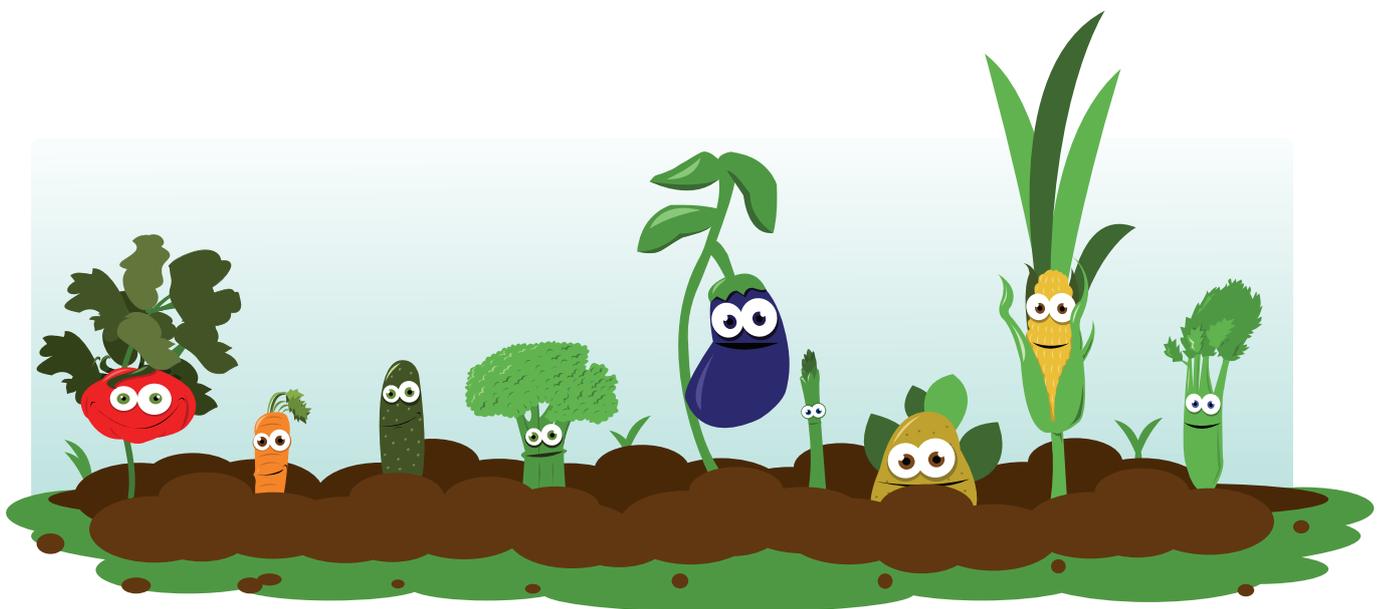


Fruit & Vegetable Barra Start Up Guide

**A tool to support you when
setting up a fruit and vegetable barra.**



Introduction

If you are thinking of starting up a fruit and vegetable barra or food initiative there are a few things worth considering. You may have a Community Food Development Worker or Health Improvement Team in your area; get in contact with them for support and guidance on how best to go about getting things started.

Before starting up a new fruit and vegetable barra (food initiative) a few simple steps/procedures are required to be put in place.

Some are required by law and some are helpful for the volunteers who will run the barra.

This booklet will provide you with guidance on:

Is there a Community need?

