

Sampling Tips Sheet for the Local Foods Matchmaker

The Matchmaker format is different from a trade show; sellers select who they meet with and sign up for a full, 10 minute, one-on-one session. This format is particularly helpful to farmers who do not have product available year-round (for example, fresh produce). For sellers who will be bringing samples, this format requires slightly different preparations to make sure the sampling can be done efficiently. Below are some recommendations for preparing:

- There are three opportunities for buyers to try your product.
 - During the one-on-one Matchmaker sessions.
 - At the closing networking session, when tables will be provided for interested sellers to place out samples.
 - Food served at the Inn. The chef at the Juniper Hill Inn will be given a list of all registered sellers and will incorporate as many products as possible into breakfast, lunch, snacks and gift baskets for guests spending the night.
- There are two sets of one-on-one sessions, with a total of 13 sessions available. There is not a lot of time between meetings in each session so please review your match sheet and plan to carry as many samples as needed between each break.
- Space will be provided to store food while it is not needed. *Please label your products clearly* so that no one will accidentally take your materials.
- Each buyer will be provided with a bag to carry items away, if you have products you want them to keep. It will be easiest to prepare these take away samples, attaching business cards and any other information, ahead of time to leave at the table.
- There will be limited time for sampling at the buyers' tables – sessions are kept strictly to 10 minutes. To help stay within that time frame we suggest:
 - Providing only a few items to try in person.
 - Packing single serving samples ahead of time (if possible) so that time isn't spent measuring out portions.
 - If your product isn't easily pre-apportioned, consider carrying it in a wide basket or board – for example an array of cheeses on a cheese board.
 - For specialty foods, consider carrying a separate set of empty packages to be able to easily display on the table during your talk.
- The closing session will be an informal time to talk and place samples on table space. Again, there will not be extensive time to prepare a display so please do as much pre-preparation as possible or plan for a simple set up (crackers in a basket, cheese on a cutting board, etc.)