

10 STEPS

For

Managing

And

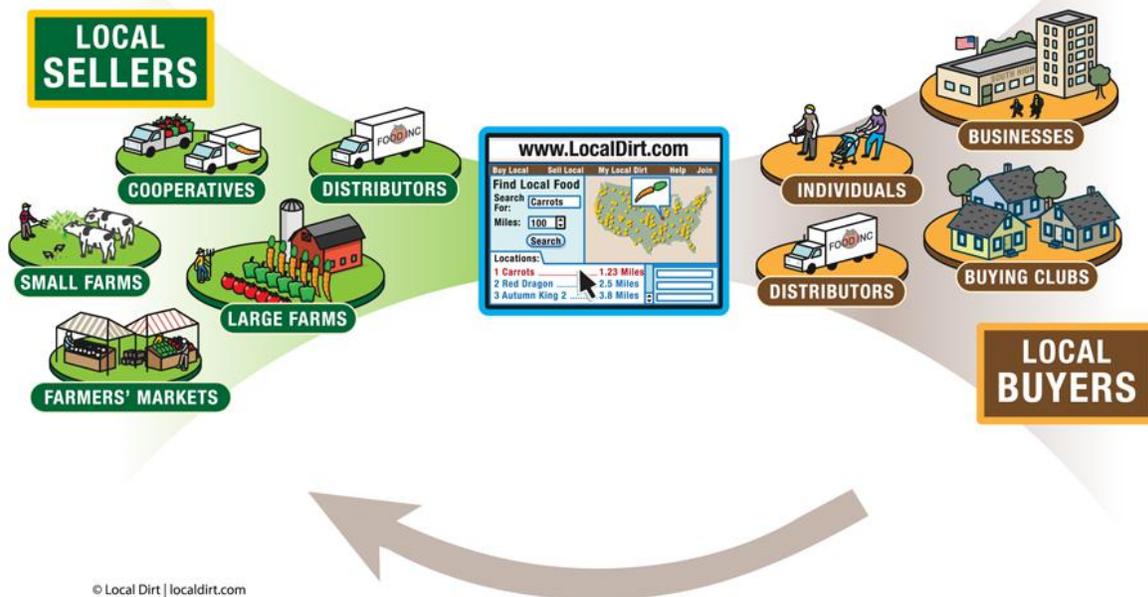
Growing

Your

Farm & Business

With

Local Dirt 



Why Join Local Dirt?

Tired of updating spreadsheets and the old paper, pencil method? How about the challenge of searching for new buyers? Local Dirt makes all of this easier and gives you the tools to help grow your business.

With Local Dirt, you will be able to efficiently search for new buyers, take advantage of free marketing, facilitate your current ordering process, maintain your invoicing, calculate your inventory and organize your delivery schedules.

Local Dirt also helps you in finding other ways to sell your product. For example, joining a buying club has never been easier. Additionally, you are able to have customers preorder for pickup of product at the farmers market. This will help you plan out what you will need to bring for that day.

Need help planning out what to harvest the following year? No problem, buyers list their needs for the upcoming year, and you can decide if you can fulfill their needs.

Take advantage of all Local Dirt has to offer. The steps below can help.

CONTENTS



1 Getting Started

Get things going by registering with Local Dirt and activating your account.

2 Organizing the Details

Gather all the information you'll need to have for your business thrive.

3 Inputting Your Delivery Schedule

Decide on your delivery locations and which days you will be going there.

4 Perfecting Your Price Sheet

List your products, keep them current, and show them off.

5 Sending Out Your Price Sheet

Plan when you will be sending your price list to customers and keeping it consistent.

6 Finding Buyers

Create the connection between yourself, and new buyers as well as farmers' markets, buying clubs, and cooperatives.

7 Using the Deals

Excess product? First frost coming? Learn how to post a deal to unload large amounts of product.

8 Financials

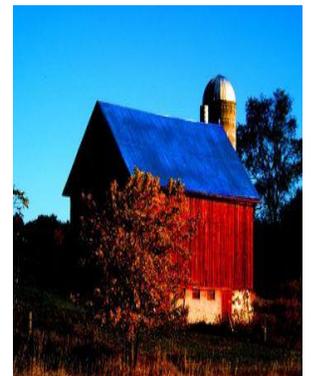
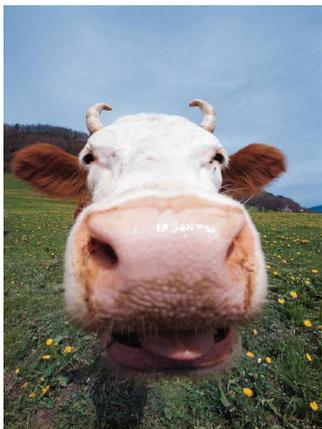
Arrange how you would like your customers to pay you on the site.

