Marketing Strategies and AI for farming

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SERVICIO DE EXTENSIÓN AGRÍCOLA™
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This workshop will help you:

1. Understand the 4 Ps — a simple roadmap to selling smarter.
2. Explore low-cost tools (yes, even simple AI) that make marketing easier.

🗣 "Marketing isn't about getting people to buy what you grow. It's about growing what people want to buy." — Adapted from Philip Kotler

Why Marketing Matters for Farmers

Local Facts & Research:

- The 2022 USDA Census counted 619 farms across the U.S. Virgin Islands, covering 8,092 acres (avg 13 acres).
- Most farms rely on direct sales, word-of-mouth, or roadside stands — few have formal marketing strategies.
- Imports dominate grocery shelves; therefore, marketing is the farmer's voice against imported competition.

Marketing Point:
"A good harvest doesn't guarantee good income — a good market does."
"Because a good product isn't enough — people have to know it exists."

Why Marketing Matters for Farmers

Purpose	Marketing Application
Know your market	Identify who the farmers and buyers are
Know your products	Focus promotion on top crops (vegetables, mangoes, coconuts)
Position your farm	Emphasize “small, local, sustainable”
Choose the right promotion tools	Focus on local media, social networks, and community events
Support proposals	Use data to attract funding or partnerships

2022 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE Highlights

U.S. Virgin Islands Agriculture

Results from the 2023 Census of Agriculture

ACH22-23/March 2025

Since the last Census of Agriculture in 2018 in the U.S. Virgin Islands, the number of farms increased while land in farms decreased.

What is a “farm”? The U.S. Virgin Islands Census of Agriculture defines a farm as any place from which $500 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the census year.

619 farms

8,092 acres

13.1 acres average farm size

Farms and Land

In 2023, the U.S. Virgin Islands had 619 farms, up 10% from 565 farms in 2018. These farms accounted for 8,092 acres of farmland. This was a decrease of 1,232 acres (-13%) from the 2018 level.

During the same time, the average farm size decreased 21%, from 16.5 acres in 2018 to 13.1 acres in 2023.

Farms and Farmland, 2018 and 2023

	2018	2023	% change
Number of farms	565	619	10
Land in farms (acres)	9,324	8,092	-13
Average farm size (acres)	16.5	13.1	-21

The smallest farm category (less than 3 acres) experienced the largest change in number of farms by size, increasing 21%.

Farm Counts by Size

	2018	2023
Less than 3 acres	268	325
3 - 9.9 acres	139	146
10 - 19.9 acres	77	72
20 - 49.9 acres	44	42
50 - 99.9 acres	23	20
100 acres or more	14	14

For more information about the Census of Agriculture, visit www.nass.usda.gov/AgCensus.

Commodity Group by Value of Sales (dollars)

	2018	2023
Vegetables	1,130,809	2,166,470
Fruits and nuts	544,305	798,249
Other livestock	465,247	379,632
Cattle and calves	100,439	207,516
Honey	(NA)	141,987
Hogs and pigs	83,590	107,310
Chicken eggs	35,503	79,234
Poultry	109,662	48,974
Field and forage crops	128,692	(D)
Nursery crops and hemp	(NA)	(D)
Total	**3,334,652**	**4,201,172**

(NA) Commodity group was not counted in 2018.
(D) Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual operations.

Vegetables accounted for 52% of total sales. Cucumbers, watermelons, and pumpkins are the largest vegetable groups by pounds produced. Bananas, mangoes, and coconuts are the largest fruit commodity groups by pounds produced.

Top Commodities by Number of Farms, 2023

	No. of Farms
Coconuts	301
Mangoes	293
Bananas	292
Avocados	253
Papayas	193

SNAPSHOT

U.S. Virgin Islands Farmers, 2023

	(percent)
Sex	
Male	68
Female	32
Age	
<35	1
35 - 44	8
45 - 54	12
55 - 64	34
65+	45
Lived on farm	59
Years on Farm	
<10	28
10+	72
Days worked off farm	
None	34
1 - 199	37
200+	29
Primary occupation	
Farming	62
Other	38
Hispanic	12
Race*	
Black	83
White	15
Other	5

*Respondents could report more than one race.

USDA United States Department of Agriculture
National Agricultural Statistics Service

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

HOW MARKETING HELPS SMALL FARMERS COMPETE

Evidence & Insight:

- Research by the Caribbean Development Bank (2022) shows that small Caribbean farmers who brand and package their goods achieve 20 % higher prices than unbranded ones.
- Marketing builds trust → trust builds repeat sales.
- A recognizable farm name or logo adds value even without increasing acreage.
- Marketing allows smallholders to compete on relationship and reliability, not just volume.

Seth Godin: “The key to success isn’t being louder — it’s being more meaningful.”

4Ps in Marketing

P	What It Means for You	Local Example
Product	What you sell — crops, packaging, freshness, brand story	Local honey in labelled jars vs. unmarked bottles
Price	How you set value — cost, demand, perception	“Premium local mangoes” priced higher than imports
Place	Where you sell — farm stand, market, restaurants, online	Frederiksted market + Facebook page orders
Promotion	How people hear about you — signs, radio, social media	Flyers at market + WhatsApp broadcast list

Product

Product

- A product is more than what you grow — it's the value, experience, and identity you offer. It includes quality, variety, packaging, brand, and trust.
- In your farm business, "product" is everything the customer receives from you (not just the vegetable, fruit, etc.).
- Philip Kotler and marketing theory teach that a product is both a core benefit (what need it fulfills) and augmented features (packaging, service, warranty, brand).
- For a farmer: the core is fresh produce; the augmented features can be freshness guarantee, packaging, farm origin story, or after-sale support (e.g. help with cooking, recipes).
- Seth Godin would remind you: "people buy stories, not products." So your "product" includes the story of your farm, your values, and what makes you unique. In the USVI, where many products are imported, your "product" carries the promise of freshness, local origin, island identity.

Your Product Is More Than Your Crop

- Quality: size, color, taste, consistency.
- Presentation: how it looks, how it's packaged.
- Branding: your farm name, symbol, visual identity.
- Experience: how the product is delivered, what the buyer feels.

A tomato from an unnamed crate is just "tomato." A tomato in a branded basket, with your farm name, a freshness guarantee, even a small recipe card — that's a product.

