

# MARKETEERING

BY TAYLOR S. COOK

Most kids our age make money by accepting allowance, doing weekly chores and occasionally washing the family car. That's not exactly the way my twin sister and I do it. To fill our pockets, we sell Jim Churchill and Lisa Brenneis's bodacious fruit at the local farmers' market on Sundays.



Jim and Lisa grow an astounding variety of succulent citrus, ranging from the famous Ojai Pixie to Oro Blancos, grapefruits that can grow to the size of volleyballs, and avocados. Soon, to Dana and me, it became more than just a job. It is a fun way to spend time with our mother, who works alongside us, talk to people we know who buy our fruit, meet some real "Ojai Individuals" (as I like to call them) and earn money at the same time!

Dana and I have been selling at the Ojai and Hollywood markets every Sunday for over a year, and each time we increase our knowledge of fruit, farming and the brisk business of trade. We have learned to weigh the fruit on a scale, count back change and, most importantly, that people trusted our judgment in helping them select the very best and ripest harvest of Jim's trees.

About a year and a half ago, Dana, my friend Asia and I took selling tangerines to a new level. We were raising money for our class trip to Catalina Island at the end of sixth grade, and our parents agreed to pay for half of the pretty steep costs. After countless lemonade stands and too many chores to remember (and who would want to?), the three of us got an idea. We went to Jim's house and asked him if we could have a couple of boxes of Ojai Pixie tangerines, along with some orange net bags and label tags.

Together we filled each bag with Pixies, and stapled on our logos to secure the bags. Then we piled 'em up in our little red wagon and hit the road, going door to door around

the block. We sold every bag for around \$5, and by the end of the day we had a hundred bucks, split three ways. The neighbors enjoyed helping us with our funds, but perhaps they couldn't withstand the irresistible combo of three young pixies selling Pixies?

So many funny things have happened while selling. In our early days, Dana and I would confuse customers and selling farmers because we switched off

working every Sunday. A mother and her adorable little girl come every Sunday to buy our fruit, but also to see the "Tangerine Lady," also known as my mother.

Jim held a contest to see who could think of the most original Pixie Tangerine logo, and many of the contributions were hilarious. My dad, who is from Tennessee, thought of "Who needs Dixie, we got Pixie" and Lisa's "Too good to throw at cars" made me laugh especially hard. Lisa dubbed me the Mystic Tangerine Picker because somehow, I usually pick a ripe and delicious tangerine to tempt the customers with as a sample.

It's summertime now, and Jim and Lisa's fruit harvest is over for the season. I still go to the farmers' market on Sunday, and the farmers wave to us and customers miss our stand. I think about all the fun times we had working the market this year, and those memories make getting up every Sunday morning at practically the crack of dawn seem worth it. In the beginning, working each Sunday was like a freshly planted seed: a slight pain to water and take care of, if you're ignorant in the art of growing. But slowly it grew, becoming a fun and flavorful tangerine that I just had to take a bite out of. Selling at the Sunday farmers' market is definitely an experience that I am very thankful for, and one I will never forget.

*Taylor Cook is 13 years old and has a twin sister named Dana. She loves to travel, cook, bake, surf, read and spend time with her friends.*