Venue

Suppliers

Funding

Equipment

Sundries

Banking and Takings

Advertising and Promotion

Setting up your Barra and Displaying the Produce

Unsold Produce

Promotional Ideas

Volunteers

Skills Development

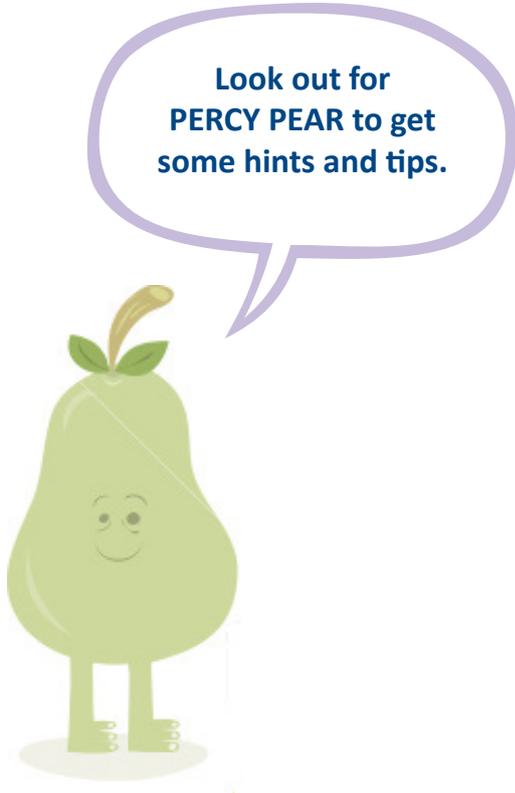
Accredited Training

Ongoing Costs to be Considered

Expanding your Fruit Barra into the Community

Healthy Start

Examples



Look out for
PERCY PEAR to get
some hints and tips.

Is there a Community need?

Q. How would you know a fruit and vegetable barra is wanted in your area?

A. You may want to consider the following options to assess if there is a community need:

- Design a questionnaire for community members and/or public to see if they would use a barra, as well as days and times they would access it and/or what produce would they like to buy. See Community Questionnaire example 1 on page 25. This is a good opportunity to advertise that volunteers are needed to run the barra.
- Organise an event or link into an existing event to distribute questionnaires or talk to the community. It may be worth considering promoting produce and suggested prices (i.e. soup bags, fruit and vegetables).
- If a few people express an interest or volunteer to help – start a focus group to discuss ideas, planning and roles – it would be good to involve your local Community Food Development Worker or Health Improvement Team at this stage before launching your barra.

It is important that a community need is established before any further action is undertaken.



Venue

Q. Is the proposed venue suitable for setting up a fruit barra?

A. Most venues will be suitable, but there are a few things to consider in helping you decide. It is advisable to carry out some form of risk assessment.

Here are some examples:

- Is the venue easily accessible for the delivery of the produce?
- Are there storage facilities for any equipment including cleaning products?
- Does the venue have suitable tables to display your produce?
- Is there hot water available for washing your equipment?
- Are separate hand washing facilities other than toilet areas accessible - ensure that hot water is available?
- Are the electric sockets close to where you might set up (if till and/or scales are required)?
- Are the electrical sockets in good condition?
- Is the serving area safe from physical hazards e.g. flaking paint?
- Does the venue require electrical items to be safety tested e.g. PAT tested?
- Are volunteers/workers aware of the venues safety procedures including fire safety?



Check with your Environmental Health Department on the suitability of your venue. Remember you are legally required to register with Environmental Health.

Suppliers

Q. Who do we get to supply the produce?

A. Are there local companies willing to work with voluntary groups to provide good quality fruit and vegetables at affordable prices?

Here are things to consider:

- Check to see if there are any other fruit barras in your area, who do they use?
- It might be useful visiting another fruit barra to see how they operate.
- Speak to suppliers in person, find out what they can offer and build up a relationship with them. Explain the importance of good quality produce at consistent prices.
- What time can the supplier deliver? Note that this might be early morning.
- Will the hall/room/venue be open at this time?
- Will there be someone available to open your hall/room/venue to accept delivery?

Sometimes a producer will offer a sale or return service. Check with them as this can be useful even for a short time when initially setting up.



Funding

Q. How do we fund any equipment we may need to purchase?

A. Check for any grants that might be available.

- NHS Forth Valley Health Improvement Team – may be able to offer support with funding or signpost you to other sources.
www.nhsforthvalley.com/healthpromotion then click Nutrition
- Community Food and Health (Scotland) – Annual Development Fund
www.communityfoodandhealth.org.uk
- Community Health Exchange (CHEX) – for other sources of funding.
www.chex.org.uk
- Check local and government websites.
- Check local voluntary sector services who might be able to support you with grant applications.

Q. How will we fund the daily/weekly or monthly orders?

A. Having some start up funds in place is good practice until you get established to pay for your first order. As part of funding requirements you may need to set up a bank account.