Trust comes from consistency: if one batch is excellent and the next average, customers lose faith. In small markets, reputation spreads fast — a beautiful-looking product builds word-of-mouth.

Choosing the Right Products for Your Market

- Match your product selection to what customers want and what your farm can reliably produce.
- Focus on a few reliable products rather than many at low quality.
- Consider climate, soil, seasonality, cost of inputs.

- In the Virgin Islands, land is scarce, water is limited, and storms threaten crops.
- Choose crops or varieties you can manage well, that don’t spoil quickly, and that have local demand (e.g. tropical fruits, herbs, niche vegetables).
- Use customer feedback or trial runs to test new products (small batches).
- Think about cropping systems that complement (e.g. intercropping, value-added products) to reduce risk.

How to Add Value

- Transform raw product to increase price potential
  - Examples: jams, dried fruits, juices, herbal teas, processed foods
- Certifications or claims: organic, local, non-GMO, “farm-fresh”
- Bundling: e.g. fruit + recipe card + gift basket

- Value-added products typically command higher margins and can stretch your harvest into off-season revenue.

- Be careful: processing adds cost (labor, packaging, regulations).

- Use local branding (e.g. “Virgin Islands mango jam”) to link value to place.

- Seth Godin’s idea: “Purple Cow” — make something remarkable so people will talk about it. Your value-added product can be your “purple cow.

VEGETABLE CURRY

PACKAGING THAT ATTRACTS BUYERS

- Practical + aesthetic — must protect and appeal
- Use eco-friendly, simple, cost-effective materials
- Visual consistency with brand

- Packaging helps signal quality: a neatly packed box, basket, or bag feels premium.
- Ideas: Use clear windows, breathable materials, minimal plastic where possible.
- Use stickers, labels with your logo.
- The Virgin Islands Local Food & Farm Council offers product stickers to help producers label goods as “local.”

- Packaging also helps with transport protection, shelf life, stacking.

Packaging

Labeling Tips and Local Regulations

- What labels should include: product name, net weight, origin (your farm), date harvested, ingredients if processed, contact info.
- Regulatory compliance: local DOA rules, FDA if processed foods.

- Labeling builds professionalism and trust.
- Check the VI Department of Agriculture's labeling and food processing guidelines.
- If making jams, dried foods, etc., you may need permits, inspections, comply with food safety rules.
- Always include traceability info (farm, batch) in case of issues

Packaging

Using Customer Feedback to Improve Products

- Ask: What do customers like or dislike?
- Use surveys, listening, tasting sessions
- Iterate and improve

- A few simple questions: “What did you like? What would you change? Would you buy again?”
- Use social media or WhatsApp to collect quick feedback.
- Use sample trials for new products before full launch.
- Feedback helps you refine packaging, sizing, freshness, and helps you discover new product ideas.

Product Story

“Tropical Fresh Farm” Product Story

- **Name:** Tropical Fresh Farm, St. Croix
- **Unique Selling Proposition (USP):** “Picked in the morning, delivered by evening — island freshness guaranteed.”
- **Products**: Mangoes, passionfruit jam, dried herbs
- **Branding:** Logo with palm leaf, bright tropical colors
- **Packaging:** Mesh bags for mangos, small glass jars for jam labeled “St. Croix Made”
- **Story:** Started by a family who cares for soil, rainwater capture, minimal chemicals

Excercise:

- Narrate a mini case: how Tropical Fresh Farm launched its jam line, tested packaging, got feedback from hotel chefs, adjusted the sweetness, then got recurring orders.
- Explain how each “P” (product, price, place, promotion) links to that product story.
- Show how the story helps customers connect and remember.

Tropical Fresh Farm, nestled in the heart of St. Croix, was already well-known for its vibrant, sun-ripened fruits. However, the abundant mango harvests often led to surplus. The farm manager, Maria, saw an opportunity: **Virgin Islands Mango Jam**. "Why let delicious fruit go to waste," she thought, "when we can capture its essence in a jar for everyone to enjoy?"

The first step was product development. Maria and her team experimented with various recipes, aiming for a balance of natural sweetness and the tangy zing of local mangoes. Once they had a few strong contenders, they moved on to **packaging trials**. They wanted something sustainable, reflecting their farm's ethos. They considered compostable pouches, reusable glass jars, and even innovative stainless steel tiffin boxes. Each option was filled with a small batch of jam for practical assessment.

They quickly realized that to make a real impact, they needed professional feedback. Maria approached several **local hotel chefs**, known for their discerning palates and commitment to local ingredients. She arranged a tasting session, presenting different jam recipes and packaging options. The chefs were impressed by the quality of the mangoes but offered crucial advice: "The jam is lovely," one chef noted, "but for our breakfast service, a slightly less sweet profile would pair better with pastries and toast." Another chef praised the reusable tiffin boxes, suggesting they would be perfect for bulk orders for their buffet, reducing waste.

Back at the farm, Maria's team diligently **adjusted the sweetness** of their flagship mango jam recipe, reducing the added sugar slightly to let the natural fruit flavor shine through even more. They also decided to offer the tiffin boxes as a primary packaging option for their bulk clients, aligning with the hotels' sustainability goals.

The refined jam, with its perfect balance of flavor and sustainable packaging, was a hit. The hotel chefs, delighted with the improvements, started placing **recurring orders** for Tropical Fresh Farm's Virgin Islands Mango Jam. What began as an effort to reduce fruit waste blossomed into a successful new product line, strengthening the farm's connection with local businesses and solidifying its reputation for quality and innovation.

Storytelling in Social Media

Picked in the morning, delivered by evening — island freshness guaranteed.

Experience the true taste of St. Croix! Our farm-fresh produce, harvested at dawn, is at your door by sunset. Taste the difference that local freshness makes!

#FarmToTable #IslandFresh #StCroixHarvest #SupportLocal

Product Differentiation

- Prompt: In 3 sentences, describe your product in a way that communicates value, uniqueness, and feeling.
- Example: “My farm grows golden mangoes in St. Croix’s volcanic soil, picked at peak ripeness and hand-packed in branded mesh bags. These mangos taste like sunshine and support our local soil conservation efforts. They arrive fresher than any import, glowing with island flavor.”

