



Your Dekalb Farmers Market®
A World Market

After managing my father's business in Rhode Island for a number of years and experimenting in food in the basement of the store, my brother, Robert Blazer, decided to strike out on his own. He moved to Atlanta where he founded Dekalb Farmers Market, in Decatur, Georgia (DFM) in 1977. It began as a fruit and vegetable stand that was housed in a 7,500 sq. ft. greenhouse-like structure on a dirt lot and has grown to be the most successful and largest retail food store in North America dedicated exclusively to the sale of perishables and specialty groceries.

I learned the business from the ground up – doing every job there was to do. Over the next few years, under my direction, we expanded seafood and added meat, cheese, deli, bakery, flowers and plants, and complementary ambient offerings. With my help, the store grew from a neighborhood fruit and veg stand to a 25,000 sq. ft. destination fresh and specialty store with reputedly the highest productivity in terms of sales, comp sales growth and profit in the retail food industry (\$2500/sq. ft. – 10% EBT).

It was soon busting at its seams.



In 1985, as General Manager and Chief Operating Officer, I orchestrated the relocation of DFM from its original location to a new 100,000 sq. ft. facility several miles away. The new market also served as a "terminal market" for local wholesale trade and contained in-house facilities for the manufacturing of bakery and prepared food items. DFM remains a destination for millions of shoppers a year and is today still one of the largest and most successful retail food stores in the country (140,000 sq. ft. and set to expand again selling no national brand groceries).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YJ4HOhc-jlQ>

