



Native Agri Update

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www.indianag.on.ca

FARM & FAMILY SAFETY

sources: www.casa.acsa.ca, www.wsps.ca

As we all know, farming has its share of hazards and risks for those working and living on the farm. Be sure you take the time to consider the risks and put a plan in place to help keep everyone on the farm safe this summer. It's a good idea to remind everyone of the potential hazards, as well as steps they can take to avoid harm. Don't forget to include everyone on the farm, especially children and youth.

With the summer's heat comes the potential for heat stress. For those doing heavy work, sickness and accidents rates increase as the temperature gets above 30 degrees C/ 86 degrees F. When your working in the heat, be sure to:

- Drink plenty of water
- Get out of the heat occasionally and take breaks in the shade
- Slow down
- Wear light coloured, light weight clothing & a hat
- Be alert to signs of heat stress

Three common conditions of heat stress:

Heat Cramps: painful cramps in arms legs, and stomach. For those affected, move to a cool area, provide water.

Heat Exhaustion: heavy sweating, cool, moist skin, body temp over 38 degrees Celsius, weak pulse, and rapid breathing or panting. Seek medical help and move the person to shade, provide water and help cool the person.

Heat Stroke: body temperature over 41 degrees C/105 F and any of the following: hot dry skin, rapid pulse, headache or dizziness, pass out/convulsions. Call an ambulance if heat stroke is suspected, move the person to the shade, keep cool, and provide water.

Farm Machinery Safety on Roads

- Check hitch connections, including safety chains. Use a locking hitch pin.
- Use Slow Moving Vehicle signs and proper lighting.
- Check the condition of all tires.
- Lock brake pedals together for road travel.
- Slow down on curves, turns and when pulling heavy loads.
- Perform a circle check before moving machinery.



Power-Take-Off Safety

- All guards and shields must be in place and in good repair.
- Always shut down power before servicing or unplugging equipment.
- Wear close-fitting clothes and keep long hair covered/tied.
- Always walk around equipment, never step onto or across a PTO shaft.



Preventing Tractor Overturns

- Never hitch higher than the drawbar height.
- Always wear a seat belt when operating with rollover protection.
- Lock brake pedals before high speed travel.
- Keep loader bucket as low as possible.

Safe Lifting and Carrying Techniques

- Bend your knees, not your back.
- Keep the slight inward curve in your lower back.
- Keep the load close to the body.
- Don't twist. Move your feet to turn.

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Contributors

Brian Bell - BB
Farm Advisor
brian@indianag.on.ca

Camden Lawrence - CL
Business Advisor
camden@indianag.on.ca

Brendan Landis - BL
Business Advisor
brendan@indianag.on.ca

Jamie Hall - JH
General Manager
jamie@indianag.on.ca

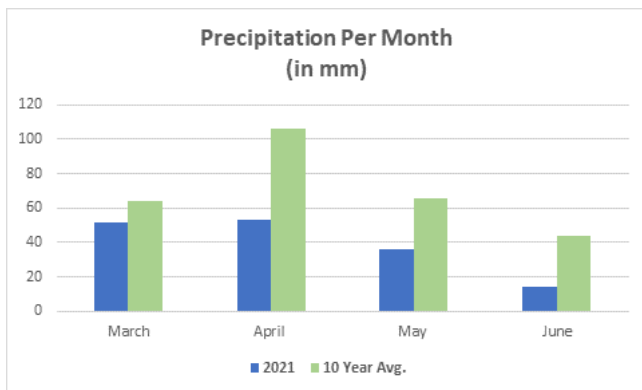
IAPO Box 100
Stirling, ON K0K 3E0
1-800-363-0329 info@indianag.on.ca

Agribusiness

DRY CONDITIONS, RISING PRICES

In a year that has seen commodity prices sky rocket back to record highs and the concerns and unknown that the end of the COVID pandemic bring, there are growing concerns of inflation and increased food costs, as well as drought.

