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## **CROTON FARMERS MARKET-2011 Season- Year End Report**

### **OBJECTIVES**

1. To curate and manage a market that satisfies all aspects of a complete meal with affordable and complementary taste profiles, suitable for the surrounding community.
2. To provide good quality produce so shoppers have better access to local farm products sold directly by farmers.
3. To provide a nice shopping environment and experience for people from the community and a place to relax and meet ones neighbors.
4. To provide a place to redeem WIC coupons for families and seniors.

### **PRODUCT OFFERINGS**

The market had three and sometimes four produce vendors selling. Three were conventional growers and one used organic growing practices, but was not certified organic. We had produce, eggs, bakery, breads, prepared foods, quiche, soups, pot pies, chutneys, pickles and beef. We had farmstead cheese but not for the entire season. Vendors sometimes quit mid year when they don't meet their selling goals. The cheese vendor did not make enough money to justify the costs of doing business at the market.

### **LOGISTICS**

The market had no major logistical problems during the season. Our only problem resulted from it being a very rainy season and it appeared to rain on many market days. The rainy season was hard on farmer's crops and the hurricane caused some damage. The farmers in this market were lucky to be on higher ground and only lost select crops. They were able to recoup and continue.

Parking was no problem this year.

### **PROMOTIONAL AND ADVERTISING**

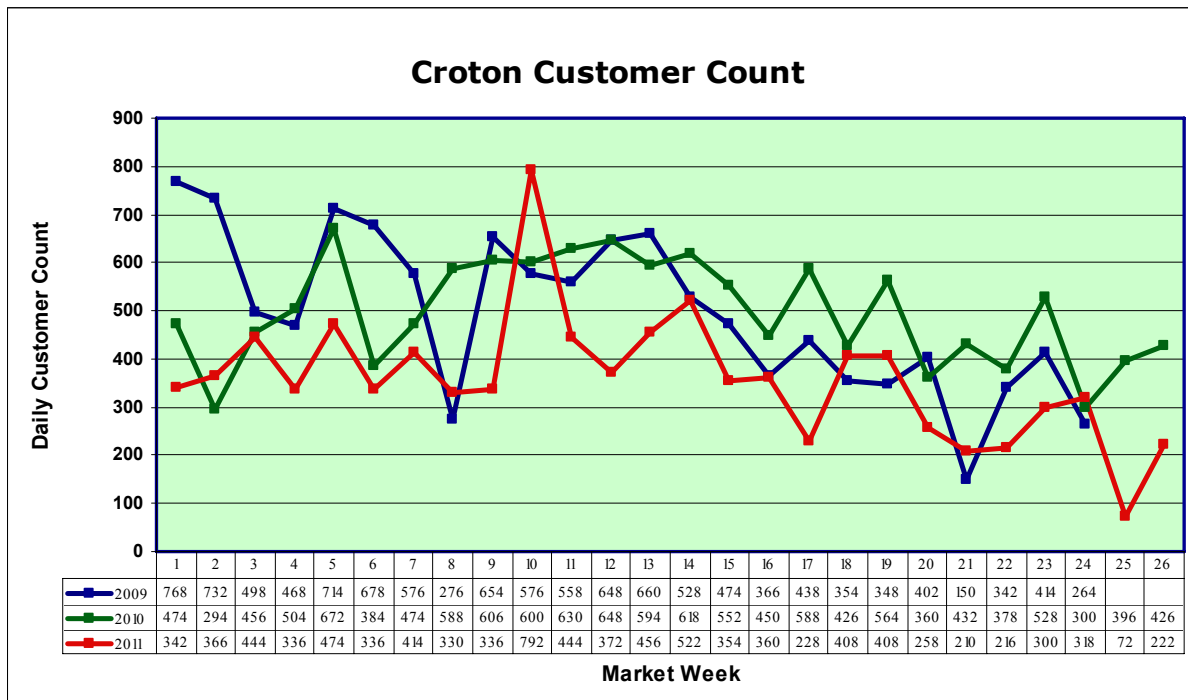
A comprehensive promotional plan was implemented including:

- face book and twitter postings by the manager on site
- flyering around the village and town
- 2 vertical pole banners were installed near the market
- Twenty 60 second promotional spots on PEAK radio station
- 7 ads in The New York Times Metropolitan section
- 6 ads in the Northern Westchester Examiner
- 1 ad in the Journal News
- 2 ads in Edible Hudson Valley Magazine
- 6 web ads in the DailyCroton

## EVEI TS

1. Canning-We had three canning demonstrations during the summer on 6/15, 7/20 and 8/3. We demonstrated using strawberries, pickles and tomatoes on these three days. This activity was from a grant we received from the Ball Canning company.
2. We ran a canning contest and had 9 entries from the four markets where we ran the demonstrations. The winning entrant was from a Croton shopper who entered a black currant jam from fruit he bought from a Croton vendor, Fishkill Farms. He received a gift basket and a large pot for canning.
3. Community Tables-We had a few groups who had a table to inform shoppers about their programs. Hudson Valley Hospital Center came and spoke about nutrition. Garden Road Nursery School gave out information about their programs.
4. Music-We had music groups twice during the season.
5. Tastings- tomato tasting of the many varieties on 8/3 and an apple tasting on 9/21.
6. Barbara and Bill Friedrich did a cider pressing demonstration on 10/12. Shoppers could turn the crank to press the apples and then have a taste of fresh cider.

## CUSTOMER COUN TS



The market shopper numbers were down from last season. This year the economy took a toll and there were fewer shoppers. Also it rained on many market days which impacted the numbers. We convened a focus group of Croton residents during the season to brainstorm ideas on how to improve the market and increase the number of shoppers. We hoped this would develop into a market committee but it did not.

## MAI AGEME T AI D ADMIN ISTRATIO

The on site manager was Brenda Ryan. She made sure the vendors were set up in the correct location, secured their tents, and got the market ready for the shoppers. Then she put on her host hat and interacted with the shoppers, answered questions, talking about food and conducting specific food tastings of veggies and fruit.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT YEAR**

- Attempt to develop a committee of Croton residents for the purpose of adding a local flavor, adding events and music to invigorate the market
- Recruit additional vendors from product categories that may be missing.
- Invite local chefs to demonstrate cooking at the market to promote their establishment and the local food at the market.
- Invite additional community groups to have a table at the market to integrate the community more into the market.