



## MARKETMAKER

**Area of Focus:** Supply chain enhancement; access to markets

**How it works:** MarketMaker is an interactive mapping system that provides a link between producers and consumers by locating agricultural businesses and products in participating states. The site was created to ease the connectivity of food producing farmers with new and economically viable markets. MarketMaker also allows users to query demographic and business data, and then generate maps showing consumer markets and potential strategic business partners. In addition, its Buy & Sell Forum provides a space for both buyers and producers to list items they are looking to buy and sell, along with any value-added or transportation services they are offering. Businesses can also create personalized profiles to help them increase their visibility through the site. Aspects of MarketMaker may be adaptable for developing countries, although this has not yet been tried.

**Technology used:** Online database and mapping technology

**Implementer/Funder:** MarketMaker was created in 2004 by the University of Illinois Extension. It has developed into a national partnership between land grant institutions and the state and federal Departments of Agriculture. Funding is currently provided by a list of over 50 sponsors mostly across participating states, which include food associations, nonprofit organizations and government agencies.

**Fees:** MarketMaker is free to users. In the future, there are plans to charge for enhanced features, including a transaction platform, mobile application, downloadable widgets, and individualized corporate and institutional portals.

**Primary Markets:** Various states in the US (currently 16 plus the District of Columbia)

**Users:** Farmers, buyers/aggregators and consumers (totaling roughly 600,000 user profiles)

**Business Model:** MarketMaker is working to develop into a regional and national model. A multi-state partnership has already been formed between land grant institutions and state agricultural agencies to commit the local resources necessary to build a national network. The site will likely continue to be financially supported through grants and state licensing fees for the time being.

**Impact:** A survey conducted by Ohio State University on the Ohio MarketMaker found that 64% of producers and 76% of farmers' market respondents reported an improved marketing performance over the past year.<sup>1</sup> Clemson University has received funding from the USDA to conduct a more in-depth impact study, although those results have not yet been published.

**For more information visit:** <http://national.marketmaker.uiuc.edu/>

**Sources:** <sup>1</sup> <http://directmarketing.osu.edu/content/pdf/OhioMarketMakerSurveyReport2009.pdf>

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