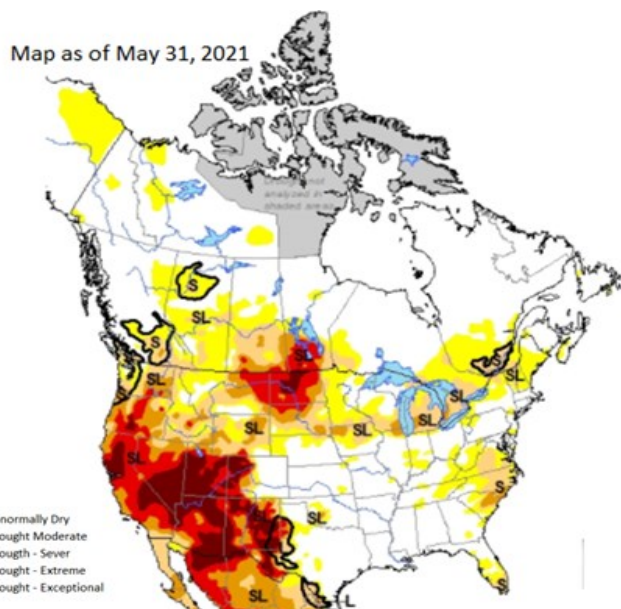
With crop prices surging anywhere from 10-75% from last year depending on the crop, it is some promising news for farmers across the province, but it may be more of a challenge getting the crop yields to take advantage of these price jumps.



source: <https://onvegetables.com/weather>

In most parts of Ontario we have seen significantly less rainfall than average which is causing such dry conditions.

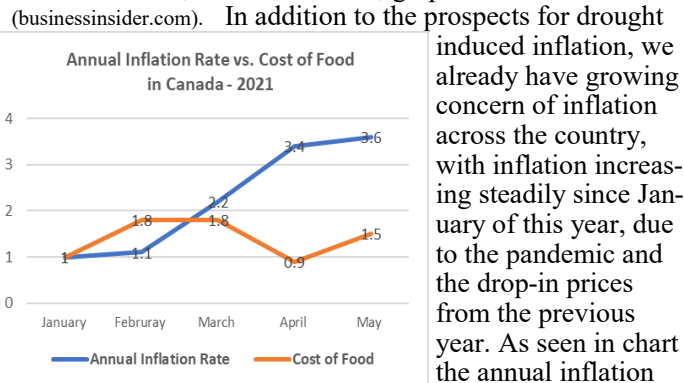
As we can see from the map below, it is not only the province that is seeing these dry conditions, but actually a concern across the continent.



Drought brings in concerns of potential crop yields including hay production, pasture growth and sustainability as well

as water supply as water sources could dry up, creating the need to haul water.

Drought is a concerns for area across western Canada, particularly in Manitoba, and even greater concerns for the Western United States, such as California. "Last time California had a drought of this magnitude (2014), shoppers saw anywhere from 17 to 62% increase on top California exports such as avocados, berries, broccoli, grapes & lettuce".



In addition to the prospects for drought induced inflation, we already have growing concern of inflation across the country, with inflation increasing steadily since January of this year, due to the pandemic and the drop-in prices from the previous year. As seen in chart the annual inflation rate has been increasing steadily from January but this has not had a major effect on food prices to date. This is not what economist believe as they are predicting the largest price jump in a decade with potential of another 3-5% increase still to come due to the pandemic, climate change and distribution costs. (<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada>)

As we emerge for the final stages of the pandemic and embark on the challenges of the evolving growing season, there is still optimism for farmers. With prices at all-time highs, a good season could be the bounce back we all have been looking for. With inflation in the background, let's all pray for rain.



Pow Wow Pitch, has announced the opening of its seventh annual Pow Wow Pitch competition to Inuit, Métis and First Nations entrepreneurs

Between June 21st and July 15th, Indigenous entrepreneurs can submit a 1-minute video business pitch as their entry into the competition.

Pow Wow Pitch will select the top 150 entrepreneurs as Regional Semi-Finalists to receive mentorship, pitch training and a chance to take the continental stage to pitch their business. The top 25 entrepreneurs from each region will pitch to a panel of judges for the chance to win. \$50,000 in cash prizes ranging from \$500 CAD to \$25,000 CAD for the Grand Prize

To learn more about the 2021 Pow Wow Pitch competition, please visit: <https://www.powwowpitch.org/pitch/>

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Market Information

BEEF MARKET WATCH

Prices are courtesy of the Beef Farmers of Ontario Weekly Market Information Report for the week ending Thursday June 17, 2021. Changes in this chart reflect the difference in prices from the week of April 1, 2021 to the week of June 14, 2021. Weekly reports provide prices on a per cwt basis for the week but do not include Friday sale results.

Fed steers ranged from \$143.69-\$166.80 averaging \$158.79 down \$0.56 from last week and \$1.06 easier than last year at this time.

