

# FARMERS' MARKET ACTION GUIDE

RESOURCES FOR OXFAM VOLUNTEERS



OXFAM

## OXFAM TOOLKITS

In keeping with Oxfam's belief in the power of people against poverty, Oxfam toolkits are designed for individuals and groups looking for a hands-on way to join the effort. These practical how-to guides collect ideas and advice from Oxfam's experts as well as supporters around the country. Oxfam toolkits represent an entry point into the world of activism—building a grassroots movement for change, one person at a time.

### TOOLKITS AVAILABLE:

#### HOW TO GET STARTED

A MENU OF IDEAS

#### HOW TO HOST AN OXFAM HUNGER BANQUET® EVENT

DIRECTIONS AND TOOLS

#### HOW TO FUNDRAISE FOR OXFAM

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

#### HOW TO HOST A HOUSE PARTY

#### HOW TO TAKE ACTION

ORGANIZING IN YOUR COMMUNITY

#### HOW TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE ON CAMPUS

#### HOW TO HOST AN OXFAM JAM

FIVE EASY STEPS TO A SUCCESSFUL EVENT

#### FARMERS' MARKET ACTION GUIDE

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All toolkits are available for download at [oxfamamerica.org/toolkits](https://oxfamamerica.org/toolkits), or email [actfast@oxfamamerica.org](mailto:actfast@oxfamamerica.org) to request free copies.

## DEAR FRIENDS,

Ever wonder how you can connect your efforts to make your community healthier with your desire to do the right thing for farmers around the world? Oxfam can help. Join fellow volunteers at farmers' markets around the country and help spread the word about the simple steps we can all take to support farmers and food producers worldwide.

Oxfam is a global organization working to end the injustice of poverty. Along with partners in over 90 countries, Oxfam is working to build a better food system: one that is sustainable and empowers people to earn a living, nourish their families, and thrive.

Join the effort and set up a table at your local farmers' market to talk with people in your community about global hunger issues. Because it's not just about farmers and food producers close to home; we're all in this together. No matter where we live, we rely on farms, farmers, and food workers to produce the food we eat. That's why supporting farmers and food producers everywhere helps to ensure that all of us have access to an abundance of healthy food.

This guide includes the tools you need to get started. If you have questions, or need help, just contact us at [actfast@oxfamamerica.org](mailto:actfast@oxfamamerica.org). Thank you for all of your efforts.

Appreciatively,

**CLARA HERRERO**  
**SENIOR ADVISOR, BRAND AND STRATEGIC INITIATIVES**  
**OXFAM AMERICA**

# VOLUNTEERING AT YOUR LOCAL FARMERS' MARKET: THE BASICS

When you host a table at a farmers' market, you can reach a large number of people in your community, help them to take action (such as trying Oxfam's guide to shopping and eating sustainably), and give them an opportunity to learn more. All you need is a table and chairs, some Oxfam materials, and a helping hand from your friends, family, or fellow volunteers. Not only are you performing a service, but it's fun.

What better time to get people to think about supporting farmers worldwide than at a place where they can buy food directly from the farmers who grow it in their corner of the world? When you set up a table at your local farmers' market and talk to shoppers about Oxfam and how to shop and eat more sustainably, you are spreading knowledge and building a movement of people who care about global food and hunger issues.

Many shoppers at farmers' markets already want to feed their families in a sustainable, healthy way. That's good news! You can then tell them about Eat for Good, Oxfam's tips on shopping and eating sustainably: five simple steps that people can take in their own kitchens to help fight world hunger. We'll go

over Eat for Good in this guide, but you'll probably find in your conversations that most farmers' market shoppers already follow many of the five tips without even knowing it.

