



BUSINESS GROWTH EBOOK

CHARCUTERIE PROFIT SECRETS

The Ultimate Guide on
How to Buy, Price & Profit Like a Pro

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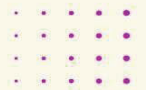
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INTRODUCTION

The Charcuterie Revolution

If you've been paying attention at all to food trends, it's clear that Charcuterie "sha-coo-tur-ee" has moved far beyond the occasional cheese board. Over the past few years, grazing tables, artful platters, and hand-held charcuterie cups have become the centerpiece of everything from weddings to baby showers to corporate launch parties. It's no longer just a treat – it's an experience.

And the best part? This is just the beginning. Industry forecasts show that the charcuterie and specialty cured meat market is on track to grow steadily through the next decade. More people want luxury at their fingertips. They crave beautiful, convenient, shareable moments, whether it's in the form of a backyard birthday board or an elaborate six-foot grazing table.

That makes this an extraordinary time to start or grow your charcuterie business. There is room for talented creators to stand out and build thriving businesses that pay them well – if they learn how to set themselves up properly from the start.



Why Pricing and Sourcing Matter More than Anything for Your Success

The truth is, it's easy to fall in love with making beautiful boards. Who doesn't enjoy folding salami into roses or drizzling honey across creamy brie? But many passionate food lovers jump into this business with plenty of creative skill and heart – and then get blindsided by the realities of pricing, buying, and protecting their margins.

What happens to too many hopeful entrepreneurs is heartbreakingly predictable. They underestimate how much it actually costs to build that stunning board. They don't account for the ice, the gas, the boxes, the floral touches, or even their own time running around town sourcing the best cheeses. They think, "If I just charge \$65 for this board, I'll still make money because the cheese will cost me \$30." But by the time the event is over, they're lucky to break even, let alone pay themselves for their hours of careful prep and cleanup.

That's why we wrote this book. Because pricing isn't just about math – it's about protecting your creativity and ensuring that your business pays you enough to keep doing what you love. And sourcing isn't just about grabbing whatever's at the grocery store. It's about choosing the right ingredients that hold up, buying just enough to prevent costly waste, and building a reputation for boards that taste as incredible as they look.



When you master your pricing and sourcing, everything else becomes easier. You'll no longer feel nervous when a client asks for a quote, or panic that you've undercharged when it's time to shop. Instead, you'll know your numbers, shop with precision, and actually enjoy the process – all while building a business that rewards you financially, not just emotionally.

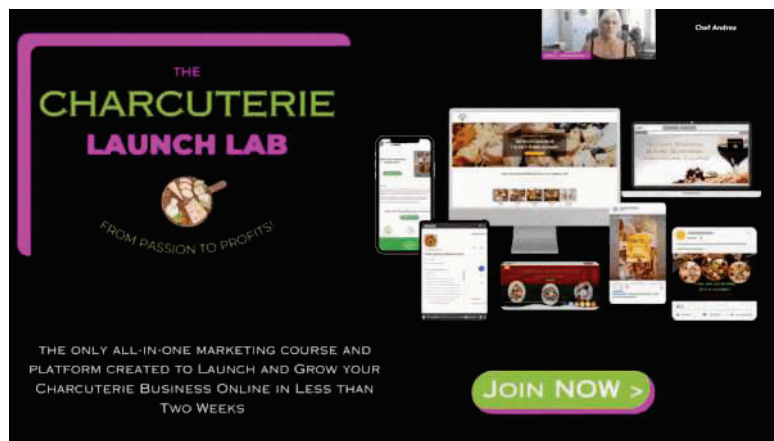
Who we are, and why we wrote this book

Before we dive into all the techniques and examples, let us share a bit of our story. We're sisters who decided to combine our different talents to create something special. I'm Patti — a marketer, business strategist, and long-time entrepreneur who's helped over 2500 small business owners all over the world to grow online with smart systems and confident sales. Sister Andrea, a graduate of Le Cordon Bleu Culinary Institute, has over 25 years experience as a chef, caterer and charcuterie business owner with an incredible gift for flavors, textures, and turning an ordinary tray into a work of art.



We've seen too many people burn out from undercharging, buying way too much "just to be safe," or spinning their wheels on social media with no real plan. We knew there had to be a better way. So we decided to bring together our combined expertise — Andrea's deep culinary know-how and Patti's years of building systems and marketing strategies — to guide other charcuterie entrepreneurs from confused and overwhelmed to confident and profitable.