Fed heifers sold from \$147.37-\$165.65 averaging \$158.38 up \$4.39 from last week but \$0.13 easier than year ago prices. Auction markets reported active trading with prices anywhere from steady to \$7.00 higher on the steers, and \$2.00-\$7.00 higher for the heifers.

The Ontario railgrade market light to moderate this week with prices reported at \$270.00 dressed for steers and \$269.00-\$270.00 for heifers with delivery this week and mostly next week. This week's average price is up \$3.25 from last week.

Larger volumes of fed/cull cows continued to sell at high prices. Cows ranged from \$71.34-\$101.95 averaging \$85.16 up \$0.28 from last week and \$7.28 stronger than year ago prices.

Auction markets reported active trading on strong demand with higher prices. As the week progressed, heavier cattle

were reported as steady to stronger with excellent demand and quality considered.

Category	Price Range \$	Ave Price	Top Price	Change
Rail Steers	270			
Fed steers	141-166	158	177	+11
Fed heifers	142-166	157	170	+14
Cows	71-101	85	131	+21
Bulls	101-124	112	191	+20
Stocker steers				
700 – 799	182-208	197	217	+8
600 – 699	177-230	206	259	+7
500 – 599	205-252	230	271	+15
Stocker heifers				
700 – 799	130-172	153	200	-2
600 – 699	142-195	176	213	+6
500 – 599	163-208	189	245	+4

All prices are on a hundred pound basis (cwt)

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CROP MARKET

Adapted from Market Trends June July 2021 by Phillip Shaw GFO www.gfo.ca

Corn In a weather market, especially this time of year, corn trading can be frenetic. In the week ending June 11th, corn was up big on the week, until it was lost on the Friday as rain had moved through the Dakotas. Meanwhile the 10–14-day weather forecast was for scorching weather. Expect more of the same, especially as we move toward June 30th and the July 4th weekend, a traditional high point for corn getting set for pollination.

US corn is close to 8-year highs, the nearby contract in the 88th percentile of the past five-year price range. Seasonally, corn tend to peak about now (mid-June) and bottom in early October.

Soybeans Soybeans supplies remain at pipeline levels, as long as that pipeline represents 135 million bushels of old crop stocks predicted by USDA. New crop stocks are unchanged at 155 million bushels, a far cry from those billion

-bushel stocks of 3 years ago. However, how many acres will the American farmer plant this spring. On June 30th, those acres are set to increase, and this will largely impact those supplies.

87.6 million acres of US soybeans and 50.8 bushel per acre are where we are at the moment and the US cannot afford to lose a bushel. However, as we all know, weather will help to define that. Rain in August is always key to soybean yield.

The November 2021 soybean contract is currently priced 23.75 cents above the March 2022 soybean contract, which reflects a very bullish market indication. The nearby soybean contract is down from last month, but still sits in the 82nd percentile of the past five-year price range.

Seasonally, soybean prices tend to peak in July and reach their low in October.

Wheat Wheat prices have been frenetic, partly because of the different weather patterns, which have affected the different classes of wheat, HRS, HRW and SRW, the latter being the predominant wheat grown in Ontario. Rain in the Dakotas and western Canada is good for HRS.

In Ontario, the wheat crop looks good, much of it sprayed with fungicide to protect against fusarium as harvest gets closer. Dry weather is certainly impacting wheat across the province and rain in mid-June would be appreciated to further grain fill. Needless to say, cash prices for wheat in the \$7 and \$8 range is good for Ontario farmers.

Coming Events

July 15 - Deadline for Submissions for Pow Wow Pitch

Indigenous entrepreneurs can pitch their businesses online for a chance to win cash prizes ranging from \$500 to \$25,000.

www.powwowpitch.org

Livestock Information

TIPS FOR PASTURE & FEEDING IN DRY CONDITIONS

There are tough decisions to make during a long period of low rainfall. Do I move cattle to available pastures or transport in hay? What are my options for local forage supplies? Can I feed old forages or even straw? What about creep feeding and early weaning? This article will discuss some of these points and provide some tips to extend tight hay supplies and drought affected pastures.

Cattle producers have a couple general options for meeting the nutrient requirements of cattle on drought affected pastures. The first is to provide supplemental feed or alternative pasture to ensure the cow herd has adequate energy, protein, vitamins, and minerals. The second is to reduce the nutrient requirements of the beef cow to a point where they can be met with lower quality forages. You may also have to consider decreasing cow numbers on pasture including removing yearlings from drought affected pastures and moving or selling them early, culling older cows, early weaning and creep feeding of calves.

