

## Marketing and Social Media at Kilpatrick Family Farm

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Kilpatrick Family Farm is a mixed vegetable, fruit and poultry farm located in Middle Granville, NY zone 4b. We sell majority retail through a 200 member CSA as well as several strong Farmers markets in Saratoga Springs and Glens Falls, NY. We also sell limited wholesale through Co-ops, restaurants, and to other CSA's. The farm is approximately 500 acres of owned, rented and leased land, 40 tillable, 100 pasture, and the balance woodlot and scrub. We plant between 12-14 acres of vegetables and fruit every year.

Marketing is how we find new customers, and let our current customers find out about our products. On most farms, it is one of the last things thought about but one of the most important things the farm does. If you can't sell a product why grow it? It ends up as really expensive compost.

As 90 % of our business is retail is it important for us to be able to connect with our customers. We use our website as a portal for customers to interact, sign up for products (csa, newsletters, bulk produce orders, and find information out about our farm and different markets. We use social media to connect with them in mediums that they are already familiar with and that they access on a daily basis. We use our email newsletter as a voice into our customers mailboxes full of news, recipes, pictures, and more about the farm.

A good website is usually the most expensive part of an online presence. It usually takes the most time, content, and effort to keep up to date. However, it is the basis for a good web strategy and where most of your content will end up being linked or sourced from. Basics of a good web site are clean, easy to navigate pages, information about the farm, hours of operation, and contact information. As well as picture galleries, recipes, and links to social media.

Social media is constantly changing and adapting as new startups build a platform, find a way to make money, and then goes IPO (initial Public offering, or when the company sells shares). For example, Facebook started monetizing through ads and then sponsored posts. It has become that if you want a post to show up to all your customers you now have to buy that privilege. Basically, nothing is free.

Web ads can be a very good place to advertise, most online advertising allows you to segment the audience and pick only those who are interested in what you are selling. For example, you can target females who are between 25-35, in a relationship, that like organic produce and live in your pre-specified zip code. Most online advertising is sold per click, not per impression like radio or newspaper ads, thus much more effective (and expensive) per unit.

An email newsletter can also be an important part of a media strategy. It is a way to send information to a customer easily, cheaply, and content rich. An email newsletter can contain information about the farm, events, sales, promotions or even video of last year's haunted hayride. Email newsletters also allow you to track read rate and if customers are using the newsletters features, providing immediate feedback of marketing efforts.

With the crazy world of different options out there one big word of advice would be to start small. Give the job of setting it up to the 20-somethings that work for you, just make sure they give you a quick tutorial as well as the passwords to access the site. Or, there are many professionals that charge a relatively cheap rate to set up the systems for you and then teach you to manage it.