

# Cherokee Nation Agriculture Network Marketing Toolkit

The mission of the Cherokee Nation Ag Network is to strengthen the local food system within the Cherokee Nation Reservation by supporting farmers, farmers markets, and market hubs. The Ag Network is dedicated to promoting community self-sufficiency, increasing access to fresh and locally grown food, and sustaining the agricultural businesses that contribute to the health and resilience of Cherokee communities.



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# Agritourism In Cherokee Nation

The Cherokee Nation Commerce Department is dedicated to supporting the Cherokee Nation Ag Network that includes local farmers, farmers markets, and farmers market hubs. We believe our community's strength lies in its ability to sustain and support itself and local food is at the heart of that strength.

That's why we've developed this toolkit to make it easier for producers and markets to thrive while helping community members connect with fresh, locally grown food.

## **How We Support the Cherokee Nation Ag Network**

We understand that marketing can be one of the toughest challenges for small businesses and we're here to help. This toolkit offers ready-to-use resources: marketing tips, social media guides, and best practices for attracting and keeping customers. You can use these tools to build your brand, strengthen your outreach, and grow your business with confidence.

Our goal is to make sure people across Cherokee Nation, and beyond, know where to find healthy, local food and the businesses that make it possible.

## **A New Way for Consumers to Connect**

To expand your reach, we are working on a new landing page, *Cherokee Nation Agriculture Network*. This resource makes it easier than ever for community members and visitors to find you. It provides a list of farms, markets and hubs. This listing is categorized by counties you can find them in along with links to their social media pages.

## **Moving Forward**

As part of our commitment to strengthening Cherokee Nation's local food system through our Ag Network, this toolkit was created to help farmers, markets, and hubs share their stories more effectively. The next section introduces the purpose of this resource, who it is designed to serve, and how to make the most of it.

# Purpose of This Toolkit

This marketing toolkit was created to help farms, markets and hubs strengthen their visibility, grow sales, and deepen connections with their communities. Inside, you'll find practical, ready-to-use tools that make it easier to promote what you do—whether that's selling fresh produce, running a market, or coordinating vendors.

## Resources Benefits

- Reach more customers and increase awareness.
- Create a consistent, professional look across all platforms.
- Share your story in ways that build trust and loyalty.
- Highlight the value of fresh, local food in your community.

## Who This Toolkit Is For

- **Farms** — to promote direct to consumer sales, farm stands, and vendor booths.
- **Farmers Markets** — to attract shoppers and promote events.
- **Farmers Market Hubs** — to coordinate communications and present a unified voice for local food systems.

## How to Use This Toolkit

1. **Start with Branding Essentials** — Use your existing logo, colors, and story consistently.
2. **Pick and Choose What Fits** — Not every section will apply to every farm, market, or hub. Use the tools that best support your marketing goals.
3. **Customize Templates** — Adapt the sample social media posts, flyers, and press releases to reflect your unique brand and offerings.
4. **Stay Consistent** — The biggest key to effective marketing is repetition. Use the same visuals, messages, and tone across all platforms.
5. **Build Over Time** — Marketing doesn't have to be overwhelming. Start small — post weekly, send one newsletter a month — and grow as you get comfortable.

# Branding Essentials

## Building Your Brand

- If your business or market does not yet have a logo, you can create one for free using AI tools.
  - **Recommended AI tools:** ChatGPT, Google Gemini.
  - Try typing: “Create a logo for my farm business” (add a short description of your products and/or values).
  - You can request revisions until you get a design that feels right for your brand.

💡 *Tip: A logo should be simple, recognizable, and easy to reproduce in black-and-white as well as color.*

## Logo Application

- Place logos clearly on signage, flyers, and digital materials.
- Avoid stretching, cropping, or changing colors.
- Pair your logo with simple, clean backgrounds.

## Color Consistency

- Stick to your farm/market colors.
- Use 1–2 accent colors that connect across the toolkit (example: a shared “community green” or “market yellow”).

## Fonts / Typography

- Use easy-to-read fonts for signage and social media.
- Avoid script-heavy or hard-to-read styles.

## Messaging

- Share your brand story consistently.
- Use a common tagline or hashtag (e.g., #FreshLocalCommunity).

## Photography Tips

- Bright, natural lighting.
- Feature products and people.
- Consistent style across posts and flyers.

# Social Media Tools

## Consistency Check List

- Use your logo in the same way every time.
- Stick to your chosen colors and fonts.
- Keep messaging clear and friendly.
- Always highlight freshness and community.