Early Weaning & Creep Feeding

Typically, calves are weaned at six to seven months of age. However, during a drought, forage is generally limiting and early weaning may be worth considering. The time of weaning will have effects on the cow and calf performance, health, and productivity on the pasture. Four distinct advantages would be improved cow body condition, calf performance, conception rates and forage availability for the cow. By weaning early, the cow's nutrient requirements for lactation are eliminated and cows are able to maintain or increase body condition prior to the fall and winter-feeding period, and forage availability for the cow.

Creep feeding in its simplest form is the practice of providing supplemental feed to nursing calves prior to weaning. The calf's requirements for nutrients such as energy and protein increase rapidly and, in many cases, can outpace the supply from milk and pasture, thus limiting growth rate and ultimately the calf's weight at weaning. Under drought situations, this nutrient gap can become even larger as milk production declines at a faster rate and the availability of high-quality forage to the calf becomes limiting. Creep feeding can help reduce grazing pressure, particularly on drought-stressed pastures.

Creep feeds can be purchased from commercial sources or mixed from homegrown feeds. Protein levels from 13 to 16 per cent and energy values between 65 and 75 per cent TDN (dry matter basis) are typical. Consumption will increase with age/weight of the calf and can reach six to eight pounds or more per day.

Pasture & Alternate Feed Options

Look for alternate grazing areas, on your farm and in your

community. Second and third growth in hay fields can be grazed if the hay is not needed. Select fields that have been established for a few years as your first choice. In some regions there are fields that have not been cropped or pastured for a number of years, investigate the possibility of using some of these for extra forage. Pastures can also be extended by bringing other crops into the rotation. Other crops such as cereals, sorghums, annual ryegrass can be grazed during the summer period to give an extended break to the main pastures. There may be a cost for fencing, but that will need to be balanced against the value of the extra pasture that you get. Temporary electric fence can be easily installed.

Supplementing pastures may be necessary to keep animals from overgrazing dry pastures. This will mean moving them onto a "sacrifice" pasture and feeding. Livestock will usually prefer pasture so will keep regrazing and weakening pastures rather than accepting the supplemental feed if they still have access. During our last major drought, producers found that they fed less supplemental feed and had better gains if they supplemented early before livestock condition was affected and before pastures were run down. Feed options include cereal crops, straw and grain.

Harvesting cereal crops as forage crops make excellent forage when harvested as cereal hay or silage. Cereals are most successfully harvested as silage at or before the kernel reaches the soft dough stage and while the leaves are still green. Early harvested cereal fields can be re-seeded to a cereal to provide forage in about 6 weeks. However, seeding should be done by mid-August.

Depending on availability, straw is a forage alternative worth considering. Quality straw is a good energy source for ruminants; however, straw is low in protein (only 4-5%) so the ration must include an adequate source of protein, along with the appropriate mineral mix and salt. Oat straw is most palatable followed by barley and wheat. Choice of cattle for straw feeding are mature dry cows in good body condition, up to six weeks away from calving. These animals have the lowest nutritional requirements of any in the herd. Save your best forages for bred heifers and young cows pregnant with their second calf, as well as for post-calving rations. Thin cows should be grouped with the bred heifer group to enable them to consume enough nutrients for successful calving and re-breeding.

Finally, for grain supplements on pasture some processing may be necessary for optimum use by cattle. Corn and oats can be fed whole but may be better utilized if coarsely rolled before feeding. Barley and wheat should be coarsely rolled. For minerals, provide the same salt and mineral mixture during drought as you would during normal conditions. The salt mixture should be placed close to watering locations. A lack of vitamin A may be a problem during fall and winter for cows that grazed drought-affected pastures during summer. Vitamin A is lacking in forages during drought and in hay produced from drought-affected forages.

If you'd like more information or to discuss pasturing on your farm, feel free to reach out to IAPO.

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Crop Information

POTATOES - WATER MANAGEMENT

sources: 2016 Organic Production and IPM Guide for Potatoes Cornell U, Irrigation –Estimating Soil Moisture no 7400 Colorado U, OMAFRA Pub 363, Estimating Soil Moisture by Feel and Appearance NRCS.

