your cash flow.
- Distributors have USDA standard pack and









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Tips for Selling to: Produce Packing Houses

Produce packing houses are large-scale businesses that buy produce from growers through a contract and then re-sell it on the open market. They sell very large quantities. Packing houses can also own land, renting plots to farmers to grow specifically for them, and sometimes supplying seed, inputs and packaging. They have invested in equipment such as coolers and fumigators, so they have the ability to store large amounts of product. Packing houses never own the product once they receive it, therefore the price the farmer receives is based on what it sells for at the end of the chain. Some packing houses are cooperatively owned by farmers.

Advantages



- Packing houses can provide land, seed, inputs, labor, and packaging.
- Working with a packing house allows farmers to focus on production rather than sales.
- Farmers don't have to invest in packing and washing equipment or storage facilities, because the packing house will provide those services for a fee.

For this market you can expect: - Higher volume of product - Lower prices per unit = \$ \$ \$ = \$ \$

Considerations

- Packing houses are considered by experts in the industry to be the most risky for farmers for many reasons. One potential problem is that the product goes through many hands, and the price a farmer gets at the end is based on the quality of the product, which may have had time to degrade.
- Some contracts with packing houses can limit participation in other market channels.
- Packing houses will quote you a price when you deliver the product, but it is not guaranteed. The farmer will get paid a percentage of the price the packing house receives for the sale.



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Tips for Selling to: Wholesale Buyers at Terminal Markets

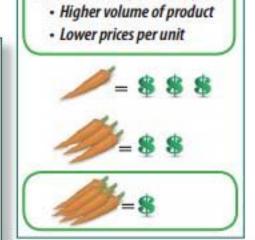
Wholesale buyers are typically located in permanent stalls at a terminal market. Terminal markets are central sites, often in a metropolitan area, that serve as an assembly and trading place for agricultural commodities. Wholesale buyers will purchase products from farmers, brokers, or packing houses in large quantities, and resell it into the open marketplace. Prices of products, cooling considerations, and time of delivery are all negotiated before farmers bring their products to the docks.

Advantages

- key point
- Buyers can handle large deliveries of produce.
- Generally, pre-negotiated prices are more stable with wholesale buyers, however prices are not guaranteed.

Considerations

- You can sell a larger quantity, but expect a lower price per unit.
- Wholesale buyers typically pay within 30 days. You must determine how this will affect your cash flow.
- Farmers can set the price, but the buyer must agree to it.
 Farmers must have a good idea of what the going prices are in the wholesale market. See fifth Tip, next page.
- Formore must most packing and grading standards



For this market you can expect:

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Trends

- Organic Foods
- Healthy(er) foods
- Restaurant & food industry trends
- ◆ Ethnic & religious foods
- ◆ Value added/convenience foods
- Value based marketing
- ◆ Local Foods

Organic Foods

- Organics has been the fastest growing sector in the produce industry for the past 20 years
- Organic food sales exceeded \$35 billion in 2014, with 11.3 % growth rate
- ◆ Fruit & vegetables represented 43.3 % of organic sales in 2014, followed by dairy with 14.6 %
- ◆ 38.83 million people claimed to have purchase organic food in 2014
- Organic prices for crops grown in Southern California (avocado, citrus, berries, etc.) still higher than conventional

Demand for Healthy(ier) Foods

- Demand for healthy, super foods continues to grow
- Health and nutritional benefits main driver behind expansion in many crops
 - ✓ Berries, primarily blueberries
 - ✓ Pomegranates
 - ✓ Pitahaya or Dragon Fruit
- Growers should capitalize on this trend and highlight health & nutritional benefits of the crops they grow