9 Getting Help

We are here every step of the way. Feel Free to contact us with anything you may need.

10 Marketing Your Farm

Keep it original. With our help, create new ideas to keep people coming back and grow your demand for your product.





“Local Dirt makes ordering easy. Before, I was trying to work with emails and spreadsheets and keep track of customers’ orders for my vendors. Local Dirt really facilitates this process, and it’s far less time consuming on my end.”

Devica Urwick, Spring Run Market Buying Club

(1) GETTING STARTED

Decide on a Membership

Does your farm make deliveries to businesses? If yes, then you would register as a medium farm. If no, then you would register as a small farm.

Register on Local Dirt

Go to www.localdirt.com, and click “join Local Dirt”. Choose either “join as a small farm” or “join as a medium farm”. Enter in your general info, choose a password, agree to the terms and conditions then submit.

Confirm you Registration

One last step; You’ll receive an email immediately upon joining. Simply click on the link to activate your account. If you don’t receive an email, contact us at (608)554-4800.

(2) ORGANIZING THE DETAILS

Checklist

It’s easy to forget a step along the way. Below is a checklist of the six most important details.

- Create your **Biography**
- Schedule your **Delivery Dates**
- Upload your **Products**
- Join any **Groups** you are a part of
- Arrange any **Deals** you may have
- Organize your **Financials**

Create your Biography

If “word of mouth” is everything in marketing, give your biography the right story to tell. Click on “my local Dirt” along the top, then “biography” and then “edit”. Upload a picture of yourself, your family and even of your family pets. Then enter some background info about your farm. Go ahead and brag about your product. It’s ok! People enjoy hearing about you and what you are selling.

Expect the Unexpected –Create a Return Policy

It’s rare that it comes up, but it does sometimes happens that a customer is not fully satisfied with the product. Decide on a set way to handle these circumstances. Most customers are used to a 100% satisfaction guaranteed policy.

(3) INPUTTING YOUR DELIVERY SCHEDULE

Decide When and Where you deliver to

If this is not already determined, try and pick locations that are not only realistic but the locations have the most selling potential. Chances are you already have this sorted out, but if not, make sure it is worth your time.

How to Input your Delivery Schedule

Click on “my local dirt”, “profile” and then “delivery schedule”. Choose a minimum purchase amount and delivery surcharge per mile. To allow any business to be able to view your products for delivery, select the area by location you are delivering to and enter in the info.

Keeping it to Certain Buyers

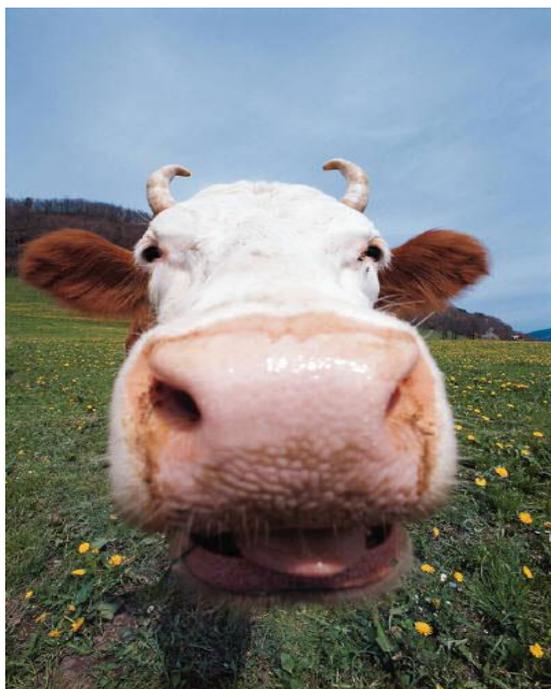
Only want your established customers to be able to view your products? Select “deliver to certain buyers” and fill in the info. Save and only those buyers can see your product listings for delivery.



(4) PERFECTING YOUR PRICE SHEET

Entering your Products

To do this, once you are logged in, click “sell local” then “products” and finally on “post new product for sale”. Be sure to check if the product can be sold for delivery, pickup or at a group.



Show your products off

Make your product stand out! Differ from the rest. Try uploading a picture of your product. This can be a stock photo found on Google or it can be an actual photo of the product that you took.

Tell them why your product is great!

Write a brief description of what makes your product unique. Was there a special process done to achieve its quality, is the color extra rich, or is the product abnormally large?