Again check for any local grants.



Equipment

Equipment needs may be different depending on the operational requirements of your barra. It would be useful to have basic equipment including chopping boards, knives, food bags and display boxes/baskets. Also consider the following questions:

Q. Will we require scales?

A. Not always, it depends on the level of fruit barra you intend to provide. If providing soup and fruit bags only, you will not require scales. If you are going to sell loose produce i.e carrots and potatoes then it is advisable, but they can be sold individually. Also consider:

- Can the scales be stored safely?
- Do you need an extension cable?
- You will be required by law to have the scales checked (calibrated) yearly by a suitable company - this can cost around £100.

Q. Will we need a till?

A. This depends on the level of fruit barra you intend to provide. If it is a 'basic' barra, where you are only providing soup and fruit bags then a till may not be required. This is often a good way to start to see what the public uptake will be. Having a money box is a good addition. You can also get calculators with a till roll facility, these are a good alternative, however, you will need to factor in the cost of the till rolls.



Having a supply of note pads, pencils and a calculator is a good idea to help when serving customers, also think about displaying an up to date large print price list near the counter, this will be useful for volunteers and customers.

Sundries

If your barra decides to do specials for example; lentil soup packs, costs associated with extra non vegetable items need to be factored in i.e. lentils, stock cubes and bags. These costs could be covered by adding a small amount to lower cost items e.g. apples cost 18p - charge 20p each.

Q. Will we need bags for the produce?

A. It is advisable to buy food grade bags to put the produce in e.g. potatoes, carrots and tomatoes. Cash and carry organisations are often good value for money, but you will be required to register with them, and have some form of transport to collect them?

- Food bags can be bought from most shops or supermarkets, but getting large bags may be an issue and they are often more expensive.
- Your supplier may be able to provide or sell these to you.

Q. Where will you buy your lentils for the soup bags?

A. Sometimes fruit and vegetable suppliers can supply these at a good price, or your local cash and carry. Most supermarkets sell smaller bags, these may be easier to purchase, but might not be as cost effective.

Q. What kind of stock cubes should we buy?

A. Vegetable tends to be a good choice as suitable for most, including vegetarians. Often a supermarkets basic range can work out good value for money.

Banking and Takings

Q. Will the barra require a start up float?

A. Yes, this doesn't have to be a large amount, but having a small selection of coins and small notes is advisable. Always count the float before the barra opens, to check for any errors.

Q. Who will take responsibility for cashing up at the end of the day?

A. It is good practice to have two people cash up at the end of the day. Taking note of amount spent on produce and amount of income from sales.

It is also advisable to write down which notes/coins are being banked, especially if someone else is taking the money to the bank. See Cashing Up Sheet example 2 on page 26.

Q. Who will take responsibility for banking the takings?

A. It can be volunteers or staff who do the banking, but it is good to keep records of how much each order costs, and how much is made each week. Then taking note of any profit or loss for that week. This is essential if you are on a monthly invoice payment system with your supplier. See Takings Sheet example 3 on page 27.



It is useful to put cashing up and banking procedures in place before starting, including guidelines around volunteers purchasing produce, i.e. always have someone else weigh, price and take the money for produce bought, never allow self weighing or payments. This will save any potential issues in the future.

Advertising and Promotion

Q. How will you advertise your barra?

A. There are various ways to advertise and promote - every community will be different but here are some ideas.

- Look at contacting any local newspapers, they might run a story on your launch.
- Display posters in local shops/libraries/community centre.
- Leaflet drop - contact local school(s) to arrange to go in bags.
- Think about having a banner designed or printed to display outside your venue.
- Does your group/organisation have a computer whizz who could promote on a social media site or create your own.

Q. Who will pay for printing costs of promotional materials (poster/flyers)?

A. Are there any local printing companies willing to support your organisation with help to design a poster/leaflet/price list/banners?

Or someone within your organisation who already has these skills?

