

MarketReady Producer Training Program

What is MarketReady?

The MarketReady Producer Training Program addresses market development risks and relationships that small farmers and ranchers must manage as they seek to develop supplier relationships with restaurants, grocery, wholesale, and foodservice buyers. While significant opportunity exists to build on the demand for local products in local markets, many farmers are hesitant or unprepared to meet the transactional requirements expected by these buyers to manage their own food safety, insurance, product quality, and traceability risks. MarketReady addresses these issues. After training, producers will be prepared for these business transactions when selling a variety of products, including dairy, fruits, meats, and vegetables.

What Topics Are Covered?

The training program is based around best business practices identified by buyers in the market channels that are actively seeking to engage local suppliers. The training is split into two units: one regarding selling to chefs and restaurants and the other, regarding selling to grocery, wholesale, or foodservice institutions.

While these marketing channels share similar issues, such as a basic business-to-business marketing framework, they also require some significant



differences in approach. MarketReady has been developed for the MarketMaker network of states to equip growers to more successfully engage these growing markets. Through its commitment to understand the Kentucky consumer, the University of Kentucky has been able to collect and qualify data useful to all of Kentucky's farm vendors. MarketReady will help farm vendors design a better business strategy to succeed.

Business functions covered by the MarketReady Training include:

- Communication & Relationship Building
- Quality Assurance & Temperature Control, Audits & Certifications
- Local Products for Local Markets
- Packaging
- Labeling
- Pricing
- Supply
- Delivery
- Storage
- Invoicing
- Insurance
- Satisfaction Guarantee
- Working Cooperatively
- Marketing

Grocery, Wholesale, and Foodservice Sales Unit

As the popularity of locally produced foods continues

to increase, demand is reaching beyond the farmers market and making its way to retail shelves and foodservice menus. Kentucky producers now are looking toward selling wholesale quantities of product(s) to grocery stores (independent, chain, and cooperatives), and foodservice institutions such as hospitals, schools, prisons, casinos, and corporate cafeterias.



Restaurant Sales Unit

Locally produced meat and seafood are this year's hottest trends for restaurant menu items, with locally grown produce pulling in as the second top trend, according to a survey conducted by the National Restaurant Association in October 2010.¹ Members of the American Culinary Federation were asked to rate 226 food and beverage items, cuisines, culinary themes and preparation methods, as a "hot trend," "yesterday's news," or "perennial favorite" for restaurant menus in 2011 (National Restaurant Association). Four of the "Top 20 Trends for Restaurant Menus in 2011" are categorized as



locally produced. With this significant increase in consumer demand for local foods, Kentucky's farmers should expect opportunities to continue expanding. The MarketReady Producer Training Program builds upon best business practices for

producers, which were identified by chefs across Kentucky.

Who Should Attend?

The MarketReady training is useful to producers who are considering or developing a new food business, and can be helpful to those who are currently selling product to a few local retailers or restaurants.

Food producers and processors who are interested in selling to restaurants or foodservice institutions are also encouraged to attend the training. With the MarketReady Producer Training Program, producers and entrepreneurs have a unique opportunity to explore ways to improve and expand their food businesses. The MarketReady program will provide individuals with a professional marketing education to improve sales relationships with restaurants and foodservice institutions.

Where, When, and How Much?

Trainings are offered as 6-hour daylong sessions, generally at County Extension Offices. A \$25 registration fee is requested to cover lunch, refreshments, and training materials. Dates of scheduled training sessions are posted on the MarketReady Web site. For more information or to register for training, please contact the MarketReady Training Coordinator.

Contact Information & Web Addresses

- Training Coordinator
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Additional Kentucky Resources

- Food Systems Innovation Center (University of Kentucky)
<http://www.uky.edu/fsic>
- Kentucky Center for Agricultural and Rural Development (KCARD)
<http://www.kcard.info>
- Kentucky MarketMaker
<https://ky.foodmarketmaker.com/>
- Kentucky Proud (KDA)
<http://www.kyproud.com/>
- MarketReady Presents *video series* (University of Kentucky, 2012)
<http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL202022CCDB1FE7FA>

Related Marketing Profiles (CCD)

- Kentucky MarketMaker
<http://www.uky.edu/ccd/sites/www.uky.edu/ccd/files/marketmaker.pdf>
- Kentucky Restaurant Rewards Program
<http://www.uky.edu/ccd/sites/www.uky.edu/ccd/files/restrewards.pdf>
- Marketing Crops to Schools and Institutions
<http://www.uky.edu/ccd/sites/www.uky.edu/ccd/files/farmtoschool.pdf>
- Marketing Fresh Produce to Restaurants
<http://www.uky.edu/ccd/sites/www.uky.edu/ccd/files/restaurants.pdf>

¹Chef Survey: What's Hot in 2011 (National Restaurant Association)
http://www.restaurant.org/Downloads/PDFs/News-Research/whats_hot_2011.pdf