Social media is one of the easiest and most effective ways to promote your farm, farmers market, or hub. This section provides ready-to-use resources such as, captions, hashtags, photo tips, and a calendar template that make it simple to stay consistent and visible online.

## Plug-and-Play Captions & Post Templates

These sample captions can be copied and customized with your farm name, market location, or vendor details. Use emojis sparingly to add personality and catch attention.

- 🌱 **Seasonal Post Example**  
“Fresh strawberries are here! 🍓 Join us this Saturday at [Market Name] from 9–1. Nothing says summer like local fruit!”
- 🌻 **Anytime Post Example**  
“Buying local supports our community and keeps your table fresh. Find us at [Location] every week!”
- 🥕 **Vendor Highlight**  
“Meet [Vendor Name] — bringing you fresh carrots, lettuce, and more. Stop by and support local growers!”
- 🎉 **Event Reminder**  
“Don’t forget — our market is open [Day/Time]! Fresh food, friendly faces, and community connection. See you there!”

💡 *Tip: You can use AI tools to create social media posts.*

## Recommended Hashtags

Using hashtags helps your posts reach more people. Pair **local hashtags** with **seasonal or product-specific hashtags** for the best results.

- **Local & Regional**  
#CherokeeNation #OklahomaGrown #ShopLocal #SupportLocal #FarmersMarket
- **Seasonal**  
#FreshInSeason #SpringHarvest #FallFlavors #SummerProduce #WinterGreens
- **Product-Specific**  
#FarmFreshEggs #LocalHoney #GrassfedBeef #OrganicVeggies #FreshFlowers

## Photo Guidelines

Great photos make your posts stand out. Follow these tips:

- 📷 Use **natural light** — early morning or late afternoon works best.
- 👤 **Include people** whenever possible — smiles build trust and connection.
- 🌱 Highlight **freshness** — close-ups of colorful produce work well.
- 🗑️ Keep **backgrounds simple** — avoid clutter or distractions.
- 🎨 Stay **consistent** — use the same style across posts so your page feels recognizable.

## Social Media Calendar Template

Consistency is more important than frequency. Start small with 2–3 posts per week. Here’s an example weekly plan you can adapt:

<u>Day</u>	<u>Content Idea</u>
Monday	Behind-the-scenes photo from your farm or market setup.
Wednesday	Recipe using seasonal produce.
Friday	Vendor or product spotlight.
Saturday	Market reminder post with hours, location, and special notes.

💡 *Tip: Schedule posts ahead of time using Facebook’s free scheduling tool.*

✨ *Social media should feel authentic. Share your story, show your products, and highlight the people who make your farm or market special.*

# Print & Digital Templates

Print and digital materials help customers recognize your business, find your location, and remember you after they've visited. Use these templates as starting points. You can customize them with your own logo, colors, and details.

## Flyers and Posters

Use flyers and posters to promote **events, seasonal promotions, or weekly markets**.

### Tips for Effective Flyers:

- Keep the message short: Who, What, When, Where.
- Use a strong photo (produce, farmers smiling, or a crowd at your market).
- Include a clear call to action (e.g., *"Visit us this Saturday!"*).
- Post flyers in community centers, coffee shops, and libraries.

### Sample Layout:

- **Top:** Eye-catching headline (e.g., "Fresh and Local Every Saturday!").
- **Middle:** Big photo plus 2–3 details.
- **Bottom:** Time, date, location, accepted benefits, and website/Facebook link.

 *Tip: You can use Canva or Poster My Wall templates to create flyers for free.*

## Booth Signage Templates

Good signage helps customers quickly understand what you offer.

### Types of Signs:

- **Pricing Signs** → Simple, large text (e.g., "Tomatoes \$3/lb.").
- **Meet the Farmer Poster** → A short bio plus photo (e.g., *"Hi, I'm Sarah, and I've been growing peppers in Locust Grove for 15 years."*).
- **Directional/Informational Signs** → Accepted benefits (SNAP/WIC), or "We're Open!" boards.

### Design Tips:

- Use bold fonts and contrasting colors for readability.
- Laminate or use chalkboards for reusable signs.
- Always include your logo or farm/market name for recognition.

## Press Release Template

Press releases are great for announcing **seasonal openings, special events, or milestones.**

### Structure:

- **Headline:** Clear and newsworthy (e.g., *“Cherokee Nation Farmers Markets Open for the Season”*).
- **First Paragraph:** Who, what, when, where, and why.
- **Body Paragraphs:** Details about vendors, accepted benefits, or new offerings.
- **Quote:** From a market manager, farmer, or Cherokee Nation representative.
- **Closing:** Website or landing page link for more info.

