

Selling Organic Stuff

Making good money because you know what you are doing (with a little help from Warm Heart)!

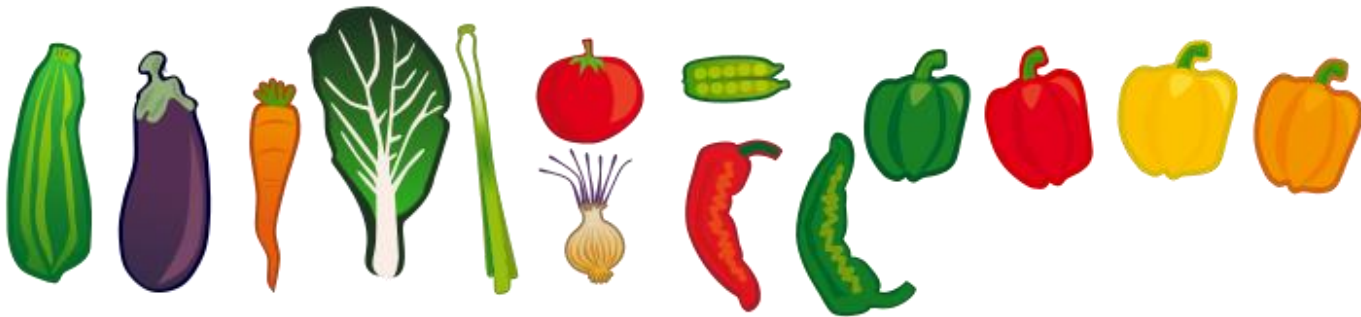
SELLING ORGANIC STUFF



- This presentation is meant for trainers. It lays out the steps they must take to organize and conduct a simple, two-day training. It provides both the materials that they must prepare to hand out to participants and step-by-step instructions for each section of the second day of classroom work.
- The teaching philosophy embedded in the training is experiential. There is no lecturing. There is no expert. There is no specialist. The participants are coached to collect the data they required without knowing why or how it will be used. On the second day, all of the exercises are group-based and require the groups to use what they observed the previous day. By the end of the second day, each group will have developed a plan for marketing organic fruits and vegetables. It will be as good as anything they could have been taught and has two huge virtues over traditional training methods: (1) participants will remember everything they learned and (2) they will depart convinced of their own capacity actually to take on the task.

What are we doing today?

- We are going to visit markets where farmers are selling their organic fruit and vegetables.
 - They are succeeding.
 - They are selling the stuff for a lot more money than you EVER sold your fruits and vegetables for.
- Your assignment is to figure out ***how they are doing it.***

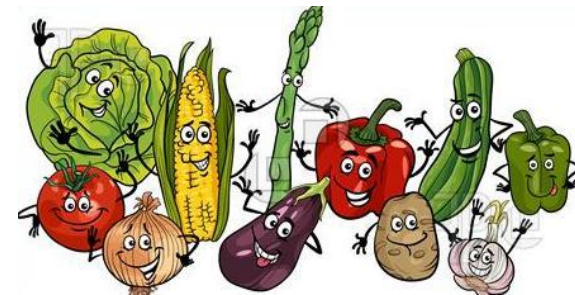
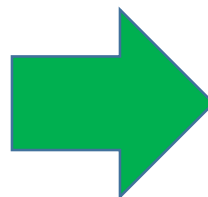


Let's get ready

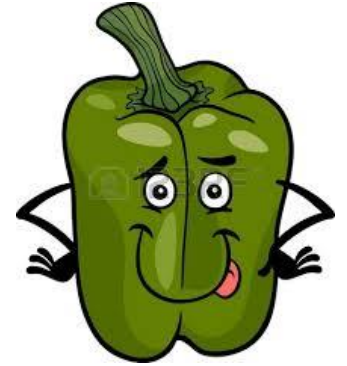
- You cannot figure this out alone. It will take a team to figure it out. In fact, it will take **a lot** of teams.
- We are going to divide you up into teams and every team is going to get **its own assignment**. You have to find out **everything** there is to know about your subject so that you can tell the whole group tomorrow.
- So that you know exactly what you are looking for and so that you can remember everything you learn, we are going to give every group a written assignment and a clip board.

Are you ready?

Go!

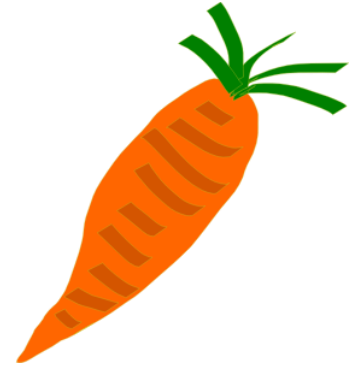


Team 1: Collection



- How is the produce collected on the farm(s)?
- Who does the collecting? How many farms does it get collected from?
- If there is more than one farm, does each collect separately?
- Deliver to a single place or does someone collect?
- Does the collection system differ among markets?
 - How?
 - Why?

