**What Do I Ask A Wholesaler?**

Wholesale markets have different rules than retail. When you meet with a wholesaler, ask them the following:

**Product Requirements**

* From how far away do you accept product?
* What commodities and growing practices do you want?
	+ You will not get a direct answer to this question because wholesalers depend on trends and other demands out of their control. Make sure that when you call you have a product in mind that is different from the norm - organic cucumbers vs. conventional, a special variety of squash vs. crookneck, etc. **Stand out.**

**Paperwork Requirements**

* What kind and how much insurance do you require from suppliers?
* What is your onboarding process?
	+ Some wholesalers have a specific process for submitting paperwork, etc. Ask ahead of time or you might not be able to sell to them later in the season.
* What food safety requirements do you have?

**Packaging Requirements**

* What kind of packaging do you require?
* Do you require certain kinds of labels?
* Do you identify the specific farm a product comes from on the final packaging?

**Sales and Pricing Issues**

* Do you have a price premium for product that is certified organic?
* If I am interested in selling to you, when do I first contact you to make a sale?
	+ Some wholesalers take product the day of a call, while others want to know months ahead of time what you will have.
* When do you take orders vs. delivery day vs. when checks are cut?
* How much will you pay?
	+ This is tricky! You will almost never get a straight answer to this because it varies according to demand, so come prepared. Know how much you need to break even on the product (including gas to get to the warehouse). Remember that being able to deliver certified organic or in the off-season (like high tunnel tomatoes in the fall) will get you a higher price.

**Delivery Details**

* What is the biggest and smallest truck your loading dock can handle?
* Where are your delivery sites?
* Do you check temperature of product upon delivery?
	+ If they do, you need to make sure your product stays cool enough for the wholesaler to accept. This might mean you need to invest in or borrow a refrigerated truck; if the wholesaler is close by, you might just need to turn up the AC in transit.