(5) SENDING OUT YOUR PRICE SHEET

Emailing your Price Sheet

In this matter, and many others, buyers appreciate consistency. Schedule the same day, or days, each week to send out the Price Sheet link. Even though the same link will always work (invite them to add it to their browser “favorites”), a reminder and message always helps to sell product. To send the email from Local Dirt, click on “sell local” then “products”, and then “email price list”. Enter in the email addresses you wish to send it too and add your own message if you so choose to personalize it.

What happens next?

Your customers will receive your email with your Price Sheet link included. When they click on the link, they will see a list of your products and be able to place an order into the price sheet. After they complete their order, you will immediately receive an email letting you know an order has been placed. Take a look in "Purchase Orders" (go to "Sell Local" then click "Sales") to see all upcoming orders. Need to make a change? You can always make adjustments to any Purchase Order. After the delivery date however, the Purchase Order will become a static Invoice and changes cannot be made.

Order confirmation

Once your customers place an order, you and the customer will receive a confirmation of the order. If you need to make any adjustments to the invoice, do so now and a new copy of the invoice will be sent out to your buyer.

Use a Second Email

Is someone else helping you put together the orders? Add a second email to your profile. Click on "my local dirt" then "profile", under notification settings, enter in another email you would like messages and alerts to be sent to along with the main login email. Local Dirt will email both email accounts.

(6) FINDING BUYERS

Finding Other Local Food Sources

When looking for additional buyers, buying clubs, farmers markets or co-ops, try searching for whoever may be signed up within 100 miles or so and sending them a message to see what their needs are or if there is a group that would work for you to join. (To send a message, simply click on the business and then view their profile. Once in their profile, you will see "send a message", click on that and enter your message.)

Joining a Group

Once you have located a group to join, they will provide you with a group password. By clicking on "sell local" and then "groups", you will then be able to enter in their group password. Once you agree to the terms and conditions and submit, you will be joined with that group. Keep in mind that this password is different than your login password and you will only have to enter this once.

Selling your products with a group

You choose which products to sell to the group and what price to sell them at. Go into any of your products and select "groups" (upper right) and enter a price.



(7) USING THE DEALS

Need to Unload Excess Product?

Maybe you didn't anticipate yielding as much as you did this year, maybe a buyer fell through or maybe it's just that time for the first frost, either way, you have more product than you can sell to your normal customer base. In "sell local", "deals", "my deals" and then "new post", list the product you wish to push. If you would like to leave the price open, leave the price as \$0 and your product will display as open.

Planning out Next Year?

Not sure what to harvest this upcoming year? Within the "deals" section, before you go to your posts, you can view what businesses have listed as to what they are searching for. Also, some businesses may list contracts that they would like to develop for the following year.

(8) FINANCIALS

Payment types

Your customers will be able to pay online or still pay you directly, which ever you prefer. Local Dirt does not take any cut of your online sales no matter how you get paid.

Taxes

Stay on top of business requirements. Know when to bring in a professional if any questions arise.

(9) GETTING HELP

Online Tours

Want to see an interactive demonstration? Simply go to the home page and on the very bottom click "Read the entire article". Choose a time that best works for you. Don't see a time that fits into your schedule? That's no problem either; simply email us to arrange a time that works for you. On these demonstrations, you will be able to show me exactly what you see and you can see exactly what I see. This can be very helpful if you aren't very familiar with using a computer or need some help with details.



State Agriculture Department

Check with your local Department of Agriculture on the regulations regarding your product. Some sell restrictions and/or taxes may apply.

Contact Us

If at any point you need help with organization, locating buyers, don't understand the process, or you just have all the info on paper and don't know what to do next, we can help! Email dirt@localdirt.com or call 608-554-4800.

(10) MARKETING YOUR FARM



Create a newsletter

Either monthly or weekly, try putting together a newsletter and send it out. On this you could include things like fun facts, recent articles that relate to your product, community events, or the most popular are seasonal recipes. You could also include a recipe with each pickup, using seasonally available food.

Sales

Work with different groups you are a part of to see if you can unload excess product as a sale offered through these groups.

Gift packs

During the holidays, it may be a good idea to offer some gift baskets to your customers or the groups you are a part of. This could be a thank you gift for your continued business or to sell as a holiday item.

Profile page

The simplest and free way to market your farm is by updating your local dirt profile page. Take the time to create a background story and add pictures. Create an image that someone else can be a part of.

Ads

Try taking advantage of the free advertisement opportunities that are available. Look at your favorite restaurant to see if they have a bulletin board, church newsletter, company newsletter, post an ad on craigslist or try looking for a listserv in your area.

Social networking

Other resources to grow your buying club that are also free include, creating a page on Facebook, Myspace, Twitter or LinkedIn.

Any Questions? Thoughts? Need Ideas?

Contact Us.

Email us at dirt@localdirt.com

Or call 608-554-4800

