

6.2 The grand opening

SPADEWORK
BROADCASTING
GERMINATION
MULCHING
STAKING
HARVEST
SUSTAINABILITY
RESOURCES

- > *Why have an opening*
- > *Choosing a date*
- > *Choosing someone to open the market*
- > *The invitation list*
- > *Practical considerations*
- > *Bells and whistles*
- > *Checklist*

Why have an official opening

Having an official event a few weeks after the first market offers another opportunity for media coverage. Continual media coverage helps establish the market in the minds of consumers. It is crucial to encourage regular market shopping habits with customers to sustain the market into the future.

Choosing a date

- > Seasonal appropriateness
- > Produce availability
- > Availability of VIP
- > Ideally, after the market has been operating for a couple of weeks and initial teething problems have been sorted out

Choosing someone to open the market

You want someone who supports the market and will attract media and public attention for example:

- > An environmental champion
- > A well known local personality who has a strong belief in the farmers' market ethos
- > A local food industry champion or restaurateur who understands the issues
- > A politician with environment, agriculture or food portfolio

The invitation list

- > Local state and federal Members of Parliament
- > Council members and council executive
- > Community leaders
- > Sponsors
- > All media
- > Local food identities
- > Local business operators
- > The public

Practical considerations

- > Send invitations to VIPs
- > Organise the site to incorporate space for audience and stage
- > Notify police and organise parking and traffic control
- > Arrange Public Liability Insurance
- > Arrange entertainment
- > Arrange press opportunities for photos and interviews
- > Organise sound system, lectern, microphone

- > Prepare running sheet

- > Record the event

Bells and whistles

- > Decorate the entrance to the site
- > Decorate individual stalls
- > Provide balloons for children
- > Music and buskers
- > Special tastings
- > Competitions and prizes

The Willunga Farmers Market Experience

Our official opening was held a few weeks after the first market. The big question was who should we get to open it?

By chance Dr David Suzuki was due in Adelaide and after protracted negotiations agreed to come to Willunga to officially open the Farmers Market. To seal the deal we promised an audience of at least 1000 people to whom he could sell signed copies of his books. Then we had to deliver!

This was confirmed less than a week before he was due to arrive so the next few days were spent in a flurry organising publicity, musicians and stages, audio equipment, notifying police and preparing the stallholders for what we knew would be a big day. We faxed off press releases to every media outlet on our list and followed up with phone calls and then concentrated on word of mouth. The region was soon buzzing with the news and we were pretty certain we could deliver on our audience promise.

It turned out to be a major event for Willunga ensuring without a doubt that the first farmers market in South Australia was open for business. Dr Suzuki sold over 300 books and was very happy, the Market made a profit from the sale of the books and received an enormous amount of free publicity and the stallholders had a huge day. The community was bursting with pride and any lingering opposition dissipated in the face of such overwhelming support.

Checklist

- > Select a date
- > Make a short list of people you would like to open the market
- > Invite preferred person
- > Draw up list of people to be invited
- > Send press releases to media, invitations to guests, arrange advertising
- > Organise site requirements e.g. seating, equipment, refreshments, entertainment, decoration
- > Write introductory speech
- > After the event, send thank you notes to any sponsors etc photos and press release to media list