Restaurant & Food Industry Trends

http://www.restaurant.org/News-Research/Research/What-s-Hot



CULINARY THEMES

		HOT TREND
1.	Environmental sustainability	77%
2.	Natural ingredients/ minimally processed food	75%
3.	Hyper-local sourcing (e.g. restaurant gardens)	72%
4.	Food waste reduction/ management	70%
5.	Gluten-free cuisine	69%
6.	Nutrition	66%
7.	Artisan butchery	64%
8.	Simplicity/back to basics	64%
9.	Street food/food trucks	63%
10.	Grazing (e.g. small- plate sharing/snacking instead of traditional meals)	62%
11.	Nose-to-tail/root-to- stalk cooking (e.g. using entire animal/ plant)	61%
12.	Wildcrafting/foraging	60%

PRODUCE ITEMS

		HOT TREND	Yesterday's News	Perennia Favorite	
1.	Locally grown produce	79%	4%	17%	
2.	Heirloom apples	65%	16%	20%	
3.	Unusual/uncommon herbs (e.g. chervil, lovage, lemon balm, papalo)	64%	21%	14%	
4.	Organic produce	64%	19%	17%	
5.	Exotic fruits (e.g. rambutan, dragon fruit, paw paw, guava)	59%	27%	13%	
6.	Dark greens (e.g. kale, mustard greens, collards)	59%	18%	24%	
7.	Superfruit (e.g. acai, goji berry, mangos- teen)	58%	32%	10%	
8.	Heirloom tomatoes	54%	17%	29%	
9.	Hybrid fruits/vege- tables (e.g. plumcot, grapple, broccoflower)	53%	38%	9%	
10.	Fresh beans/peas (e.g. fava, sweet, snow)	52%	17%	31%	
11.	Root vegetables (e.g. parsnip, turnip, ruta-	52%	20%	29%	

Ethnic & Religious Foods

- Hispanics buying power estimated at \$1.5 billion
- Large number of immigrants from Eastern Africa and the Middle East
- Demand for religious certifications increasing (Kosher, Halal, etc.)
- Not all African Americans, Asian or Hispanic consumers are the same or have the same food preferences





Local Food Movement

- Local foods perceived as fresher, healthier, tastier, easier on the environment
- Consumers see local more important (52%) than organics & willing to pay more (?)
- ◆ Demand has grown exponentially
 - ✓ Number of CFMs in CA has grown from 1 in 1979 to >700 today & from 1755 in 1994 to 8144 in the US
- Local foods are changing the US food systems
 - ✓ Retailers & distributors are adapting, sourcing and promoting local products
 - ✓ Value-Based marketing

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PACKING/MARKETING

- Few handlers/packers available in SoCal, may have to pack on your own
- Most buyers want fruit commercially packed in 6, 10, and 20 lb. boxes.
- Market preference for red/colored flesh varieties, over \$ 1.00 more per pound
- Most imports from Vietnam, Nicaragua,
 Florida and California appear on Reports
- Quality, flavor, local...our selling points!



Pitahaya Market & Price Info

- USDA-AMS Market Report calls everything "Red Pitaya" but refers to skin color, no indication about flesh color.
- https://www.ams.usda.gov
 - Market News
 - Fruit and Vegetables
 - Fruits
 - Dragon Fruit (Red Pitaya)
 - From here you can refine the report by market, date, etc.

Packaging and Marketing

Date	Market	Origin	Color	Pack	Туре	Price US \$
8/18/14	Los Angeles	Nicaragua	Red	10 lbs.	Conventional	32.00 – 33.00
8/18/14	Los Angeles	Vietnam	Red	10 lbs.	Conventional	23.50 – 29.00
8/18/14	Los Angeles	California	Red	10 lbs.	Organic	57.50 – 57.50
8/18/14	Los Angeles	California	Red	6 lbs.	Organic	42.85 – 42.85
8/18/14	San Fran	Nicaragua	Red	10 lbs.	Conventional	38.00 – 38.00
8/18/14	San Fran	Florida	Red	20 lbs.	Conventional	50.00 - 50.00
8/18/14	San Fran	Florida	Red	¾ B.C.	Conventional	60.00 – 65.00