Activity:

- Give farmers 2–3 minutes to write their 3 sentences.
- Ask some to share.
- Use those sentences as a seed for their marketing / label copy.

"ISLAND GOLD HARVEST"

The "Island Gold Harvest" Promise:

When you choose St. Croix Golden Mangoes, you're choosing an authentic, unparalleled tropical experience. You're choosing the vibrant flavor o sun-ripened fruit grown in unique volcanic soil, harvested with care, and delivered with unmatched freshness. And you're choosing to support a farm dedicated to sustainability and the preservation of St. Croix's natural beauty. It's not just a mango; it's an **Island Gold Harvest** – a taste of paradise that does good.

Summary: Key Takeaways on Product

Your "product" is more than what you grow — includes packaging, identity, promise.

1. Adding value and differentiating builds price and loyalty.
2. Consistency and trust are essential to brand strength.
3. Your USP is your "why you, not them."
4. Packaging + labeling = the front line in customer perception.
5. Use real feedback and stories to refine your product offering.

Price

Price is the amount of money customers pay for your product — but it's more than just a number.

It reflects:

- The value customers see in your product,
- Your positioning (premium vs. affordable), and
- The balance between what it costs to produce and what people are willing to pay.

In short: Price = Value for customers + Profit for the business.

Price

Why Price Matters for Farmers:

- Farming costs are high (inputs, transport, labor).
- Local products compete with imported goods.
- Customers want fresh, sustainable, local — but still care about affordability.

So, price needs to be fair, competitive, and reflect local value.

💵 1️⃣ Pricing Strategies (Types)

Strategy	Description	Example for a Farm	When to Use It
Cost-Plus Pricing	Add a fixed % profit to your cost.	If mangoes cost $1 each to grow and you add 50% → sell for $1.50.	Simple, ensures profit.
Value-Based Pricing	Price based on perceived quality or benefits.	Organic papayas priced higher because customers see them as healthier.	When product has unique value.
Competitive Pricing	Match or adjust based on other sellers.	Selling lettuce at $3 per bag because local market average is $3.	When facing competition.
Penetration Pricing	Set a low initial price to attract new customers.	New jam brand sells at $5 instead of $7 for first month.	When launching a new product.
Premium Pricing	Higher price for high quality or exclusivity.	"Island Organic Honey" sold in glass jars for $12 vs $8.	When product is niche or premium.

Price

📊 2️⃣ Factors That Influence Pricing

- **Production Costs:** seeds, feed, water, packaging, labor, transport
- **Market Demand:** how much people want your product
- **Competition:** imported goods, other farms
- **Seasonality:** supply changes (e.g. mangoes cheaper during harvest)
- **Customer Perception:** people pay more for "local" or "organic"
- **Distribution Channel:** direct sales = higher profit margin than wholesale

💭 3️⃣ Psychological Pricing Techniques

Sometimes small details influence how customers *feel* about a price:

Technique	Example	Purpose
Charm Pricing	$4.99 instead of $5.00	Looks cheaper psychologically
Bundle Pricing	3 coconuts for $10	Encourages bulk buying
Discounts & Loyalty Deals	10% off for repeat customers	Builds loyalty
"Island Grown" Labeling	Emphasizes value of local product	Justifies higher price

💡 What Are Pricing Tactics?

Pricing tactics are *short-term* or *psychological* methods used to:

- Make prices **more attractive** to customers
- Increase **sales** or **customer loyalty**
- Create a certain **image or perception** (like "affordable," "premium," or "local")

Think of them as "smart tricks" to help your price *look or feel right* — without necessarily changing your whole pricing strategy.

🌾 Common Pricing Tactics (simple examples)

Tactic	What it means	Farm example
Charm pricing	End prices with .99 so they *look* cheaper	$4.99 for a tomato basket instead of $5 🧠
Bundle pricing	Sell several items together for one lower total	3 coconuts for $10 instead of $4 each
Seasonal pricing	Change prices when supply or demand shifts	Mangoes cheaper in harvest season
Discounts / Promotions	Temporary price drops to boost sales	"Buy 2 jars of jam, get 1 free"
Premium pricing	Higher price to signal special quality	Organic island honey $12 in a glass jar
Loyalty pricing	Rewards for repeat buyers	"10 % off every week for Farm Club members"
Subscription / Pre-pay	One payment for several deliveries	Veggie box $80 per month (delivered weekly)
Geographic pricing	Different prices by location	$2 at the farm, $3 in St. Thomas (shop markup)

Price

🌿 4️⃣ Example for a USVI Farm

A local vegetable farm calculates:

- Cost per basket = $15
- Adds 40% margin = $21
- Competing baskets sell for $20–$25
- Customers value freshness and local support

✅ Final price: **$22** — fits market range, covers costs, and communicates quality.

Price is not only what you charge — it's how you communicate value and ensure your business is sustainable.
The right pricing strategy helps farmers stay profitable, competitive, and trusted by their community.

Price

The Price “P” isn’t only about how much something costs — it’s also about how customers pay, when they pay, and what payment options make it easier for them to buy.

In marketing terms, that’s called your payment strategy.

🏛️ Examples of “Ways to Pay” in the Price Strategy

1️⃣ Payment Methods

- Cash 💵
- Credit/debit cards 💳
- Mobile payments (like **ATH, Apple Pay, or mobile wallets**) 📱
- Online payment links (PayPal, website checkout, WhatsApp orders)
- Checks (less common now)

💡 For farmers in USVI, accepting **card payments or mobile pay** can attract more tourists and younger customers — people don’t always carry cash.

2️⃣ Payment Timing

- **Pay now:** Customer pays at the market or online right away.
- **Pay later:** Restaurant or store pays you at the end of the month.
- **Subscriptions / Prepay:** Customers pay in advance for a CSA box or weekly delivery.

These are all **pricing decisions** — because they affect **cash flow, risk, and customer convenience**.

3️⃣ Payment Incentives

Sometimes, how people pay can even change the price:

- Discounts for paying in cash (“Save 5% if you pay cash”)
- Higher price for delivery or credit (to cover your cost)
- Free delivery for pre-paid orders

Those are all **pricing tactics** — because they directly affect the total cost to the customer.