 *Tip: Send press releases to local newspapers, radio stations, and community newsletters 2–3 weeks before the event.*

# Customer Engagement

Customer engagement is about building relationships, not just making sales. When customers feel connected to you and your story, they are more likely to return, recommend your business to others, and support you through every season. Engaged customers aren't just buyers; they become advocates who spread the word and strengthen your farm, market, or hub's place in the community.

## Elevator Pitch Examples

An elevator pitch is a short introduction (about 30 seconds) that tells customers who you are, what you offer, and why it matters.

- **Farmer Example**  
"Hi, I'm Sarah from Green Valley Farm. We grow fresh vegetables without chemicals, and you can find us at the Saturday farmers market every week."
- **Market Example**  
"Welcome to the Downtown Farmers Market! We bring together local farms and food producers so you can enjoy fresh, healthy, and locally made products every weekend."
- **Hub Example**  
"We're Cherokee Fresh Hub, connecting local farmers with restaurants and families. Our goal is to make fresh food easy to access and good for our community."

## Talking Points

Use these conversation starters with customers, community groups, or media:

- Why buying local food matters (freshness, health, local economy).
- What makes your products unique (organic practices, heritage varieties, family-owned).
- The story behind your farm or market (history, traditions, values).
- Ways customers can support you (visit weekly, share your Facebook page).






## Loyalty & Repeat Customer Ideas

Encourage customers to come back again and again:


- **Punch Cards** → Offer a free item or discount after 10 purchases.
- **Referral Incentives** → Give both the new customer and referrer a discount.
- **Seasonal Deals** → Bundle seasonal produce (like fall squash or spring greens) at a reduced price.
- **Membership Programs** → Offer discounts or special perks for frequent shoppers.

## Storytelling Prompts

Sharing your story helps customers feel connected to you and your products:

-  How and why you started your farm or business.
-  A day-in-the-life story from your farm or market.
-  What makes your products special.
-  A favorite memory with your customers or community.
-  What you love most about being part of the local food system.

 *Tip: Customers connect best with people, not just products. Share your story often. It makes your business memorable!*

 *Tip: Create a Google Sheet with customer names and notes from your last conversation. This makes it easy to remember details and continue the conversation the next time you see them.*

# Digital Presence

Having a strong digital presence helps customers find you quickly, builds trust, and increases sales. Even small steps, like setting up a Google Business Profile or being listed in online maps, make it easier for people to discover your farm, market, or hub.

## 1. Google Business Profile (Step-by-Step Guide)

A Google Business Profile is free and one of the most effective tools to improve your visibility in online searches.

### How to Set It Up or Update It:

1. Go to [google.com/business](https://google.com/business).
2. Click **“Manage Now.”**
3. Sign in with your Google account.
4. Search for your business name.
  - If it appears, claim it.
  - If it doesn't, select **“Add your business.”**
5. Enter key details:
  - Business name
  - Address or service area
  - Phone number
  - Website or Facebook page link
  - Hours of operation
  - Accepted benefits (SNAP, WIC, Double Up Bucks, etc.)
6. Add photos of your farm, market, or products.
7. Verify your listing (Google may mail a postcard or let you verify by phone/email).
8. Update regularly with new photos, events, and hours.

 *Tip: Customers often check Google first. An accurate profile builds trust before they even arrive at your farm or market.* 

## 2. Quick Website / Landing Page Options

Not every business needs a full website. If you don't have one, consider these simple, low-cost options:

- **Google Business Profile** → Works almost like a mini-website.
- **Facebook Page** → Free, easy to update, and widely used.
- **Linktree (linktr.ee)** → Create one link that organizes your Facebook, Instagram, or ordering system.
- **Wix / Squarespace / Weebly** → Drag-and-drop website builders with templates.
- **Canva Websites** → Free, visual templates for a simple landing page.

 *Tip: Start simple. Even a Facebook page with accurate hours and product updates is better than no online presence at all.*

### **3. Online Directory & Map Listings**

Beyond Google, make sure your farm or market is listed in other local directories so customers can easily find you.

#### **Where to List Your Business:**

- Google Maps (via your Google Business Profile).
- Apple Maps (add through Apple Maps Connect).
- Local Chamber of Commerce directories.
- Oklahoma Local Ag Collaborative Farmers Market Directory
- Shape Your Future OK Farmers Market Directory
- Community or tourism websites (like “Visit Oklahoma”).

 *Tip: The more places your farm or market appears online, the more chances customers have to discover you.*