

Creating Displays and Exhibits

Exhibitions, fairs, and other events take place all over Nova Scotia. These are great opportunities to create displays or exhibits showcasing food and agriculture in your community, county, or for the whole Province. Creating a fun and effective display or exhibit requires planning and preparation. This resource is a tool to help you start planning for your event and give you some key considerations.

Goals of your exhibit or display

Your display or exhibit should have at least one clear goal in mind. Do you want to educate the public on farming practices? Do you want to target children and youth? Your goals will help lead the style, design and resources you present in your exhibit.

Your space matters. You can create fun, engaging, beautiful displays in any space. You just need to prepare for the space you will be in.

Space considerations:

- **Lighting:** is the space well lit or dark? Do you have windows? You may need extra lighting if the space is dark or you may need window coverings if the space is too bright.
- **Electrical outlets:** will you need power? Make sure you have access to electrical outlets or plan for a space that does not require power.
- **Tables:** Do you need tables in your space?
- **Colouring stations, table top games or areas for conversation** need tables. Child size tables are inviting to children to use.
- **Seating:** Do you want people to sit and stay in your space or is it to walk-through? Having seating available invites people to stay longer in a space.
- **Traffic Flow:** How do people come into the space and exit the space? Do you have a different entry and exit point? Do want people to walk around and move through the space?
- **Number of visitors at one time:** Spaces are often not large. If you are limited on space try to limit the number of people in your exhibit.



Display materials and giveaways

The displays, games, giveaways, and materials presented in your exhibit or given to visitors is an important part of your exhibit. Much consideration should be given as to the messaging, quality, validity, and overall look of the materials. It's important that materials are up to date, clean, visually appealing, age appropriate, and present information that support your goals in your display. A mix of paper handout resources, interactive games or displays, activities, pull-up banners, posters, and video/technology displays will provide interest to a broad range of people.

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Display materials and giveaways continued

People learn and retain information in different ways so a combination of visual, auditory, and experiential materials increases retention. Try to stick with a colour theme and make the space cohesive and eye appealing. If you do not have display units like shelving, counters, stools, buckets, or stands, consider renting them from an events supplier. They often offer delivery and have a wide range of products available.

Staff- Ask for help:

Creating an exhibit and being in the space for the entire event is exhausting. But, having staff in the space is so important. People who can answer questions and be a welcoming face, adds a personal touch to the display. Create a committee to work on the space together and ask farmers and other people in the food system to participate in the space. Get them to bring items they use on their farm or in their work as conversation starters or ways to interact. For example, a dairy farmer could bring in a sample of ingredients used in the ration they feed to their cows for visitors to smell and touch.

Opportunities for connection and conversation:

The biggest takeaway you can have when planning an exhibit or display is that you want to create opportunities for conversation. Your display is not just about educating consumers but creating the opportunity to have a conversation with the public on food and farming. Providing materials and information can act as a spark for talking about agriculture and farming. We know that connecting on shared values is 3-5 times more powerful than communicating with facts when it comes to earning trust (CCFI, 2018). What values matter to the general public? To families? To youth?



Top five issues:

- Rising cost of food
- Keeping healthy food affordable
- Climate change/ global warming
- Energy costs
- Health care costs

Source: Canadian Centre for Food Integrity 2021 Public Trust Research Results

Meet Your Farmer has a range of materials and resources available for use in exhibits. You can find our Public Trust Resource Inventory [here](#). If you are interested in any of the items available please reach out to Janette McDonald: jmcdonald@nsfa-fane.ca