🌽 Example for a Farm

A local farm sells fruit baskets for **$22** each.
They offer:

- **Cash or card** payments at the market.
- **Online payment** for home delivery.
- **Prepaid weekly subscription** for $80/month (cheaper than paying $22 every week).

👉 All of these are *pricing choices*, because they influence **how customers buy and how the farm earns money**.

Place

Place

Place refers to the distribution strategy — the where and how your product is made available to customers.

In simple terms:
“Place” is about getting the right product to the right people, at the right time, in the right way.

It’s not just the location, but the entire path your product takes from your farm to the consumer.

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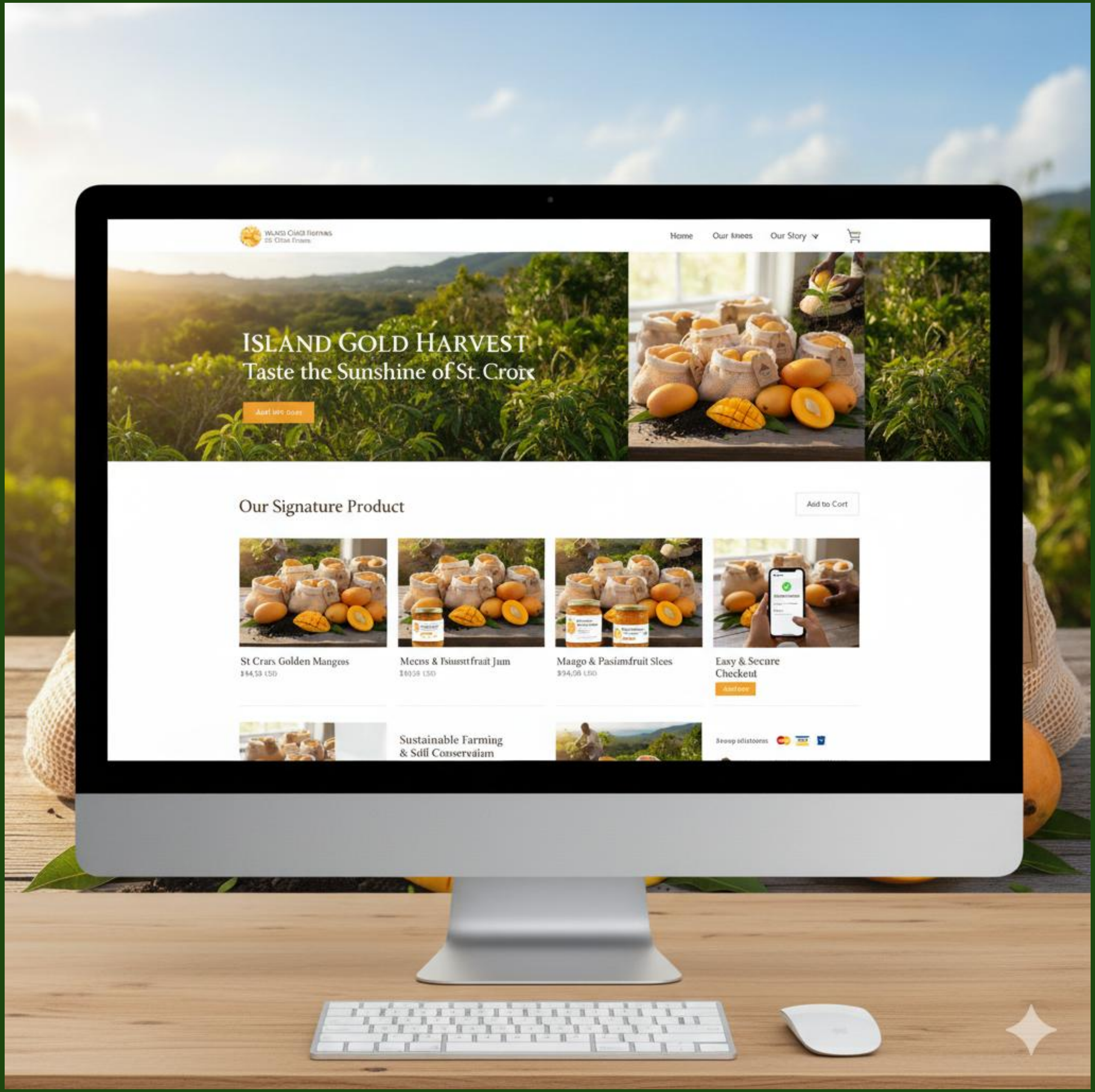


Place

🌴 Examples of "Place" Decisions for Farmers

1️⃣ Distribution Channels

How customers get your product:

Channel Type	Example	Pros	Cons
Direct Sales	Farmers' markets, farm stands, CSA boxes, on-farm sales	Full control, personal connection, higher profit margin	Limited reach, time-consuming
Retail / Wholesale	Selling to grocery stores, hotels, restaurants	Larger volume sales	Lower profit margin, less control
Online Sales	Website, Facebook orders, delivery apps	Wider reach, convenience	Needs logistics and promotion
Tourism & Events	Selling at agrotourism experiences or fairs	Builds awareness, connects with community	Seasonal demand

💡 *Example:*

A farmer in St. Croix sells fruit directly at the Agriculture Fair, delivers boxes to local restaurants, and accepts online pre-orders via WhatsApp — that's a multi-channel "Place" strategy.

Place

Place = Distribution.

It’s how your product travels from the producer to the consumer, whether through markets, stores, online channels, or direct delivery.

A strong “Place” strategy combines convenience, visibility, and reliability.

2️⃣ Location Strategy

Where and how your products are available:

- Proximity to customers or tourist areas
- Accessibility (parking, transport, delivery routes)
- Presence in **local markets or eco-tourism zones**

Example:

> Setting up a small farm shop near a cruise port to attract tourists = smart “place” choice.

3️⃣ Distribution Logistics

How the product moves:

- Storage and packaging
- Transportation (truck, cooler, ferry, etc.)
- Delivery schedule and coordination
- Maintaining product freshness (especially in tropical climate)

4️⃣ Online Presence as a Place

In modern marketing, your **website, Facebook page, or Instagram shop** also count as *places* — digital touchpoints where customers can “find” your brand or order products.

💡 Even if the farm doesn’t sell online, social media still acts as a **virtual location** that leads customers to your physical market.