Water management and rainfall are among the most important factors determining yield and quality of potatoes. Potatoes are more sensitive than other crops drought due to a shallow root system with most of the roots in the top 12 inches of soil, as well as soil type, as potatoes are often grown on sands and sandy loam soils that have low to medium water holding capacity.

While adequate irrigation is important for yield, excessive or unnecessary irrigation should be avoided. Environmental impacts of too much water use include erosion, leaching of nutrients and depletion of water reserves. As well, growth cracks, hollow heart, blackspot, internal necrosis, knobby tubers, seed piece decay, Rhizoctonia and tuber late blight can be related to excessive amounts of water.

According to OMAFRA, potatoes require a minimum of 2.5 cm or 1” per week in of water for good yield. Determining if its time to irrigate involves considering rainfall, how much water is available in the soil, and crop stage. Crop stage is important because water needs increase particularly during potato initiation and bulking. Impacts on yield due to drought are most significant during these stages. During mid-season crop evapotranspiration can easily exceed 2.5 cm or 1” of water per week.

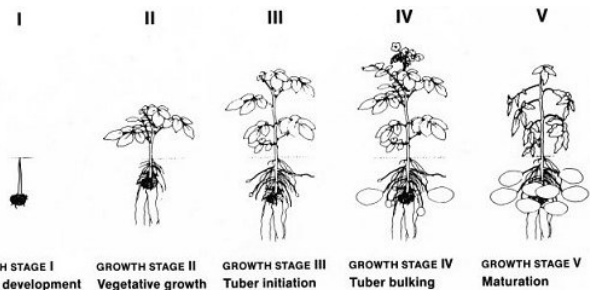
The table below shows water requirement by growth stage. Research in the US shows yield losses will occurs if available moisture drops below required levels for more than 5 days.

Growth Stage	Soil Available Water Requirement	Yield Losses if Available Water Below Required Levels > 5 days
Growth Stage 1 Sprout Development	75% available soil water	Short periods of drought stress do not reduce yield
Growth Stage 2 Vegetative Growth	75% available soil water	5%
Growth Stage 3 Potato Initiation	80% available soil water	10%
Growth Stage 4 Potato Bulking	90% available soil water	40-60% Highest demand for water. Adequate water is necessary for high yield. Dry conditions favour potato malformations
Growth Stage 5 Potato Maturation	60-65% available soil water	Water deficit causes tuber dehydration

source: www.omafra.gov.on.ca Impact of Dry Conditions on Potato Yield

Irrigation Scheduling

It is important to use some method of irrigation scheduling to avoid drought stress and provide water when it is most needed.



There are two basic methods of irrigation scheduling:

Water Budget Method This method uses climatic data to estimate the amount of available water lost from the rooting zone through crop use and evaporation. The amount of crop water use is calculated using the percentage of crop cover and the evapotranspiration rate from climatic data. Further details of this method are available online.

Measuring Soil Moisture There are several tools available for measuring soil moisture content including Tensiometers, Electrical Resistance Blocks, and Time Domain Reflectometry (TDR). For a low tech, hands on approach, the “feel and appearance method” may be worth considering.

The feel and appearance of soil vary with texture and moisture content. Soil moisture conditions can be estimated, with experience, to an accuracy of about 5% according to the US National Resource Conservation Service.

Soil moisture is typically sampled in 1-foot increments to the root depth of the crop at three or more sites per field. For each sample the “feel and appearance method” involves:

1. Obtaining a soil sample at the selected depth using a probe, auger, or shovel.
2. Squeezing the soil sample firmly in your hand several times to form an irregularly shaped “ball”.
3. Squeezing the soil sample out of your hand between thumb and forefinger to form a ribbon.
4. Observing soil texture, ability to ribbon, firmness and surface roughness of ball, water glistening, loose soil particles, soil/water staining on fingers, and soil colour.

Available Soil Moisture %	Moderately Coarse Texture (fine sandy loam, sandy loam)	Medium Texture (silt loam, sandy clay loam, loam, very fine sandy loam)	Fine & Very Fine Texture (clay, silty clay, sandy clay, silty clay loam, clay loam)
100	Upon squeezing, no free water appears on soil but wet outline of ball is left on hand.		
75-100	Forms weak ball, breaks easily when bounced in hand*	Forms ball, very pliable, slicks readily*	Easily ribbons out between thumb and forefinger.*
50-75	Will form ball, but falls apart when bounced in hand.*	Forms ball under pressure*	Forms ball, will ribbon out between thumb and forefinger.*
25-50	Appears dry, will not form ball with pressure*	Crumbly, holds together from pressure*	Somewhat pliable, will ball under pressure.*
0-25	Dry, loose, flows through fingers	Powdery, crumbles easily.	Hard, difficult to break into powder.

