

Vegetarian Newsletter

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Eat your Veggies!!!!

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Direct Marketing: Bradford County Style

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Bradford County boasts a total of ten roadside produce stands; eight are located along the US 301 corridor, three within the City of Starke and two are located off the major highway. In addition to selling to highway travelers, these locally owned small businesses provide a daily flow of fresh produce to residents of Lawtey, Starke and Hampton. They specialize in selling seasonal commodities including fruits, vegetables, citrus, pecans and Christmas trees.

Bradford County's network of roadside stands benefits the community in many ways. It provides local jobs, brings in revenue and supports local farmers. All of the proprietors sell seasonal produce they either grow or buy from local farms. Many farmers do not want to direct market their produce and they are happy to sell their produce wholesale to a local outlet. Local supply is seasonal and is not available throughout the year so, out of necessity, all of the markets sell produce that is shipped in from out of state and from foreign markets. If the markets do not thrive all year they cannot support the local farmer during their growing season.

Half of Bradford County's roadside markets have been open between seven and twenty years and their successes prove that locating a roadside stand near high density cities and/or high traffic locations is a good business strategy. According to Florida Department of Transportation statistics, twenty thousand potential customers see these stands every day. It is no accident that the majority of Bradford County roadside stands are located on the Tampa – Jacksonville highway.

Another successful strategy for locating a roadside stand is to grow the produce near the stand. Two prominent stand owners in Bradford County feature farms adjacent to their stores. Both of these farmer's stands are adorned with trophies from the Bradford County Fair Association recognizing them for their record winning berries over the years. Generally, the products they grow are easy to sell and yield the greatest profit margins. The presence of those big berries and other vegetables growing on location brings in customers. The word is, "*Fresh is Best.*"



Bradford County roadside stands from north to south: White Oaks Produce, Kings, Normans, King's Kountry Produce, J.C.'s Scales & Tails Seafood & Produce, Norman's County Market, Sara B's Market, and Citrus Shop & Produce.