


# HOSTING A MINI POP-UP FARMER'S MARKET

BY BETSY JENKINS  
PHOTOS BY JENNIFER SCHEIB





Our Wild + Free group has come together for many different adventures, parties, and events. We love to have a good time! We mamas especially love to hold events that create space for our kids to learn new skills, try new things, and interact with our local community.

Recently several mamas in our group began offering excess produce from their bountiful gardens to each other. This sparked an idea. We already hold a semiannual handcraft fair, where our children sell handmade goods. Why not hold a mini pop-up farmer's market? Not only would it be a wonderful way to share produce and homemade goods, but it would also be a great opportunity to teach our children about the farm-to-table process.



As the event began to take shape, our children's enthusiasm grew. Kids who had been working in their family gardens took great pride in harvesting and prepping produce for sale. Mamas and children measured and mixed as they baked breads, cookies, and bars. Little ones learned the science behind the process of canning and the magic of pectin that turns homegrown fruit juice into jelly. Little hands helped prepare homemade sausages and bagged pasture-raised chickens for sale. Beeswax, goat milk soap, yarn from sheep's wool, tinctures from garden herbs, fresh pasta, sourdough bread, elderberry syrup, and old-fashioned lemonade were all lovingly crafted by our families.











The day of the farmer's market dawned bright and breezy. Excited chatter and oohs and ahhs of delight could be heard as each family brought out their goods and set up their tables in my front yard. The children bought, sold, and bartered with one another. Friends, family, and neighbors came to support our little market, and everyone agreed that it was a huge success. Most of the kids didn't end up with a lot of money at the end of the day, as they were keen to buy their very own heirloom tomatoes, cupcakes, and lemonade, as well as flower bouquets for their mamas.

As the morning turned to afternoon, I looked over my lawn and down to the lake. Groups of children were running foot races (the prize being a nickel), pushing each other in the hammock, and fishing off the dock. The teens lolled in the shade of the trees, playing the guitar and singing. No one was in a hurry to leave as we enjoyed the richness of a community who loves nature, hard work, and equally hard play. We mamas basked in the sweetness of the life we are building for our children, together.

## HOW TO HOST YOUR OWN FARMER'S MARKET


1. Decide what items you want to be available at your market. Only produce? Homemade items? Kid's handcrafts? Setting up the parameters will help families know ahead of time what they can bring to the sale.
2. Set up a date and time that works well for the majority in your group. Choose an outdoor space that can accommodate a large group, tables, and has plenty of parking available.









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- A woman with long brown hair, wearing a yellow floral shirt and blue jeans, stands behind a table. A young boy with brown hair, wearing a grey t-shirt with orange sleeves, stands in front of her, looking up at her. The table is covered with various fruits, including red tomatoes and yellow pears. A black scale is visible on the table. A white plastic bag with a red bullseye logo is being held by the woman. The background is a blurred green forest.
3. Get the kids involved! Encourage your group to include their children in the cultivating, creating, cooking, and making of their goods. Have your kids practice adding up totals and counting back change.
  4. Suggest that mamas set up payment apps ahead of time for easy selling options. Some of your customers may not have cash on hand.
  5. Post about your event on social media, advertise through word of mouth, invite friends, family, other homeschool groups, and neighbors.





6. The market is a great opportunity for kids to learn where food comes from and how things are made. Encourage them to ask their friends questions about how they grew or made their goods.
7. Don't forget to have fun! First and foremost, this is about building community and friendships!







## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Betsy Jenkins is the mother of five awesome boys. She is an artist, writer and co-owner of a decorative design company, though you may know her best for her classical art memes on Instagram. Betsy is married to a renaissance man who can build and fix just about anything. Together, they are just crazy enough to think that raising and educating a million boys at home is a really sweet deal.

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## ABOUT THE PHOTOGRAPHER

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Jen Scheib is a documentary and portrait photographer of over 16 years, specializing in outdoor play and genuine expressions. When she's not taking pictures, Jen is usually daydreaming about living in Cinderella's Castle. Until then, home is in Summerfield, NC with her husband, two teenage sons, a preschool-age daughter, and two happy labs.

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