

Fall is almost here! Hard to believe but it's true.

Many festivals abound in the fall season and festivals are great places to make a few extra dollars using the bounty from your garden. Consider the ideas below to make some extra cash.

Decorating the door, porch and yard have become a tradition for Halloween. Take the remaining corn stalks from your garden and pair them with hay bales and pumpkins for a classic Halloween look. If you thought ahead and planted Indian corn use that in your wreath decoration for the front or back door. Use what you have from the garden and be creative.

For those who planted pumpkins in July, if you watered them you should have plenty to sell. People like pumpkins in all sizes and shapes. The small ones are very popular with children and the larger ones can be used in a clustered arrangement near the front door. And, of course the all-time favorite use of the larger pumpkins is to make a jack-o-lantern.

Berries this year were bountiful and many people harvest and freeze their berries for later use. If you are in that group, take the berries out of the freezer and make juice. The juice can be used to make syrup for your pancakes or jelly for your toast.

If you did not pick berries earlier, muscadines are almost ready to harvest. Expect these to be plentiful in August and early September. This berry makes great jelly but is also a favorite for homemade wine that you can enjoy with friends after a day at the festival.

Not all of the ideas I've mentioned can be sold at festivals, but a special Louisiana law, [La R.S. 40:4.9](#), passed in 1991 and amended in 1995, 1997 and in 2014, provides an opportunity for an individual to make "low risk food" like jams and jellies in a home instead of a commercial kitchen if sales do not exceed \$20,000 in a year. The state sanitary codes do not apply to these individuals, but the law should not be construed to imply that any unwholesome foods should be sold. "Low risk food" are identified in the law as the following:

- (1) Baked goods, including breads, cakes, cookies, and pies.
- (2) Candies.
- (3) Cane Syrup
- (4) Dried mixes.
- (5) Honey and honeycomb products.
- (6) Jams, jellies, and preserves.
- (7) Pickles and acidified foods.
- (8) Sauces and syrups.
- (9) Spices.

Taking advantage of this law to make up to \$20,000 in low risk food may give you an opportunity to explore starting a business. Starting small and growing as funds become available might be a great way to start your business with limited risk.

How about flowers? Do you still have zinnias blooming? These make great bouquets, especially the big-faced zinnias. Think about bunching them together in school colors. In Louisiana, flowers can be sold at festivals and markets but they must be sold as flower stems and can be bunched together for multiple sales, but our Louisiana law prevents arranged flowers from being sold unless you are a certified florist.

Have fun selling your bounty this fall and pocket those earned dollars to start your garden next year.