In this guide, we'll outline four important topics for volunteering at your local farmers' market:

1. KNOW YOUR FACTS
2. KNOW YOUR GOALS
3. KNOW YOUR RESOURCES
4. KNOW YOUR TIMELINE

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## 1. KNOW YOUR FACTS

### WHY CARE ABOUT FOOD JUSTICE?

One in nine people are chronically undernourished, meaning they go to bed hungry. Many of us have come to believe that this is because there isn't enough food to feed the world's population, but that is untrue. Hunger is not inevitable. It is a symptom of poverty caused by unfair political and economic systems in which a privileged few control decisions and resources. Most chronic hunger exists because of deep imbalances in access to resources like fertile land and water. The power to control these resources sits neither with the billion-plus farmers who produce the majority of the world's food, nor with the billions of consumers who eat it. Instead, elites, including some companies and governments, exercise disproportionate control of our global food system—and they often determine who eats and who doesn't.

### HOW CAN YOU HELP?

All of us deserve enough to eat, so change is urgently needed. To feed all people without putting undue pressure on our precious planet, we need to produce food more fairly and sustainably. We must therefore choose cooperation over division: together, we can fight hunger by recognizing our power to drive change and by urging governments and companies to do the right thing.

Oxfam is working globally to build a better food system—one that will feed all of us (and there are estimated to be nine billion of us by 2050)—and to empower people like you and other concerned citizens to take steps to ensure that farmers can earn a living and that people living in poor or marginalized communities can earn a living, feed their families, and thrive.

Join Oxfam and help make sure everyone has a seat at the table. Here's what we need to do, starting now:

- Increase the productivity, self-reliance, and economic opportunity of small-scale farmers, especially women, who depend on agriculture for income and food.
- Increase farmers' access to resources like water and land, and make sure they don't have to compete unfairly with big companies for ownership of these resources.
- Increase farmers' preparedness in the face of more-frequent and more-extreme droughts, floods, and storms.
- Modernize our food aid programs so they are more effective, efficient, and fiscally responsible, improving the global response to natural disasters and food crises.
- Hold governments and businesses accountable for the impacts of their policies and practices on global food security.

## WHAT ARE OXFAM'S TIPS FOR SHOPPING AND EATING SUSTAINABLY?

Did you know that one-third of the world's food gets lost on the journey from farm to fork? What if this wasn't the case? What if we could make changes in our own kitchen that would change the way the world eats?

Eat for Good is a simple but meaningful way of thinking about food—and about the way we buy, prepare, and eat it. Trying any of these five simple principles, and encouraging your friends and family to try them as well, can make a difference in the fight against global hunger.

The best part is, you're probably already employing some of these principles without even recognizing their significance. Because these steps are already familiar to many farmers' market attendees, they are a great way to get a conversation rolling.

You can learn more about Eat for Good—plus find recipes, tips, and more—at [oxfamamerica.org/eatforgood](http://oxfamamerica.org/eatforgood).

## 2. KNOW YOUR GOALS

### STARTING A CONVERSATION

When talking to farmers' market shoppers, break the ice by asking for their tips and tricks to save food or cook smart, and share your favorite seasonal recipe. At this point, let them know about Eat for Good, and use your knowledge to create the conversation. For example, mention that by making one meal a week with lentils instead of beef, a family of four can save the equivalent of 17 bathtubs full of water.

Once they're on board with Eat for Good, keep the conversation going by telling them about Oxfam's work to improve our global food system, and then ask them to sign our current petition.

### PETITIONS AND SIGN-UPS

Your goal is to inform and engage people in the fight against hunger. One significant way for farmers' market shoppers to make a difference is by signing Oxfam's latest petition. We use these petitions to call on world leaders and corporations to change the injustices that keep people trapped in poverty.

Be sure to contact Oxfam to check for the latest petition before you go to your farmers' market. You'll want to encourage people to sign the petition as one of the ways they can take action. Remember: We need an email and a ZIP code for a signature to matter. If signers are cautious about giving out their email address, let them know that they can opt out of email updates at any time.

