

Tips For Retailers



Center for an
Agricultural
Economy

We know it's a difficult time for you, and that you are in totally uncharted territory. You are doing a great job - thank you for your heroic efforts to keep Vermonters fed. We want to support you, and bolster your efforts. We want to be your cheerleader, as you are for local food and for your community.

Here are a few ideas for promoting local products (Especially the "non-basic" items). These are ideas we have seen being used around the state, or things we dreamed up and would love to see in action.

Create a Curated Set of Local Items

Your customers generally know the sorts of products you carry, and trust your recommendations. Put together themes ranging from "Charcuterie special" to "farmstead cheeses", or "deluxe salad kit" that have a fixed price that customers can purchase. Example: Deluxe Salad Kit with local blue cheese, local croutons or candied nuts, local salad dressing, local sprouts or micro greens, local meat.



Photo: Food & Wine Traders

Encourage Local Alternatives to Imported Products

Substitute local products for imported items and tell your customers how they are a similar alternative. Try Vermont cheeses that are similar to a Gouda or Parmesan (with a sign that says "looking for a Gouda? try ____"), or local salamis and cured meats instead of Italian and French charcuterie.

Share Posts on Social Media, Ask Your Producers to Reshare Them

Encourage your producers to share the social media posts that your store puts out, and to tag themselves and let folks know that you have their products in stock. Ask your specialty producers to send an email or create a social media post that encourages their customers to seek out their product at local stores -including yours.

@therootsfarmmarket in Middlesex is fully stocked with @snugvalleyfarmer grassfed beef and pasture raised pork. They will be open tomorrow. Check their insta for full details!



Photo Right: Example of a post from a local market that a producer shared, tagging themselves and the market.
Photo Courtesy of Snug Valley Farm

Remote Store Tours

If you can't allow customers in your store, you can still bring your store to them. Give them some tools to discover great Vermont products they will love!

Give Customers a 3D Tour

Sites like <https://buy.matterport.com> help you create a 3D tour of your store, so customers can shop virtually, in every aisle. You do need a 3D camera, ask on your local Front Porch Forum, or a local realtor if they can loan you a camera or take images for you.

Post Photos of Your Aisles

Take photos of the store by aisle or section, focus on Vermont products. When you post them on social media, tag those producers that are featured.

List Products by Section

Put together a simple list that has food by Category. Many stores rely on customers to remember what products you carry. List the items you carry in different sections of the store.

Redirection Through Recipes

If there is a gap in your supply use it as an opportunity to promote alternatives and help customers use them. For example if your store has a limited supply of yeast, link to a website with great no-yeast recipes and encourage customers to explore them with other ingredients you sell.

We Want to Hear From YOU!

Please give us feedback on what you are doing that is effective.
How are you promoting local products beyond the staples?
Are there local products that are in short supply and you can't get?
Are their local products that aren't moving at all?

Need help implementing these ideas? Have questions?

Reachout to us: Lylee@hardwickagriculture.org

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Explore Craftsbury General Store in 3D
Matterport 3D Showcase

Photo: Craftsbury General Store, and the platform they are using for virtual store tours



brattleborofoodcoop
Brattleboro Food Co-op



Photo: Brattleboro Food Co-op's Instagram page, highlighting some of the local cheeses they carry