Promotion

Promotion

Promotion is the process of communicating and persuading customers to buy or support a product or service.

For farmers, promotion means telling people about your farm, your products, and why they should choose you — whether it’s fresh produce, livestock, honey, or agro-tourism experiences.

The goal of promotion is to:

- Increase awareness of local farm products.
- Build trust and reputation in the community.
- Encourage repeat purchases or visits.
- Differentiate your farm from imported or industrial products.

Marketing

The 4 Promotion Mix Tools

1 Advertising

Paid communication that reaches a wide audience.

Examples for USVI farmers:

- Local radio ads on stations like Isle 95 FM or WSTA.
- Social media ads (Facebook, Instagram) showing farm life and harvests.
- Influencer Marketing
- Flyers or posters in markets, stores, and ferry terminals.

Tip: Keep the message simple and visual — “Fresh. Local. Island Grown.”

Influencer Marketing strategy

Influencer marketing is when a brand partners with a person who has influence (such as a social media creator, chef, or community leader) to promote its products to their followers — usually through authentic stories, reviews, or demonstrations.

💡 Example for farms:
A local chef in St. Croix posts an Instagram picture cooking with vegetables from your farm, tagging your account and saying: "These fresh island greens from Coral Bay Farm are the best for my tropical salad!"

Influencer Marketing strategy

What to Look for in an Influencer

1 Engagement Rate (most important metric)

- Measures how actively followers interact with the influencer's content.

Let's imagine the influencer post we created earlier (by @IslandExplorerJenn) had these hypothetical stats after a few days:

- **Likes:** 3,500
- **Comments:** 250
- **Shares:** 80
- **Saves:** 120
- **Followers:** 50,000

Using the formula:

(3,500 + 250 + 80 + 120) / 50,000 * 100
= (3,950) / 50,000 * 100
= 0.079 * 100
= **7.9% Engagement Rate**

- Formula:

$$\text{Engagement Rate} = \frac{(Likes + Comments + Shares)}{\text{Total Followers}} \times 100$$

- A **good engagement rate** depends on follower size:

Type of Influencer	Followers	Good Engagement Rate
Nano	1K–10K	5–10%+
Micro	10K–100K	3–6%
Macro	100K–1M	1–3%
Mega/Celebrity	1M+	<1% (but large reach)

💡 For local or niche marketing (like agriculture), **nano and micro influencers** are usually best — smaller audience, but higher trust and engagement.

Why is it important?

- A high engagement rate suggests that an influencer's audience is genuinely interested in their content and, by extension, the products or brands they promote.
- This can lead to better ROI (Return on Investment) for marketing campaigns, as an engaged audience is more likely to trust recommendations and convert into customers.

Influencer Marketing strategy

What to Look for in an Influencer

2 Audience Fit

- Are their followers your **target customers** (local, food lovers, eco-conscious people, tourists)?
- Check their **location**, **language**, and **interests**.

3 Content Quality

- Do they post **authentic, visually appealing** content?
- Is their tone **aligned with your brand** (family-friendly, sustainable, local, etc.)?

4 Credibility & Authenticity

- Are they **genuine** or overly commercial?
- Their audience should **trust** their recommendations.

5 Consistency & Professionalism

- Do they post regularly?
- Are they reliable with partnerships (meet deadlines, follow brand guidelines)?

Marketing

2️⃣ Sales Promotion

Short-term incentives to boost sales or attract new customers.

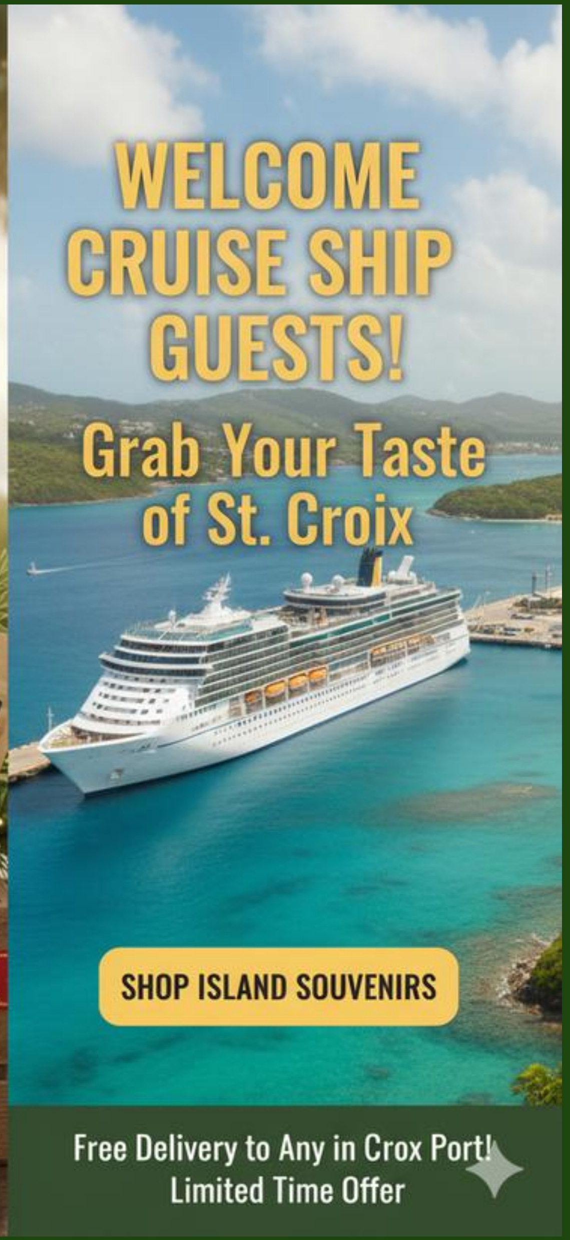
Examples:

- Discounts for first-time buyers or bulk purchases.
- "Buy 2 get 1 free" deals at markets.
- Loyalty cards or a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) subscription program.
- Free samples during fairs or open-farm days.