* Squeeze a handful of soil firmly to make ball

5. Comparing observations with the chart above to estimate percent water available. There are also some good picture resources online that show ball and ribbon tests at various moisture levels.

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Other News

DIRECT MARKETING

Whether you are starting a farm market or attending one as a vendor, there are a few key points to get right.

Location

In setting up your own market, the location is very important. Not only the geographical location but whether it's close to the road or down a long lane. Being in a heavily populated area or along a busy highway will go a long way in generating and keeping customers. When deciding on a market to attend as a vendor, research is important. The hours of operation, location, and competition of each location should all be factored into your decision of which location to attend.

Presentation



The goal with the displays is to make your customers want to buy the product. Displays should be well-stocked and displayed in a tasteful way. Coordinating the colours and different textures of the products together will create a beautiful display. (Eggplant beside summer squash next to carrots with tops, etc.)

The quality of the product is very important. Your customers need a reason to take the time to drive to your market instead of buying produce when they do their weekly shopping. Quality can be a drawing card for your customers. A few pointers in maintaining the look of quality are as follows:

- keep products out of the sun
- often spray greens with cool water
- replace any 'tired' looking product
- sort every item daily, and remove imperfect products
- handle with care in any transportation.



When you have a product that is no longer "fresh" looking, you could remove it from the large display and reduce its price. Any produce that has lost its freshness, could be used to make preserves. This will directly reduce the amount of waste that comes from any products not selling quickly.

The placing of the product is important. A high-profit product should be displayed in high traffic areas to ensure a greater volume of sales. If you notice that a product doesn't seem to be selling, try moving it to a different location or display it differently. In farm markets, rarely will reducing the selling price create more sales volume. Most of your customers choose to buy from you because they want a fresh product.

The signage of the product is also key. A clear indication of price as well as product is a must. Regardless of your location, check with local signage requirements to ensure you

will not be hassled by any governing body. For more info on Ontario's farm market signage requirements see www.omafra.gov.on.ca. Another great idea is to have recipe cards or brochures to help your customers know how to cook with your produce. This can increase your sales as the recipe may call for several items instead of the one item your customer was planning to buy. Foodland Ontario has many merchandising materials including recipe cards, which are free of charge when you register your market. (www.ontario.ca/foodland)

Pricing

When it comes to pricing at a farm market, there are 3 key areas to keep in mind: costs, competitors and target market.

Cost include the direct and indirect costs associated with producing the product, electricity, water, fuel, labour, land, etc. Keep in mind that your prices are not only based on your costs but should also be based on the value perceived by your customers. On a farm, it can be a little tricky to solely use this method so it is always a good idea to see what your competitors are doing. Remember that grocery store chains are not on the same level as a farm market so their pricing will not be a good indication of what your prices should be. While grocery stores will discount their product to drive mass sales, for farm marketers, its important to do the math before giving discounts. For example, let's say you have broccoli that you are selling for \$1.50 each with a \$0.50 profit on each head. In an effort to sell more, you decide to make a deal or feature selling 3 heads for \$4.00. This will reduce your profit per broccoli to \$0.33 each. As shown below, if you normally sell 40

	# units	Retail Price	Total Sales	Margin/head or bunch	Net Profit
Broccoli -	40	\$ 1.50	\$ 60.00	0\$0.50	\$20.00
Broccoli - 3 for \$4	20	\$ 4.00	\$ 80.00	\$1.00	\$20.00

head, you'll need to sell 20 bunches or 60 heads to stay even! One way to preserve your profit and drive sales can be simply bundling without price reductions. An example of this would be selling the broccoli in a bundle such as, 2 for \$3.00 while maintaining the individual price. This strategy works by encouraging "single" bunch buyers to buy more.

Another key area to be mindful of, is your target market. If you are marketing to customers who come to your farm from a large city for fresh produce, your profit margin may be larger than if you were selling to a small town where there are a lot of local farmers. The way you market your product will have an impact on your sales. Displaying and marketing a product as a premium product will likely move product more quickly.

Advertising

Facebook and Instagram provide excellent advertising methods as they use your customers to create a buzz. You can reach 1000's of people at very little to no cost. In any Facebook advertising, using pictures or videos is important. *BC*