

### How should we choose a location for a market?

First, choosing your site might depend on what is available to you and how much it will cost to use it. Can you find a private landowner that will allow you to use their property or will you have to pay for a permit for public property? As you're looking at sites, here are some things to keep in mind:

**Accessibility:** Look for a site in a central location with plenty of through traffic, and that's easy to get to by all modes of transportation. Try to find a place by a well known landmark or intersection or near offices or other businesses.

**Space:** You want to find a location that can accommodate the space needs for the number of vendors you will have and/or hope to grow to in the future, while leaving space for shoppers to easily circulate through the market and stop and socialize with one another. Here is how Carla Jenkins of [Cedar Park Farmers Market](#) calculates her spacing needs: "I allow width for farmers' trucks (18') + their canopy (10') + an isle (15') + canopy (10') + another isle (15') + canopy (10') + truck (18'). All of that is my width, times the number of 10' booths for my length to figure the square footage needed."

**Parking:** If you expect many of your customers to be driving to the market, is there enough parking available close by? Suzanne Santos from [Sustainable Food Center's Farmers Market](#) in Austin, Texas says to plan on a minimum of 500 spaces for a four hour market that has 4,000-6,000 shoppers. If you can find a location with free parking nearby, even better!

**Utilities:** A site with access to electricity, water, public restrooms, and a place for people to wash their hands will all be things to consider when choosing a site.

**Ground Cover:** Try to find a site with a level surface on asphalt with minimum standing water and pot holes. That will make it easier for vendors to drive their trucks without risking damage, and provide a safe shopping experience for customers.

**Long-Term Availability:** Opening a market in one place only to move the next season when the site owner sells or redevelops the property is a frustrating, but not uncommon, experience for farmers markets. You can help avoid this by requesting a long-term lease.

For more information on what to look for in the ideal market location, look at Matthew Peters' paper on [Locating Farmers Markets](#). You can also use his [Site Selection Tool](#) to compare multiple potential sites for your market. You should also consider what the New Mexico Farmers' Marketing Association says about [finding the right market site](#).

Finally, when reviewing potential sites, consider whether there are any federal buildings in your community that could be good locations for a market based on the criteria above. If there are, check out the USDA's resource for [Opening a Farmers Market on Federal Property](#).