



REPORT

From the office of the...

Mac Farmstand

TO: Members of the Executive Board
FROM: Lucia Jara
SUBJECT: Mac Farmstand Report 1
DATE: July 31st, 2014

UPDATE

After a rough start of the season, Mac Farmstand finally made it to its Grand Opening on Wednesday June 25th, 2014. Since then, it's been offering its service every Wednesday and Thursday 11am to 4pm. After long sessions of planning and a "soft opening" we have covered most of the basic needs for a functional stand. We are now focusing on advertising, events for welcome week, Mac Quest, etc, and creating an educational branch to offer along with our customer service and local produce.

SERVICE USAGE

Throughout the summer we've been making an average of ~\$400 weekly. It did go down once second semester of summer school started (volume of student decreased significantly). As for this moment we are targeting people who work on campus and find it convenient to buy their produce on campus. We are expecting a significant increase in sells once the school year starts. In addition to this we will have more variety to offer as well (more fruits available as the weather changes).

One of our main goals is to break even and have no monetary loss. So far we are only ~\$130 away from our goal.

PAST EVENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

Weekly meeting with the executive team- discuss goals, tasks, and brainstorming.

Training CSRs – sharing Mac Farmstand's vision, purpose and goals. Training in cash

CSR meeting- touched base with all the trained CSRs. Discussed positive aspects about each individual, things we need to improve as a team, and took suggestions from CSRs as well.

Weekly markets since June 18th- after our soft opening on June 18th, we've been offering our service twice a week 11am-4pm.

Grand Opening- on June 25th we had our grand opening. We offered samples, live music, plants donated by Vicotory Gardens, and lots of information about Mac Farmstand (for future reference).

Instagram account- we've created an instagram account for Mac Farmstand in order to target a different audience and share recipes, tips, event coming up, etc.

Meatless Mondays- through all of our social media usages we share a vegetarian recipe every Monday. The recipe involves using some of the produce we offer at the stand. In addition to this we try to raise awareness about the mass consumption of meat in North America and the causes it has on our environment.

UPCOMING EVENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

Participating in Mac Quest- having a table with volunteers offering information about Mac Farmstand, and promotional material such as pins, pamphlets, etc.

Participating in Alternative Welcome Week- we have various activities planned for alternative welcome week. Amongst these is a trip to a local farm, potentially Simpler Thyme.

Participating in the Graduate Student Resource Fair

Having a Harvest Festival in partnership with the McMaster Community Garden- still in planning stage

BUDGET

We have currently spent around \$300 (taking into account some expenses from July) from our \$2,000 budget. We had to purchase a cash register last minute but this was not covered with our budget.

In the beginning stage, we found little to no materials to have a functional stand, so numerous artifacts had to be bought, such as: bushel baskets, clips, price tags, pamphlet holders, cleaning supplies, name tags, etc.

We are currently planning a Volunteer Appreciation Event. We would be offering food and potentially T-shirts (would be coming from our budget) in order to thank the volunteers who've helped us throughout the summer.

CURRENT CHALLENGES

1. As a team we have noticed that opening inside MUSC is way more beneficial (for the produce, sales, and employees) than having the stand outside. However, according to our agreement with Lori Diamond we are only allowed inside when it is either raining or extremely hot. Last week we had an issue because we were inside and tables were being set for welcome week.
2. Many of the artifacts that we were offered are falling apart. For example: tent, table, cart. It is very hard to have an efficient and functional service without a reliable infrastructure.
3. Numerous customers have been asking about the salad bar that was part of Mac Farmstand last year. It would be great if we could have this service again, but there are many obstacles in the way- health and safety (no running water), potentially competing with other food services, etc.

SUCSESSES

We've worked hard on visual identity at the stand and it's been a success so far. Prices are clear, available, and affordable. Produce is kept fresh, organized and it's constantly being replenished. We've gotten great comments from administration, professors and students.

In addition to this, after our Grand Opening an article about Mac Farmstand was published on The Spectator, a week later we had an appearance on The Silhouette and we've been on McMaster's daily news as well.