💡 Tip: Use promotions around holidays or tourism peaks (Christmas, Carnival, cruise ship season)

Marketing

2 Sales Promotion



Marketing

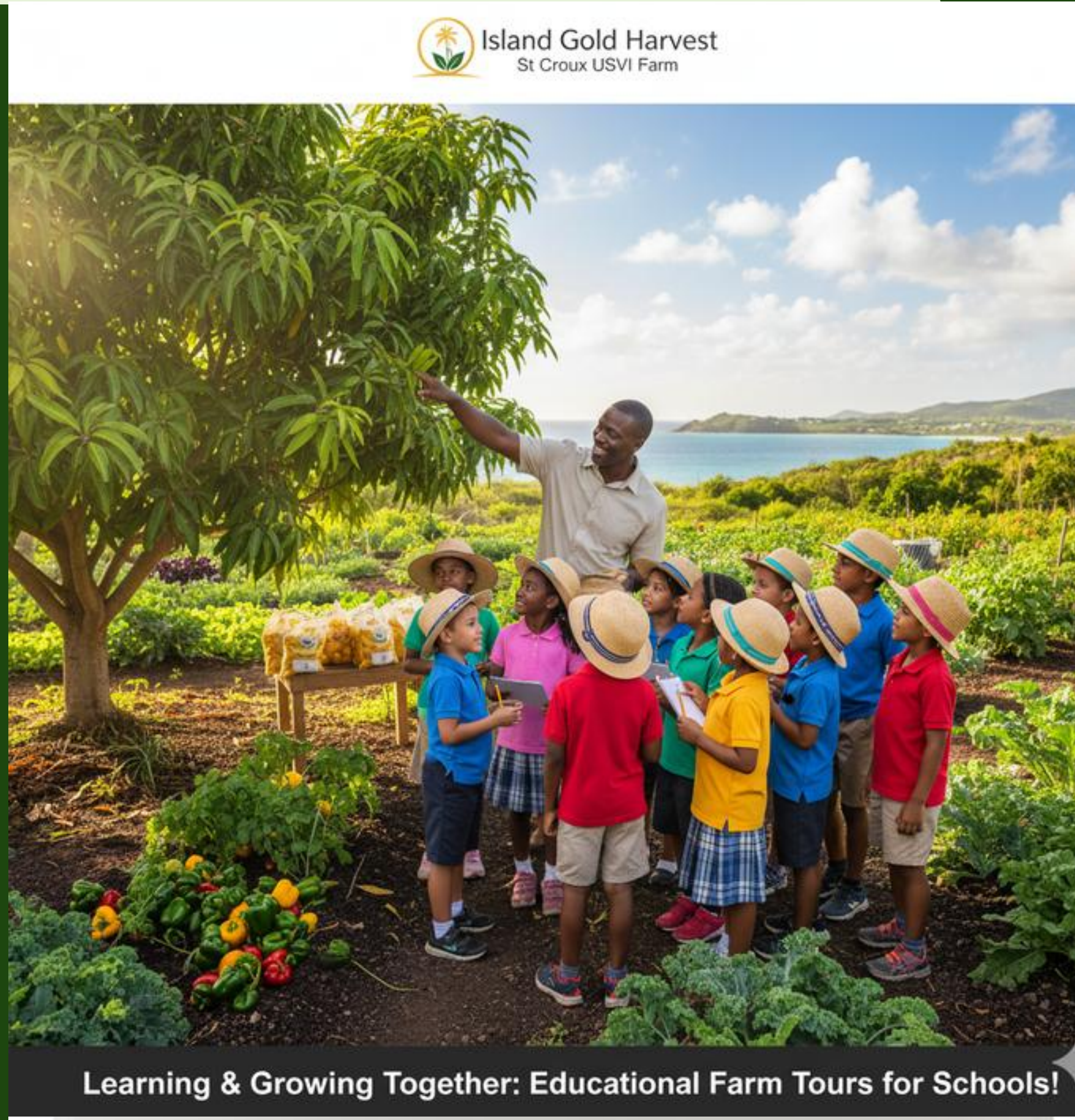
3 Public Relations (PR)

Building a positive image and strong community relationships.

Examples:

- Partner with schools for educational farm tours.
- Appear in local news stories about sustainable farming.
- Join island-wide programs like “Buy Local USVI” or “Island Grown.”
- Sponsor small community events or donate to food drives.

Tip: Share your farm’s story — people love to support local families and eco-friendly farmers.



Marketing

4️⃣ Personal Selling

Direct, one-on-one communication with customers or buyers.

Examples:

- Talking with shoppers at the farmers' market.
- Visiting hotels, restaurants, or stores to offer your produce.
- Hosting tastings or demonstrations on your farm.

Tip: Personal relationships are key in small communities — friendliness, honesty, and reliability build long-term loyalty.

AI in Farming

What is AI (Artificial Intelligence) ?