At the end of each farmers' market, make sure that you send the petitions to Oxfam, along with the "Tell Us About Your Event" form on the last page of this guide. Keep in mind that we need to receive the signed petitions in order to deliver them. Here's how to get the event form and petitions back to Oxfam:

#### Scan and email

[actfast@oxfamamerica.org](mailto:actfast@oxfamamerica.org)

#### Mail

ATTN: Farmers' Markets  
Oxfam America  
226 Causeway Street, 5th Floor  
Boston, MA 02114

## EAT FOR GOOD



**SAVE FOOD:** One-third of all food produced for human consumption is lost or wasted globally, which amounts to a staggering 1.3 billion tons of food per year. By planning your meals and saving your leftovers, you'll reduce this waste and be responsible for fewer greenhouse gas emissions.



**SHOP SEASONALLY:** We waste lots of energy trying to grow food in the wrong place, at the wrong time of year. Discover what's in season near you, and you'll find perfectly delicious fruit and vegetables to eat that do not require massive investments in fuel to get food to your plate.



**EAT LESS MEAT:** If you eat a little less meat and a little less dairy, you'll dramatically reduce the impact of your diet on the environment.



**SUPPORT FARMERS AND FOOD PRODUCERS:** By supporting small-scale food producers, you're supporting the 1.5 billion people who live on small farms in the world, and you're helping protect our ability to produce food in the future through sustainable farming practices.



**COOK SMART:** Try cooking with as little water as possible by using a flat-bottomed pan, covering your pan with a lid, and reducing the heat as soon as the water starts to boil—you'll save energy, water, and money!

## 3. KNOW YOUR RESOURCES

### MATERIALS

Oxfam can send you a packet of free materials to use when tabling at farmers' markets. To request your materials packet, email us at least four weeks prior to your event at [actfast@oxfamamerica.org](mailto:actfast@oxfamamerica.org). Make sure to include "Farmers' market packet" in the subject line, and include the date and place of the farmers' market in your message, as well as your mailing address.

The materials available include the following:

- **Oxfam recipe cards** Featuring recipes from well-known chefs linked to the principles of Eat for Good, these cards are great for grabbing attention and starting a conversation.
- **Oxfam banner** Tape our banner to your table to get Oxfam's name out there—and to show farmers' market shoppers who you are.
- **Eat for Good pocket guides** These catchy little booklets give farmers' market shoppers a look into habits that can help end world hunger.
- **Buttons, pins, and stickers** Perfect takeaways! Buttons, pins, and stickers are fun to wear and are a great way to spread the word.
- **Petitions** These forms contain actions from Oxfam. We'll deliver your petitions to lawmakers and business leaders to help change key policies surrounding food justice. Remember to mail us your petitions after your farmers' market event!
- **Oxfam fact sheets and brochures** These materials are a great way to educate people about Oxfam's efforts to end the injustice of poverty.

### AREA MARKETS

Before setting up your farmers' market table, research which of your area markets will be most worth your time. Some markets simply don't have the foot traffic to get many petition signers. Others have shorter hours and may not be worth the travel and setup time. Still others may have fees or full-day requirements for nonprofit tables.

Once you identify possible farmers' markets in your area, get in touch with the individual farmers' market organizers. Make sure you speak directly with someone who can answer any questions regarding fees, setup schedules, and time commitments. Some area markets may not turn out to be the right fit, so don't be afraid to ask questions to get the information you need before committing.

### VOLUNTEERS

If other volunteers have offered to help table, make sure you know their schedules and availability in advance. If you have a full-day commitment at a farmers' market, make sure you have confirmed shifts from all of your helpers.

When you're at the farmers' market, your volunteers will be your best resource. Not only can you tag-team the crowd and get more signatures, but setup time is cut in half. Bring along this guide and share some materials to get your volunteers quickly up to speed prior to the event.

### SUPPLIES TO REMEMBER

Be sure to bring clipboards, pens, markers, paperweights, and tape. These essentials are easy to forget but important for successful tabling.

### FURTHER HELP FROM OXFAM

We're here to help! Take this guide with you to farmers' markets for backup and quick reference. Also, don't hesitate to email us at [actfast@oxfamamerica.org](mailto:actfast@oxfamamerica.org) if you need help setting up your farmers' market visit, organizing volunteers, or getting more materials.