Team 2: Distribution



- How is the produce brought to market?
 - By one person?
 - Several people?
 - Rotation of people?
 - Paid person?
- Does the distribution system differ among markets?
 - How?
 - Why?

Team 3: Booth



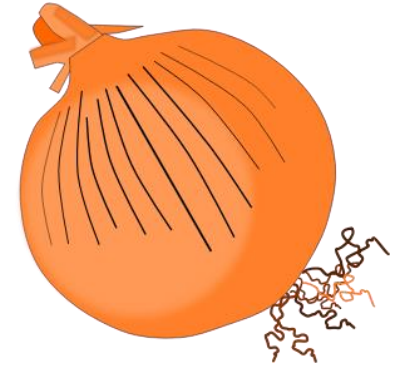
- What does the booth look like?
 - Is it appealing/not?
 - What do you like/not like?
- What kind of signs do they have?
- What kind of information do they provide?
- Who staffs the booth?
 - How informed are they?
 - Are they one of the farmers or are they paid staff?
- Are the booths different from one market to another?
 - How?
 - Why?

Team 4: Display



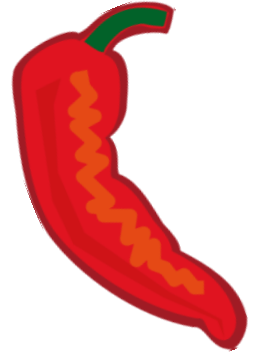
- How are the fruit and vegetables displayed?
- Are they kept fresh?
- Are they nicely presented or just in piles?
- What signs are there with each type of produce?
- Is any information provided with different types of produce?
- Are the displays different from one market to another?
 - How?
 - Why?

Team 5: Organization



- Does the booth belong to:
 - One farmer?
 - A group of farmers?
 - A coop?
- How are decisions made?
- How is the operation organized to be open when it is open?
 - To have produce?
 - To manage money?
 - To pay fees?
- Does the organization have booths in more than one market?

Team 6: Marketing



- Do the owners of the booth use any special signs or other techniques to attract buyers to their booth?
 - If so, what?
 - Do they think they help?
 - What do they think of the things other booths do?
- Do the owners of the booth do any marketing/advertising?
 - In/near the market?
 - Newspapers?
 - Radio?
 - TV?
 - Facebook?
- If not, why not?
- Do you see the same kind of signs or whatever in all the markets or are they different?

Team 7: Volume and quality



- How much do the booths sell?
- What variety do the booths sell? A lot of things? Just a few?
- How do they ensure that they have enough produce every day?
- What quality standards are there?
- How do they decide what to display/sell?
- If it is not just a family booth, how do members of a group of farmers decide about quality?
- Are there quality differences among the markets?
 - What differences do you see?

Team 8: Shoppers



- Who buys stuff at the booths?
 - Falang/Thais?
 - Old/Young?
 - Local or do they drive to get there?
- Why do they come to buy?
- Why do they buy from this booth?
- How are the shoppers different at one market from another?
 - What differences do you see?

Get on the van!

Nong Aom will assign you to groups and give you your assignments!



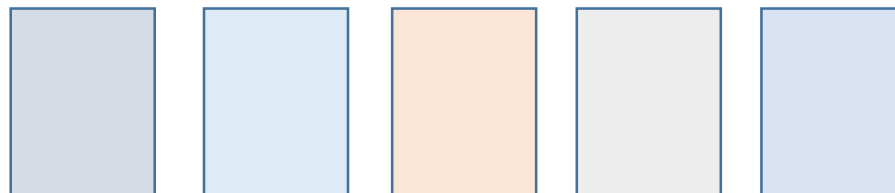
Distribute assignment sheets

Marketing Training

Day 2 Sequence

Pre-start set-up

- Prepare space with long wall/board area with seats arranged in a rough semi-circle in front
- Tape 5 separate sheets of poster/newsprint paper along wall 2 or 3 inches apart
- Do not label, but mentally note that these will be used (left to right) to record brainstorming comments about Farm stuff, Quality/Volume stuff, Distribution stuff, Booth/Display/Marketing stuff, and Organization stuff



Opening: 10 minute max, get attention, focus

- Warm up questions
 - Did you have a good time?
 - Excited?
 - Want to do this?
 - Think you can make money at organic farming?

Brainstorm: 30 minutes max

General rules for managing

- Seek to engage as many people as possible
- Do not allow strong individuals to dominate
- Respond to and record all comments in some way, somewhere

Main question: Based on what you observed yesterday, what are the most important things we need to know about selling organic fruits and vegetables if we are going to succeed?