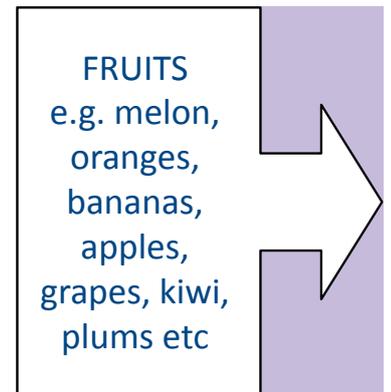
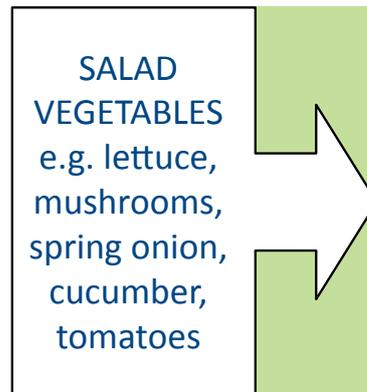
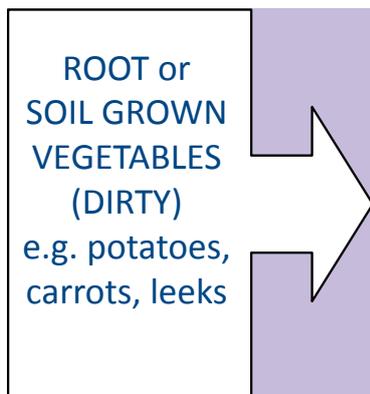
See funding section on page 6 for useful contacts/websites.

Setting up your Barra and Displaying the Produce

Q. What's the best way to set out the produce for sale?

A. For food hygiene purposes keep dirty root or soil grown produce separate from ready to eat or washed produce.

Example table plan:



Make sure all equipment and surfaces (including till and scales) are cleaned regularly during service. Also, ensure hands are washed frequently when handling produce.

It is good practice to remind all customers to wash all fruit and vegetables before preparing or eating.



To comply with Food Hygiene Cross Contamination Guidelines ensure you use 2 sets of boards and knives (ideally different colours) one for use **ONLY** with soil grown or dirty produce e.g. leeks, potatoes, turnip and the other for washed/ready to eat produce e.g. apple/melon.

Unsold Produce

Q. I have unsold produce, what will I do with it?

A. This is an important point to consider when setting up a fruit barra, especially if it only operates one day a week.

Consider your venue and if there are other activities going on in the area:

- is there a youth club or exercise class running later that day?
- could you make up small bags and sell for set amounts e.g. 50p or £1.00?
- are there any other local charities or community cafes?
- is there a local homeless project who would welcome extra food for service users?



Ideally you don't want any unsold produce. Keep a note of what sells quickly and what hasn't sold and alter your order for the following week.

Promotional Ideas

Once you are up and running you will have to consider the sustainability of your initiative. Running regular promotional events or specials is a good way of encouraging new customers to try your barra or existing customers to invite a friend along.

Q. Are you going to provide 'specials' bags e.g. rainbow fruit bags and lentil/broth soup bags?

A. If yes, you will need equipment and/or space to prepare the ingredients?

Q. How do I prepare a fruit bag?

A. You could prepare a fruit bags by:

- using the smallest pieces of fruit,
- put all the fruit into a suitably sized bag,
- making some up with kiwi and some with plums.

Contents:

1 apple
1 medium banana
1 satsuma
1 pear
1 kiwi fruit or plum

Prices for the soup and fruit bags ingredients may change it's good practice to check ingredient prices to ensure they stay within budget.



Promotional Ideas

Q. How do I prepare a lentil soup bag?

A. You could prepare a soup bag by:

- cutting turnip into quarters.
- cutting a leek in half (if using).
- putting ½ mug lentils into small bag with stock cube and tie.
- placing all the above ingredients with 2 potatoes, 2 carrots into large bag add recipe sheet, tie and display.

Contents:

½ mug lentils
2 carrots
¼ turnip
2 medium potatoes
1 small onion or leek
1 stock cube
(ham, vegetable or chicken)

Lentil Soup Recipe:

½ mug lentils
2 carrots
¼ turnip
2 medium potatoes
1 small onion or leek, 4 or 5 mugs water
1 stock cube (ham, vegetable or chicken)
black pepper to taste

How to:

1. Wash, peel and chop all vegetables.
2. Rinse lentils in a sieve under cold water.
3. Place large pot onto a high heat; add chopped vegetables, water, lentils and stock cube.
4. Bring to the boil, reduce heat to medium and cook until all vegetables are soft.
5. Soup can be served chunky or use a hand blender to make smooth.
6. Add black pepper to taste.

