

Tips for Talking with Farmers Market Attendees

To attract the attention of people walking in -- when you catch their eye or see they're looking at the banner, or the table, or you:

- ❖ We're all about native plants here!
- ❖ Welcome to the farmers market!
- ❖ Enjoy your visit!

To initiate a conversation with a new person who's walked up:

- ❖ We're encouraging people to plant native plants in their yards. OR
- ❖ We're looking to create places for the butterflies and fireflies to live since we're paved over so much of where they would normally live. OR
- ❖ We're encouraging people to share their yards by planting native plants for the butterflies and bees, the insects and birds that are running out of places to live.

Notice their reaction, allow some time for them to react.

THEN PIVOT TO A QUESTION

To establish a connection with the person, ask a getting-acquainted type question

- ❖ Are you gardeners?
- ❖ Do you live in the area?
- ❖ Have you been to the farmers market before?
- ❖ Ask a question that relates to something they've said, such as
I just moved here :: Oh, where were you before?
My mom's a gardener :: Does she garden with native plants?
This is such a good idea :: What's attracted your attention to this?
I live in an apartment :: Would you garden if you could? (workdays)

and use their answer to continue the conversation, and eventually pivot to what we're doing and why.

To introduce what we're doing

- ❖ If possible, allow the conversation to develop, and build on what you learn in the process.
- ❖ Choose from the many things you know and talk briefly about one idea that seems likely to interest them, from what you've heard so far.
- ❖ If there's milkweed available at the booth, it's a great way to let people know that monarchs will only lay their eggs on milkweed plants. Most people don't realize there are highly evolved relationships between plants and insects and other animals - and that's WHY adding native plants to the landscape is so important.

To engage them going forward

- ❖ If they're already involved with native plants, introduce Wild Ones as a means of being involved with other people for support, to share their knowledge, to get their questions answered, for the camaraderie...
- ❖ If they're interested in doing something in their yard, tell them that we come out, walk their yard and brainstorm with them how to get started, what they might want to do next, identify plants they don't know, provide tips, help with where to find resources.
- ❖ If they seem ready to take a small step, ask whether they might want us to send them our newsletter so they can see what's going on.
- ❖ If they seem really interested, let them know what events are coming up. We usually display a printed list of upcoming events you can reference.

NOTES:

These are merely pointers. Do use the words and ideas you're comfortable with.

Talk a little. Listen a little. Talk a little. Listen a little...

Aim to balance building a relationship with providing information.

The relationship part may be what brings the person in, going forward.

Again, these are only suggestions based on just what we've experienced.

