

Direct Marketing

MASTER FARMER SERIES

Oahu Resource Conservation & Development Council

Direct Marketing is a general term referring to farm marketing and business practices that involve a direct relationship with the customer.

Farmer's Markets and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) are examples of direct marketing strategies that satisfy consumers' interests in knowing who grows their food and the desire for farmers to develop relationships with the customers who buy their products.

Community Supported Agriculture

Farm-fresh produce is enjoyed by a growing number of people nationwide, with many consumers participating in farm to table agreements known as Community Supported Agriculture (CSA). The traditional CSA is based on a subscriber or shareholder model where members purchase shares of the farm's harvest each week, biweekly or monthly for a set fee. Usually the box comes pre-packaged with an assortment of the week's harvest. Members give up some or all choice in selecting their boxed produce, however they are guaranteed the freshest produce and the opportunity to support local farmers. The farm benefits from the certainty of a customer base. CSAs vary, but all are based on the same direct relationship between farm and consumer.



Produce for sale at a farmer's market (photo courtesy of otsujifarm.com)

Farmer Profile

Ed Otsuji, Otsuji Farm, Hawai'i Kai

Otsuji Farm's mission is to provide the highest quality produce at affordable prices, by carrying on tradition while embracing new technology in order to improve quality, efficiency, and sustainability.

Otsuji Farm employs a CSA model that allows members to purchase \$10 boxes without a specific commitment.

This method works because people pick up boxes of produce from the farm and extra boxes can be prepared for sale if demand exceeds expectations for any given week. While selling produce boxes for \$10 has been a great way for Otsuji Farm to build a relationship with their customer and offer produce to more people at a great price, they admit that selling ala carte at farmer's markets is more profitable.

Like many other farms, Otsuji Farm relies on a combination of endeavors to be sustainable. They rely on 100% word-of-mouth and some hand-made road signs to guide people to the farm for the market and CSA boxes. They also offer public farm tours and education programs to build a relationship with their customers.



Ed Otsuji (photo courtesy of otsujifarm.com)

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Hand-made road sign directing people to
Otsuii Farm (photo courtesy of otsujifarm.com)



Select Resources & Publications:

North American Farmers' Direct Marketing Association: www.nafdma.com/Public/Welcome/

USDA Agriculture Marketing Service: Resource Clearinghouse

[Farmers Market Promotion Program \(FMPP\)](#): a competitive grant program that assists in establishing, expanding, and promoting domestic farmers markets, roadside stands, community-supported agriculture programs, and other direct market opportunities.

Direct Marketing Resource Guide: www.sare.org/publications/dmrg.htm

"Toward Sustainable Agriculture: A Guide for Hawai'i's Farmers"
www.ctahr.hawaii.edu/sustainag/Downloads/TSA_marketing.pdf

"Direct Marketing of Your Agricultural Products"
www.ctahr.hawaii.edu/sustainag/news/articles/V2-Cox-DM.pdf

"How to Direct-Market Farm products on the Internet":
www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/getfile?dDocName=STELDEV3101222

Some Oahu CSA's and Farmer's Markets:

Ailani Gardens ailanigardens.com

Holoholo General Store holoholostore.com/

Just Add Water www.just-add-water.biz/csa.htm

Kahumana Organic Farm (Wai'anae) kahumanafarms.org/C.S.A..html

Ma'o Organic Farms (Wai'anae) shop.maoorganicfarms.org/products/ma'o-organic-farms-csa-subscription

Otsuji Farm otsujifarm.blogspot.com

Waihuena Farm (North Shore) <http://www.meleanasfarm.com/>

Oahu Farmer's Markets: hawaii.gov/hdoa/add/farmers-market-in-hawaii/Oahu.pdf



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