Volunteers

Q. Do volunteers need specific roles?

A. Having roles can make running the barra easier. Have discussions to establish individual roles and responsibilities. Some volunteers may wish to take an active role (e.g. making up weekly orders), where others may take on an operational role within the barra (e.g. placing order with supplier).

Operational Roles

- Order fruit and vegetables from supplier.
- Order/purchase other items (e.g. bags/lentils etc).
- Record income/expenditure each day.
- Work out profit/loss.
- Organise paperwork (e.g. invoices).
- Bank takings and arrange petty cash (float).
- Ensure payment to supplier.

Active Roles

- Serve customers.
- Cash handling.
- Make up pre-orders.
- Display produce and keep area clean and tidy.
- Keep daily records (if necessary).
- Weigh or measure produce.

It may be worthwhile encouraging new and existing volunteers to try other roles to gain experience and different skills.

Q. Do volunteers need prior training to work on the barra?

A. Not specifically - but training should be considered for basic food hygiene, customer service, produce information, including handling, storage or ripeness and seasonality. See Accredited Training section for further details on page 19.



Consider visiting a local fruit market or another already established fruit barra to share good practice and learn about produce. Often people don't know how large a sack of potatoes can be. Some volunteers may be unable to lift or move these bags – this may be something to think about when risk assessing your food initiative.

Skills Development

When looking at volunteer skills development, it's often useful to ask them what they feel happy to do for example; serve customers or make up soup bags. It is also useful to find out what skills they wish to learn or develop within their volunteering role. Overall it seems volunteers will increase their confidence and organisational skills through their role.

Q. How can volunteers develop their skills?

A. Peer led skill development is often a good informal way for new volunteers to learn (especially around customer service, it is very easy for someone to welcome 'friends or family' in a different manner). This can be applied to different tasks within the running of the fruit barra.

Volunteers may wish to develop their skills within the following areas:

Good Customer Service

Are all your volunteers confident in serving customers? Are some better suited for preparation e.g. making soup bags up, or preparing any orders or you could pair volunteers together to learn from each other.

Handling Money

Volunteers will have different abilities around numeracy and cash handling skills. The barra will provide a great opportunity to improve these skills within their volunteering role and personal life.

Skills Development

Applying Food Hygiene and Safety

Maintaining good food and personal hygiene is essential when working at a barra. Volunteers will need to have an understanding of basic food hygiene practices, see examples below:

Basic food hygiene training, e.g. cross contamination or transfer of dirt/soil onto other produce. Encourage volunteers to wash hands regularly especially after handling potatoes or other root vegetables, or provide a glove specific for potatoes (only to be worn when handling potatoes).

Volunteers should be encouraged to wear clean or wipeable aprons.

Encourage the disinfecting and sanitising of all surfaces including scales and till; before, during and after service using a suitable food safe anti-bacterial spray and paper towels.

Encourage volunteers to keep the serving area clean and tidy, disposing of any empty boxes, packaging, used aprons and gloves.

Volunteers should take extra care when working with sharp knives.

**Contact your local
Environmental Health
Department for more
information.**



Skills Development

Other Key Skills

Some volunteers may require training on equipment use, operational procedures and knowledge of fruit and vegetables. This may include:

- the operation of the scales and till.
- safe handling, display and storage of produce (for cross contamination reasons and to keep the produce in top condition for selling).
- seasonality of produce and knowledge/experience of using the fruit and vegetables.
- the conversion of bought-in weight produce to actual selling weight produce and subsequent prices. See Order Form/Weight Price Conversion sheet example 4 on page 28.



It may be beneficial to think about volunteer inductions for upcoming roles or spaces. Does your area have a volunteer support service to for your volunteers to access, or could they advertise your vacancies? This service may also be able to assist your organisation in the development of a volunteer induction programme.

Accredited Training

Training opportunities:

Gaining any accredited training within a voluntary role will enhance individuals' skills development, assist within further education and further employment opportunities.