## 4. KNOW YOUR TIMELINE

To set up your farmers' market table, you'll need to start calling local markets and figuring out your options in advance. Just follow the timeline below to keep on track.

### ONE TO TWO MONTHS BEFORE: SCHEDULING

Contact your local farmers' markets. Some may not be able to schedule you just yet, but because tabling spots fill up quickly, it's good to get an early start. A quick internet search should lead you to the contacts for tables at your farmers' markets. Get in touch and see what their schedule looks like and what sort of commitment they're looking for. Make sure to ask key questions such as the cost, setup time, minimum or maximum time commitments, and whether you can collect signatures. Keep in mind that you can usually schedule multiple tabling dates at once.

### FOUR WEEKS BEFORE: ORDERING MATERIALS AND RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS

Oxfam can send you a packet of free materials to use when tabling at farmers' markets. To request your materials packet, email us at least four weeks prior to your event at [actfast@oxfamamerica.org](mailto:actfast@oxfamamerica.org). Make sure to include "Farmers' market packet" in the subject line, and include the date and place of the farmers' market in your message, as well as your mailing address.

At this point, you should also begin to reach out to potential volunteers. Be sure to give them a clear idea of what you need them to do, confirm their interest, and let them know you'll get back to them with final details prior to the event.

### TWO WEEKS BEFORE: FINALIZING PAPERWORK

Make sure you have turned in all the paperwork that the farmers' market needs from you. Also, check with the market's organizers to confirm the times for setup and breakdown of your table.

### ONE WEEK BEFORE: CONFIRMING VOLUNTEERS

One week before is the time to confirm all shifts with your helpers and volunteers. Make sure they know when to arrive and how long they need to stay so you're not left without help. You can also send volunteers examples of Oxfam materials online or offline to give them more background about what you'll be doing. We recommend familiarizing volunteers with your efforts prior to the event to help ensure that everyone is on the same page.

## THE DAY OF: TABLING

Remember your schedule and gather all of your materials. Plan for travel time so you'll be there with plenty of time to set up and meet your volunteers. Then once you're done, pack your materials and take note of what you'll need to order for next time.

## RIGHT AFTER: GETTING IN TOUCH WITH OXFAM

We'd love to receive your photos, stories, and comments about your farmers' market tabling experience. What worked best for you? Which materials ran out the quickest? What do you need to reorder? Also, remember to send your petitions and event form to us:

### Scan and email

[actfast@oxfamamerica.org](mailto:actfast@oxfamamerica.org)

### Mail

Oxfam America  
ATTN: Farmers' Markets  
226 Causeway Street, 5th Floor  
Boston, MA 02114

# TELL US ABOUT YOUR EVENT

FILL OUT THIS FORM, SEND IT BACK TO US ALONG WITH THE SIGNED PETITIONS, AND WE'LL SEND YOU AN OXFAM T-SHIRT AS THANKS!

Please complete and return this form along with the petitions to Oxfam America.

By email: [actfast@oxfamamerica.org](mailto:actfast@oxfamamerica.org)

By mail: Attn: Farmers' Markets, 226 Causeway Street, 5th Floor, Boston, MA 02114-2206

## YOUR INFORMATION

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ORGANIZER / GROUP LEADER'S NAME

EMAIL

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VOLUNTEER'S NAME (PLEASE USE BACK OF FORM FOR MULTIPLE VOLUNTEERS)

VOLUNTEER EMAIL

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YOUR STREET ADDRESS

---

CITY

STATE

ZIP

---

PHONE

T-SHIRT SIZE

CHANGE LEADER? Y / N

CAMPUS CLUB? Y / N SCHOOL

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## YOUR EVENT

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FARMERS' MARKET NAME

DATE OF TABLING

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FARMERS' MARKET CITY AND STATE

FARMERS' MARKET ZIP CODE

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APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF ATTENDEES

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF SIGNATURES (PETITIONS ATTACHED)

COMMENTS

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