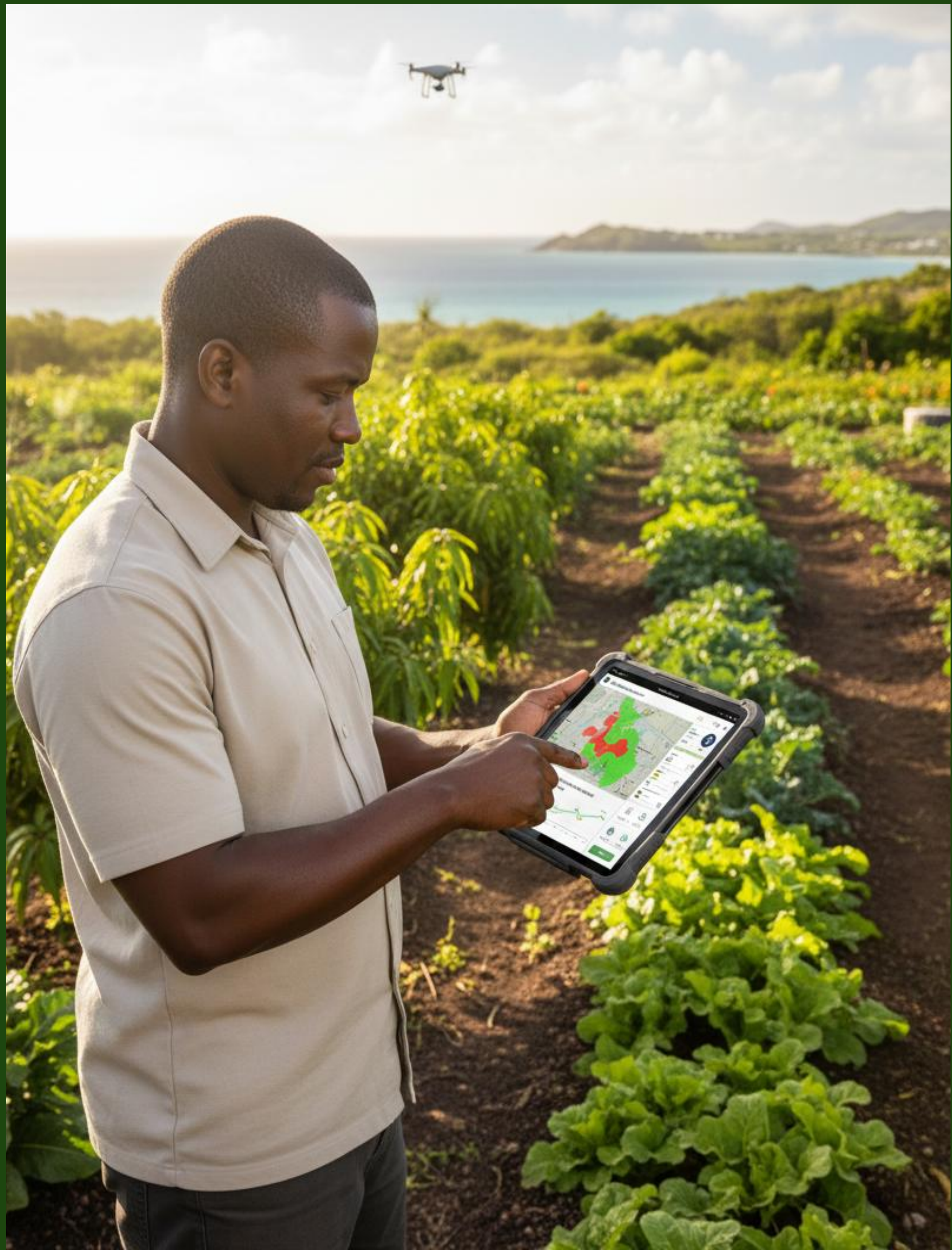
AI is technology that enables computers and machines to simulate human learning, comprehension, problem solving, decision making, creativity and autonomy (Stryker and Kavlakoglu, n.d).

Instead of just following instructions, AI can:

- Understand language (like ChatGPT does when you type a question)
- Recognize images or sounds
- Predict outcomes (like weather, prices, or trends)
- Create things — text, photos, videos, music, or even designs

In simple words:

AI is a smart helper that can read, write, draw, and analyze data — instantly. For farmers, small businesses, and marketers, AI saves time and helps make smarter decisions.



How to get a ChatGPT account

ChatGPT is one of the most popular AI tools made by **OpenAI**.

It can write messages, translate, summarize, generate ideas, and even create marketing content.

To get started:

1. Go to 🌐 https://chat.openai.com ↗
2. Click **Sign Up**
3. Create an account using:
   - An **email address**, or
   - A **Google** or **Microsoft** account
4. Verify your email, and you're ready to start chatting!

✅ **Free version:** ChatGPT-4o (text and image chat)

💎 **Paid plan:** ChatGPT Plus — includes more advanced features (faster answers, image creation, data tools, etc.)

Prompts

A prompt is simply what you type into ChatGPT or any AI — your question, request, or instruction.

The better your prompt, the better the answer you'll get.

💡 Prompt Tips

Tip	Example
🎯 **Be specific**	Instead of "Tell me about farming," say "Explain how small farms in the Caribbean can use social media to sell products."
🧱 **Give context**	"I'm a farmer in St. Croix. Write a Facebook post promoting my mangoes to tourists."
🪄 **Tell AI what style or format you want**	"Write a short, friendly paragraph for a brochure." or "Make it sound like a social media caption."
🔁 **Ask for improvement**	"Make this sound more professional." or "Add emojis to make it fun."
📊 **Ask step-by-step**	"Explain how to price farm products using cost-plus pricing."

💬 Think of AI as your *assistant* — the more clearly you explain what you want, the better it performs.

AI Prompts

🥕 1️⃣ PRODUCT – Designing & Improving What You Sell

These prompts help farmers **understand customers**, **improve products**, and **create value-added ideas**.

Prompts to use:

- 🧠 "What are some value-added products I can create from [crop name] that will attract local buyers?"
- 🌾 "Explain how I can describe my farm's products to highlight freshness and sustainability."
- 📦 "Write product descriptions for my farm's online shop — make them sound natural and appealing."
- 🔍 "Analyze what farm products are trending in the [Caribbean / USVI] market right now."
- 🧑‍🌾 "Suggest eco-friendly packaging ideas that make my local farm brand stand out."

Example output:

> "Turn surplus mangoes into dried fruit snacks — brand them as *'Island Sweet Bites'* emphasizing zero waste."

AI Prompts

💵 2️⃣ PRICE – Setting Smart and Fair Prices

AI can help farmers understand costs, competition, and customer perception.

Prompts to use:

- 💰 "Calculate a fair selling price if it costs me $12 to produce a basket of vegetables and I want a 35% profit."
- 📊 "Compare different pricing strategies I could use for my farm products (cost-plus, value-based, competitive)."
- 📈 "How can I use discounts and bundles to attract more repeat customers at my farmers' market?"
- 🌴 "What pricing strategy should I use to sell local organic produce in the U.S. Virgin Islands?"

Example output:

> "Use value-based pricing — highlight your local freshness and sustainable farming to justify a premium price."

AI Prompts

🚚 3️⃣ PLACE – Finding the Best Ways to Reach Customers

AI can recommend **distribution channels**, **sales routes**, and **customer touchpoints**.

Prompts to use:

- 🛒 "List the best places to sell local produce in the USVI and explain their advantages."
- 🚛 "Suggest how I can organize farm deliveries efficiently to nearby restaurants."
- 🧭 "How can I combine online sales with in-person farmers' markets to reach more customers?"
- 📍 "Recommend digital tools or apps to manage orders and deliveries for small farms."

Example output:

> "Sell through Facebook Marketplace and WhatsApp groups — popular in the islands and easy for customers to order."

