

Information Sheet: Interview Questions for Farmers’ Market Manager

Alberta Agriculture and Forestry (AF) is committed to the long term success of approved farmers’ markets in Alberta. One of the ways this can be achieved is through recruiting and selecting the most appropriate candidate for market manager. The purpose of this information sheet is to provide information to boards and selection committees on interview questions to consider and hiring tips. It may not be complete and should be customized to fit your market’s situation.

Keep in mind that an interview is one step in determining the suitability of a candidate. It is important that you ask questions that will give you an indication of how the candidate will react in certain situations that may arise at the market. It is equally important that you check references on your selected candidate.

There are several types of questions you can ask during an interview, each with different results:

Open questions- " Tell us a little about....."	Keep in mind the selection criteria.
Closed questions - Asked when the interviewer wants specific information, often factual or technical in nature, these questions can frequently be answered with a “yes” or “no”	Seeking clarification and elaboration of past experiences. Requires the candidate to demonstrate technical knowledge in some area
Hypothetical questions-What would you do if...	These will assess the candidate’s ability to think on his/her feet.
Leading questions- The answer seems logical...	As a grower representative you will require good communication skills - do you have good skills in this area? Do not give a yes/no answer. Give examples to support your response.
Multi-barrelled - two or more questions linked to the same topic	Be sure the candidate answers all the questions and don’t be afraid to repeat part of the question if he/she doesn’t answer.

Behavioural questions - uses past experiences to predict future behaviours	Questions here seek examples of experiences that shows the candidate has developed specific skills and how these could benefit the market.
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Sample Interview Questions

These questions are samples only and are not necessarily an exhaustive list. You can pick and choose which questions you use. Add any additional questions based upon the job description for the manager. Feel free to add additional questions than what you go to the interview with depending on how the candidate responds. Be sure to have the candidate elaborate and expand on his/her responses so you feel you have gained a good understanding of what the candidate's skills are.

Tell us about yourself. What are your strengths? Why do you feel you would be suited for this role?

What do you envision your work at the farmers' market to be like?

Tell us about your experience with farm direct marketing.

Tell us about your experience with and knowledge of farmers' markets and this market in particular.

Have you worked with a volunteer board at all in the past? If yes, in what capacity? Provide an example of a challenge you faced working with a volunteer board and how you dealt with it.

Provide an example of a conflict situation you have dealt with in the past. How did you deal with it and is there anything you feel you could have done better?

This position requires strong organizational skills and attention to detail. Please describe your organizational style.

Part of the role of the farmers' market manager requires you to be in charge of promotions for the market. Please describe your experience in this area.

In the role of the farmers' market manager, you will be required to deal with all sorts of people from vendors to health inspectors to Alberta Agriculture staff to regulatory agencies, etc. Please describe your interpersonal style (ie how you relate to others).

Share what you know about the Alberta approved farmers' market program. Are you willing to take the mandatory training required for all approved farmers' market managers?

Please share with us your vision for this farmers' market.

Tips on hiring

As your business grows, you may eventually need to hire employees. It is important to be able to delegate certain tasks so that you can better allocate your time. The person that you choose to hire is going to be representing you and your company, so it's important to choose wisely.

Hiring employees can be a challenging process. Below are a few key steps that you will need to take into consideration during the hiring process:

- Evaluate the need for wanting to hire an employee
- Prepare a job description
- Post the job at appropriate locations (e.g. online, classified listings, ask for a referral, hire a recruiting agency, etc.)
- Review Alberta's Employment Standards to ensure you understand employee rights
- Prepare an employee contract
- Fill out all appropriate forms and maintain proper records
- Review the process of doing payroll
- Train and monitor your new employee
- Utilize the services of an HR professional, as needed

For more detailed information on the hiring process, please visit <http://alis.alberta.ca/pdf/cshop/EmployersGuide.pdf>

Copied from E-News from the Business Link Issue #97 June 2010