- As people answer, mentally categorized their observations and record them on the appropriate sheet. Do ***NOT*** reveal what you are doing.

Brainstorm break-down

- OK, let's stop now before I can't write anything more!
- What have you put together?
- Review each panel
 - Start by adding the panel title and then pulling together the different observations into a coherent whole.
 - At the end, draw an arrow beginning at the left and going all the way across to the right
- Observe: OK, so what you have done is to identify all of the pieces of a successful approach to marketing organic fruits and vegetables. Amazing. All by yourselves with no help. Right? Pretty cool. Now the work begins. But first, let's take a 10 minute break.
- During the break, move the posters to another wall.

[At this point, you need to assess whether this is going to work in one morning or you need to plan for the afternoon/tomorrow morning.]

What did you learn yesterday?

- OK, it's time to review your homework!
- Please get into your groups from yesterday and get out all of the notes that you took yesterday while you were observing and asking questions.

[While they are doing this, hand out 2 sheets of newsprint to each group and a set of magic markers.]

- Listen up – here are your directions: I want you to prepare a short class for the others.
- Put your heads together as a group and prepare a 5 minute presentation about what you learned yesterday.

Report back presentation review

- Let them go!
- Have the groups present in order (Team 1 to Team 8)
- When each group is finished presenting, tape it's poster up in order so that you create a "wall of knowledge" – everything that they have collected/know about the organic produce business
- Be supportive of presenters, keep them on point, emphasize key points, KEEP TIME!

So how do you organize your business?

- OK, you have done all of the preparations; you have all of the information. Only one thing remains:
- IT IS TIME TO ORGANIZE YOUR OWN BUSINESS!
- How are you – literally you and you and you – going to create a business to make money selling your organic fruit and vegetables in Chiang Mai?
- Not going to divide into your Teams again because there are so many. This time let's go by 2's: Team 1 & 8, 2 & 7, 3 & 6 and 4 & 5.

[While they are doing this, hand out 2 sheets of newsprint to each group and a set of magic markers.]

- Here is your assignment: Based on everything you learned yesterday and today, I want each team to come up with the best way to organize at the farm level, do quality control, manage distribution, etc., etc., etc.

Preparing final presentations

[Circulate around the room while the teams are working. Answer questions, ask questions, make comments, be encouraging. Do **NOT** just disappear! Do **NOT** help!]

[This is where everything comes together. Make sure that you are at your best and make sure to keep things up beat, funny and on-point. The entire training will be wasted if this final section isn't pleasurablely memorable!]

[Give them 30 minutes. At the end of 30 minutes, tell them that they have 5 more minutes. At the end of 5 minutes, tell them to finish up. After 3 minutes start getting pushy. **REMEMBER**: the fun is in the presentations and what they are working on will **not** get any better with another 2 minutes or 5 minutes or 10 minutes.]

Doing final presentations

- Watch the time!!!
 - Make sure that everyone knows that the absolute limit is 10 minutes.
 - After 5 minutes tell them that they have 5 minutes left.
 - Then give them a 2 minute warning.
 - When they hit 10 minutes, ***stop them!*** Ask the group if they should get more time and, if so, how many minutes.

[At this point, I would avoid Q&A. Just get on with the presentations. Let each group have its say. Make sure that each group gets a big pat on the back.]

Wrapping up

- Hope that they are happy with the training.
- Do they feel as if they learned something? Do they feel as if they are better prepared to figure out how to sell their organic produce in Chiang Mai?
- That's great – and the really important thing for them to remember as they leave this training is that you – the trainer – didn't teach them anything. They discovered everything on their own. They figured it all out by themselves – from what they observed in Chiang Mai to how they put it together in their business plans today.
- Congratulations – and thank you for letting us work with you!

Post-Training

- Let them have everything ***except*** the final presentations!
- On your computer prepare a good summary of each presentation, probably best in PowerPoint. At the next full group meeting you will show this to them with commentary!
- When you have finished the summaries, post the final presentation posters on the wall where everyone can appreciate them.
- Clean up!

SELLING ORGANIC STUFF

Warm Heart is a grassroots community development organization serving the world's 2.5 billion poorest people – rural small farmers.

In addition to publications such as this one for developed world audiences, Warm Heart Publications' Educational Program publishes a wide range of simple but accurate materials for small, rural farmers. This program begins from the assumption that rural people are interested in the big issues affecting their lives and want to understand them.

Publications in the Warm Heart Educational Program for Small Farmers cover issues as diverse as the basics of soil health and plant nutrition to mitigating the consequences of climate change and how biochar works.

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