AI Prompts

📣 4️⃣ PROMOTION – Telling Your Story & Attracting Customers

AI is *great* for helping farmers create **ads, posts, slogans, and marketing campaigns**.

Prompts to use:

- 🗣️ "Write 3 social media posts promoting my farm's fresh produce this week."
- 📸 "Create 5 catchy slogans for my local farm that focus on freshness and community."
- 💌 "Write a short message I can send to customers to remind them about this week's market."
- 🎥 "Suggest ideas for farm videos I can post on Instagram or TikTok to attract visitors."
- 🤖 "Act as my marketing coach — help me make a simple 1-month plan to promote my farm online."
- 🌱 "What are the best hashtags to use for farming and local produce in the Caribbean?"

Example output:

> " 🌴 *Taste the Island, Support Local!* Visit Coral Bay Farm this weekend for the freshest greens in the USVI! #IslandGrown #BuyLocalUSVI"

AI Apps

🧠 🔄 AI Apps That Can Help You (Beyond ChatGPT)

Here are some great **AI tools** for farmers, marketers, and small business owners:

🎨 For Images & Design

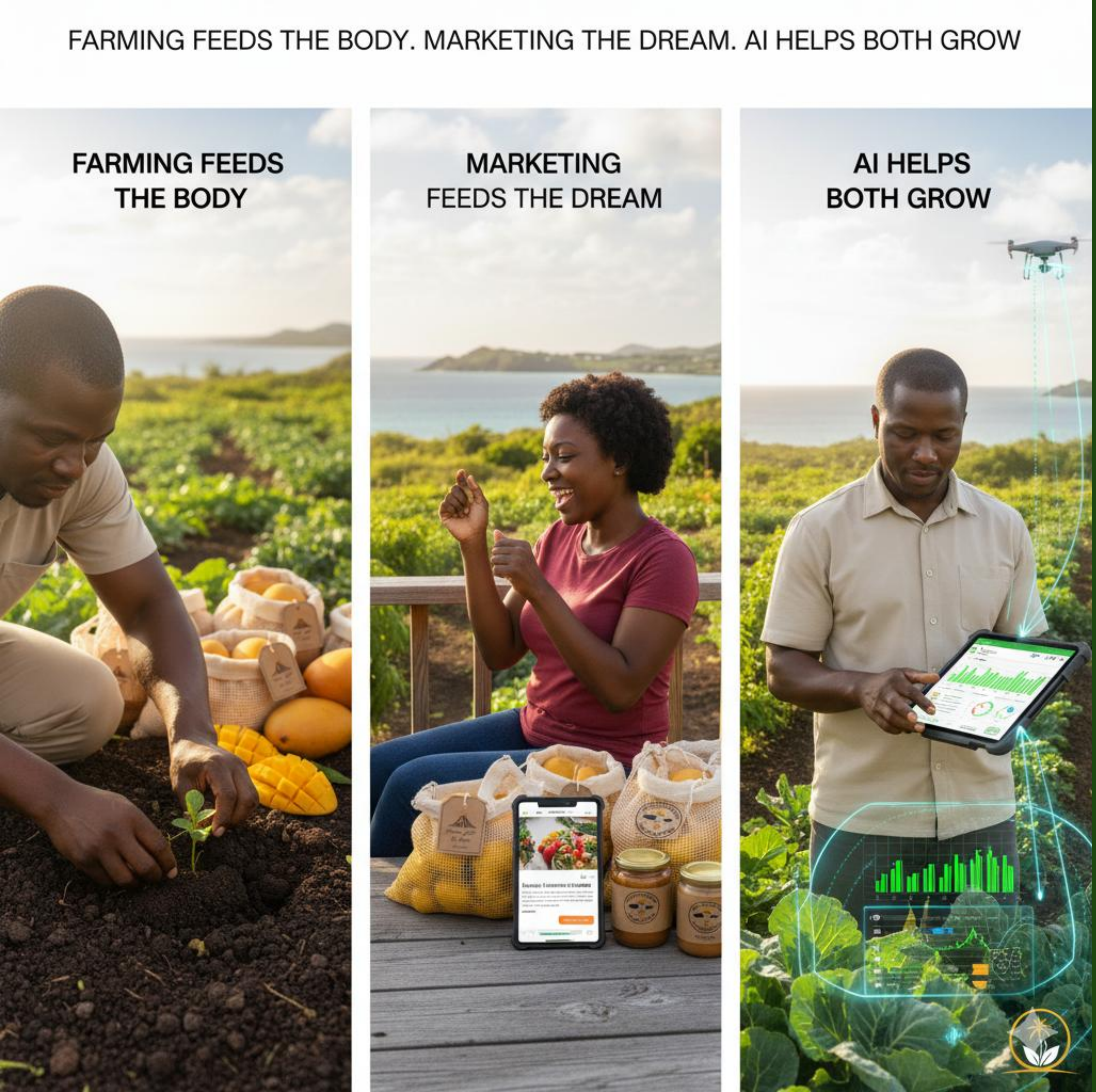
Tool	What It Does	Use Example
Canva	Designs posters, social media posts, and flyers with AI help.	"Create a poster for my farm's open day."
Microsoft Designer	Auto-generates social media graphics and captions.	"Make an Instagram post about organic bananas."
DALL·E / ChatGPT (image option)	Generates realistic images from text prompts.	"Create an image of a tropical farm stand."
Adobe Firefly	Generates professional images, replaces backgrounds.	"Make my farm products look fresh and professional."

🎥 For Videos

Tool	What It Does	Use Example
Pictory.ai	Turns written text into videos automatically.	"Make a short video about my farm's story."
Animoto	Easy video creation with text and photos.	"Make a slideshow of my crops with music."
CapCut	AI video editor (used on TikTok/Instagram).	"Add captions and music to my farm videos."
Synthesia.io	Creates videos with virtual presenters (AI avatars).	"Make a video ad for my farm using a friendly spokesperson."

📈 For Information & Research

Tool	What It Does	Use Example
Perplexity.ai	Finds and summarizes information with sources.	"Summarize the latest trends in Caribbean agriculture."
Google Gemini	Google's AI for research and image generation.	"Find data about local produce demand."
ChatGPT	Writes, plans, and answers marketing or farming questions.	"Make a 4Ps plan for my local farm."



Thank You!

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