- REHIS Elementary Food Hygiene Course (advised for all volunteers handling food). Check with your Environmental Health Officer, local college or training/ education centre. Your Health Improvement Team are on hand for advice and support.
- REHIS Elementary Food and Health Course (Nutrition) see local NHS Health Improvement Team for information.
- REHIS Elementary Cooking Skills Course see local NHS Health Improvement Team for information.
- Scottish Grocers Federation (SGF) Healthy Living Training (for produce storage, point of sale, etc) and seasonality.
- Community Food & Health (Scotland) run regular training courses, which may be suitable/beneficial for your volunteers for example - customer care, how to evaluate your project www.communityfoodandhealthscotland.org.uk.



Check the NHS Forth Valley website for information on local training and funding opportunities.

Ongoing Costs to be Considered

Q. Will there be other costs except fruit and vegetables?

A. You will need to consider the following and their associated costs:

- Lentils
- Food grade bags: 2 or 3 sizes.
- Stock cubes.
- Hygiene materials: bactericidal spray, cloths and carrier bags to take produce home.
- Calibration of scales (yearly).
- Till rolls (if using a till or similar calculator).
- Printing costs of stationery/resources e.g. takings sheets/recipes.
- Promotional materials - leaflets/banners.
- REHIS Food Hygiene Training for new volunteers or refresher courses for certificates more than 3 years old.
- Costs associated with taster days or other events.
- Volunteer expenses.
- Trips to other barras/markets.

Expanding your Fruit Barra into the Community

Q. How can we get the community involved in our barra?

A. There are various ways to promote your barra within your community:

- For instance contact your local schools, nurseries or family centres to see if they would consider buying their weekly orders from you, suggest giving them a sample of some of the produce, or invite them along to a taster day.
- Attend local events e.g. gala days, sports days or fetes.
- Thinking about offering an order service for regular customers. See Order Form/Weight Price Conversion example 4 on page 28.
- Contact your local health centre or pharmacy to see if you could do a small stall there. This is often a good way of promoting the main barra.
- Is there a way for you to provide a local delivery service to older adults or those who are housebound? This could be done on foot if it's a short distance, but consider the weather or how heavy will the order be. You may need to purchase a small trolley. Or is there an option for a volunteer delivery driver to do this (expenses for fuel will need to be taken into consideration).
- Taste it, eat it, buy it' events are a great way of bringing in new and existing customers. Make them themed around the seasons of the year e.g. make a butternut squash and sweet potato soup in the Autumn. Invite the local press along, it's a great way to keep your barra in the news and on the local community's minds!
- It could be mutually beneficial to have your barra running alongside other activities such as toddler groups, lunch clubs or health assessment sessions (e.g. Keep Well).

Healthy Start

Food initiatives supplying fresh fruit and vegetable can apply to become registered to accept healthy start vouchers. This will help fruit and vegetable consumption in families with children under 4 years and pregnant women.

Q. What is Healthy Start?

A. Healthy Start is a UK-wide government scheme which aims to improve the health of low income pregnant women and families with young children on benefits and tax credits. Healthy Start provides qualifying pregnant women and families with Healthy Start vouchers to buy fruit and vegetables, powdered infant formula or plain cow's milk. Healthy Start also provides coupons that can be exchanged for free vitamins from all NHS Forth Valley Health Centre premises and pharmacies.

Q. What can Healthy Start vouchers be used to buy?

A. Within your barra, they can be used to buy:

- fresh fruit and vegetables – whole or chopped, packaged or loose.

Vouchers can also be used to buy:

- plain cow's milk – whole, semi-skimmed or skimmed. The cow's milk can be pasteurised, sterilised, long-life or UHT.
- frozen fruit and vegetables – whole or chopped, packaged or loose.
- infant formula milk that says on the packet that it can be used from birth (and is based on cow's milk).



HEALTHY
START

Q. Who Accepts Healthy Start vouchers?

A. Only registered retailers can accept and claim payment for Healthy Start vouchers. Retailers should not accept Healthy Start vouchers before their registration is confirmed, as they cannot claim payment for them.

