

1 AmeriCorps – A national program that allows people of all ages to spend a year serving communities in need, AmeriCorps placements* can be half-time or full-time and typically span 11 months. There is a small stipend associated with having an AmeriCorps member placed with your organization. To learn more about hosting an AmeriCorps member visit www.americorps.gov

2 SeniorCorps – Similar to AmeriCorps, SeniorCorps* provides meaningful opportunities for adults over age 55 to find volunteer opportunities that match their skill sets. If your market is looking for someone to help with accounting or marketing this could be a great place to look. To find out more about SeniorCorps visit www.seniorcorps.gov

3 Offer a Formal Internship – Massachusetts has hundreds of colleges and universities. That means there are thousands of students looking for opportunities to gain work experience over the summer months. If you have the capacity to manage a student, this can be a fantastic opportunity. They can be an extra set of hands for market day; they can conduct surveys with farmers and customers, and do just about anything you need. However, be sure to have a clear work plan established in advance of the summer or neither of you will capture the full potential of the relationship.

4 Area High School Students – Many high schools, both public and independent, require students to conduct community service in order to graduate. Many students choose to do this work during the summer months when they are not burdened with school work. High school juniors and seniors are a great option for conducting outreach and helping with the managers' booth on the day of the market.

5 Recruit Online – There are a number of online services that help people find volunteer opportunities in their neighborhoods. You can list your market on these sites and provide people with the chance to find you. Here are a few suggested sites:
Network for Good: www.networkforgood.org/Npo/volunteers/
Idealist: www.idealists.org
United We Serve: www.serve.gov

6 Try Social Media – More and more people use Facebook and Twitter. Both of these social networking programs can be used to spread the word about your market and to recruit volunteers. Create a Facebook page or Twitter account for your market and start recruiting today.

* You must apply to become a host site, so the turn-around time for receiving a volunteer can be lengthy. Check the website well in advance of the season to begin your application.

7 Use Your Market's Website – A website is a great way to advertise for your market. You can communicate with potential customers about the types of products available, special events, and volunteer needs. Provide a downloadable form that interested volunteers can fill out and return to you via email.

8 Advertise at the Market – People who are already at the market are some of the most likely to care about its success. Have a volunteer sign-up sheet at the manager's booth. Provide people with clear opportunities, so they know what they are being asked to do. For example, if your greatest needs are advertising, set up/take down, or accounting, list those options on the sign-up sheet and allow people to self-determine which activities they are best suited for.

9 Ask a Friend – We all have things that are important to us and our friends want to be supportive. If you know people who like being outside, care about farmers, or have a specific skill you need ask them for help. The worst that can happen is they say no.

10 Talk to Community Members – Many people want to find a way to connect with their community, but don't know how. By asking them to volunteer (or donate money) you are providing them with an opportunity to be a part of something meaningful. Go to town hall meetings or any place you can find civic-minded people gathering will be a great place to make a pitch for volunteering at your market.

*Remember recruiting volunteers is only half the battle. You need to provide volunteers with a fun and meaningful experience if you want them to return. Start by providing your volunteers with small tasks and help them build their confidence and skills over time. And of course, make sure they have a good time and feel appreciated.