Source: USDA/AMS Website

Packaging and Marketing

Commodity	City Name	Туре	Package	Variety	Sub Variety	Grade	Date	Low Price	High Price	Mostly Low	Mostly High	Origin
DRAGON FRUIT (RED PITAYA)	BOSTON		20 lb cartons	WHITE FLESH			8/20/15	45	45			FLORIDA
DRAGON FRUIT (RED PITAYA)	BOSTON		20 lb cartons	RED FLESH			8/20/15	45	45			FLORIDA
(112)			20 15 cartons	TED I ELOTI			0,20,13	.5	.5			. 2011.071
DRAGON FRUIT (RED PITAYA)	BOSTON		20 lb cartons	RED FLESH			8/20/15					FLORIDA
DRAGON FRUIT (RED PITAYA)	BOSTON		4.5 kg cartons	RED FLESH			8/20/15	59	60	59	59	VIETNAM
DRAGON FRUIT (RED PITAYA)	DALLAS		10 lb cartons				8/20/15	63	63			VIETNAM
DRAGON FRUIT (RED PITAYA)	LOS ANGELES		10 lb cartons	WHITE FLESH			8/20/15	30	40	35	35	VIETNAM
DRAGON FRUIT (RED PITAYA)	NEW YORK		10 lb cartons	WHITE FLESH			8/20/15					VIETNAM
DRAGON FRUIT												
(RED PITAYA) DRAGON FRUIT	NEW YORK		10 lb cartons	RED FLESH			8/20/15					VIETNAM
(RED PITAYA)	PHILADELPHIA		20 lb cartons	WHITE FLESH			8/20/15	50		יעבוטונ	v vi Ca	FLORIDA

Agriculture and Natural Resources

Marketing Pitahaya or Dragon Fruit: 10 Things a Distributor Wants (from Frieda's Finest)

Understand your customer's business	Labeling and Trace Back				
Participate in Marketing	Food Safety and Insurance				
Don't be Greedy	Quality Control				
Target Dates and Yield Estimates	Pack Size & Pricing				
Post-Harvest Control	Variety & Flavor				

Success in agriculture depends on marketing what you grow at a profit. Do your homework, develop a business/marketing/food safety plan and spend time talking to prospective buyers or consumers!!

Who will buy Your Pitahayas?

- Melissas' / World Variety Produce
- Frieda's
- Whole Foods Market
- Eco-Farms?
- California Tropics?
- Stelhy Farms Market?
- Carreño's Produce?

Economic Prospects

- Great potential as a commercial crop alternative
- Establishment costs are high and can range from \$15000-25000/per acre
- Value per acre can be significant if yield and quality are maximized (> 20,000 lbs/acre)
- Downward pressure on price will continue because of increased domestic production and import volume (\$1.50 to \$3.00/lb. farm gate prices; \$6-8 at CFMs)
- Red fleshed varieties usually sell at a higher price than white fleshed varieties (~ \$1.00/lb)
- Risky Business...BE CAUTIOUS!!

Resources/References

- ◆ UCCE Riverside http://ceriverside.ucanr.edu/
- ◆ UCCE San Diego http://cesandiego.ucdavis.edu
- ◆ UC Small Farm Center http://Sfc.ucdavis.edu
- ♦ UC SAREP http://www.sarep.ucdavis.edu/
- UC Cost and Return Studies http://coststudies.ucdavis.edu
- ♦ NCAT/ATTRA https://attra.ncat.org/
- National Restaurant Association http://www.restaurant.org
- ◆ USDA Ag. Marketing Service http://www.ams.usda.gov/
- Ag Marketing Resource Center http://www.agmrc.org/
- Univ. of Maryland Extension https:// www.extension.umd.edu/agmarketing
- Western Extension Marketing Committee http://cals.arizona.edu/arec/wemc/

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