Some basics about the scheme:

- To register for the scheme, a retailer must sell at least one of the Healthy Start foods (listed on page 22).
- Vouchers can only be accepted towards the cost of one or more of these foods.
- Customers are allowed to use more than one voucher at a time, as long as all of the vouchers they wish to spend are within their use-by date.
- Retailers must give Healthy Start foods to the full value of each voucher – change must not be given.
- Retailers cannot charge customers any handling fee for accepting the vouchers.
- Retailers must not pass vouchers on to another retailer – they must be sent directly to the Healthy Start retailer reimbursement unit for payment, along with a completed claim form.
- Retailers are paid by BACS and must ensure that the Healthy Start retailer reimbursement unit always has their correct bank account details.

For more information and to find out how to become a retailer, please visit:

www.healthystart.nhs.uk or call 0844 991 22 22

If you need support with registering contact your local Health Improvement Team.

Examples

1. **Community Questionnaire**
2. **Cashing Up Sheet**
3. **Takings Sheet**
4. **Order Form/Weight Price Conversion**

EXAMPLE 1 - Community Questionnaire

Fruit and Vegetable Barra Questionnaire

[Your organisation/group] are looking into starting a Fruit and Vegetable Barra from [your venue], selling low cost, good quality fruit and vegetables straight from the market or local supplier.

1. Would you use it?

Yes No

2. If yes which day of the week would suit you best?
(Please only circle 1)

Mon Tues Wed Thurs Fri Sat Sun

3. Which time of day are you most likely to access the Fruit and Vegetable Barra?
(Please only circle 1)

morning (9.00 -12.00) mid morning (10.00 -1.00) afternoon (1.00 - 4.00)

4. What produce would you be likely to buy?
(Suggest your top 3 items)

1. 2. 3.

5. If they were to offer a local delivery service would you use it?

Yes No

6. Would you be interested in helping out or volunteering?

Yes No

If yes please leave your contact details below.

Name

Address

Contact Number

EXAMPLE 2 - Cashing Up Sheet

Coin	Amount	Total		Coin	Amount	Total
1p				1p		
2p				2p		
5p				5p		
10p				10p		
20p				20p		
50p				50p		
£1.00				£1.00		
£2.00				£2.00		
£5.00				£5.00		
£10.00				£10.00		
£20.00				£20.00		
Total				Total		
Minus Float				Minus Float		
Till Takings				Till Takings		
Signed				Signed		
Counter signed				Counter signed		
Date				Date		

EXAMPLE 4 - Order Form/Weight Price Conversion

Product	Product Size	Cost Per Item	Amount Ordered	Cost Price	Sale Price
Carrots	12.5 kg	£7.00	1 bag	$\frac{£7.00}{12.5} = 56\text{p per kilo (kg)}$	60p per kg
Dirty Potatoes	25 kg	£10.00	1 bag	$\frac{£10.00}{25} = 40\text{p per kg}$	45p per kg
Leeks	4.5kg net	£6.00	1 net	$\frac{£6.00}{4.5} = £1.33 \text{ per kg}$	£1.40 per kg
Baby boilers potatoes	10 kg box				
Baking potatoes	40's				
Turnip	Net (8-10)				
Cauliflower	Each				
Broccoli	Head/each				
Red Onion	Kilo				
Onions medium/small	Kilo/bag				
Dutch cabbage	Each				
Savoy/spring cabbage	Each				
Mushrooms	1.5 kg chip/box				
Tomatoes	5 kg box				
Cucumber	Each				
Spring onions	Each bunch				
Round lettuce	Each				
Iceberg lettuce	Each				
Mix salad leaves	110 g bag				
Cherry tomatoes	Small tub				
Mixed peppers	5 kg (approx 20)				
Grapes (red)	4.5 kg				
Grapes (green)	4.5 kg				
Red apples	Each				
Golden delicious	Each				
Granny smiths	Each				
Kiwi fruit	Each				
Banana (under ripe)	Box				
Banana (regular)	Box 18 kg				



Produced by NHS Forth Valley, Community Food Development Workers, Department of Nutrition & Dietetics, October 2014

www.nhsforthvalley.com/healthpromotion
Then choose Nutrition.