Together, we started GrazingBiz to help people start and grow a charcuterie business. We built our signature program, the **Charcuterie Launch Lab**, out of a necessity for Andrea's business, but also because of a simple realization. We kept meeting amazing people who were passionate about food, eager to create beautiful boards, and excited by the idea of running their own business – but who were struggling because no one had ever shown them how to start and grow a business... and actually price, source, and market their products profitably. The **Charcuterie Launch Lab** is our complete, step-by-step program that helps you start, grow, and scale a profitable charcuterie business from scratch. Inside, we teach you everything – from how to create beautiful boards, and how to get started with licensing, health and insurance, to setting your pricing and sourcing ingredients, to building your website, handling orders, marketing on social media, and creating gorgeous boards that wow clients. Whether you're brand new or already taking orders... you may want more confidence and consistency. The **Charcuterie Launch Lab** gives you all the tools, templates, and personal guidance to build a business you love (and that actually pays you well). Whether you are new to the business or already selling them... we can help you to build your own amazing food business and grow it to unimaginable heights. You can learn more about our signature program at: <https://Grazingbiz.com/Launch>



This book is an important part of our mission to help charcuterie entrepreneurs to launch and grow a successful business. It's here to help you see exactly what goes into profitable pricing, how to shop and plan so you stop losing money on wasted ingredients, and why doing this well means you can finally treat your charcuterie business like a real, income-generating venture – not just an expensive hobby.

What you'll find in these pages

So what can you expect as you keep reading? This isn't some quick hit list of "top 5 cheeses to buy." We're going to go much deeper. You'll see the difference between pricing for public events where you charge per cup or box — and private events like weddings where you're paid in advance by headcount or by the hour. You'll learn how to use proven markup formulas so you never accidentally underquote again, and how to build in buffers that protect your profit even if you end up using a little more fruit or a few extra bunches of herbs.

You'll also learn how to shop smarter. We'll show you how to calculate exactly what to buy for different types of events so you're not stuck throwing away \$200 worth of soggy berries or ending up with three pounds of leftover salami. And we'll help you think like a real business owner, balancing abundance with caution so your displays always look lavish — but your bank account stays healthy too.

Throughout these chapters, we'll sprinkle in real-world stories of charcuterie business owners who've learned these lessons the hard way, and give you practical tools like worksheets and calculators so you can apply all of this immediately to your own business.

How we can keep helping you (beyond this book)

While this guide is designed to be a complete pricing and sourcing resource on its own, it's also just the beginning. If you decide you want more support, more systems done for you, and more coaching every step of the way, we'd love to welcome you into the Charcuterie Launch Lab. Inside the Lab, we go far beyond pricing — we walk you through setting up your website, building funnels and email campaigns, automating follow-ups, crafting stunning proposals for weddings and corporate clients, and so much more.

And if you'd like to stay inspired, we'd love for you to listen to our very popular podcast, the *Charcuterie Launch Lab Podcast*. It's where we share fun behind-the-scenes stories, marketing tips, interviews with other charcuterie entrepreneurs, and plenty of laughter and real talk about what it takes to run this kind of business. You can check it out anytime at <https://grazingbiz.com/podcast>.

You can also join us in our free Facebook group named *Start your Charcuterie Business*. Come on in and get free help from us and other charcuterie entrepreneurs with a focus on building a business... not just the boards. Join us here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/charcuteriebiz>

Why this moment matters

If you've picked up this book, chances are you already feel that spark. Maybe you've made a few boards for friends and started to wonder if you could turn it into something more. Maybe you're already running a charcuterie business, but feeling overwhelmed by pricing or constantly second-guessing your quotes. Or maybe you've just been captivated by this gorgeous world of cheeses, meats, fruits, and flowers and want to see what's possible.

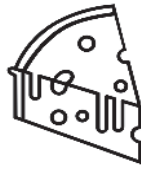
Wherever you're starting from, know this: the opportunity is wide open. More people than ever want these experiences. More weddings, parties, and corporate events are choosing grazing displays over traditional catering. And the chance to build a beautiful, flexible, rewarding business – one that genuinely delights people – is right here, right now.

We're so glad you're here. Let's get started earning you money in your passion. By the end of this book, you'll have the clarity, tools, and confidence to price your charcuterie products properly, buy exactly what you need, and finally build the profitable business you've been dreaming about!



Disclaimer: Pricing, Health Licensing & Local Regulations

The information in this book is intended for educational purposes only and is based on general industry standards and experience. Pricing recommendations, sourcing tips, and preparation guidelines may vary depending on your local market conditions, competition, food costs, and target audience. Likewise, health department regulations, cottage food laws, and licensing requirements differ significantly from state to state, county to county (and country to country). It is your responsibility to research and comply with all local laws, permits, and food handling certifications required in your area before selling food to the public. When in doubt, always consult your local health department, attorneys, financial advisers or small business authority to ensure you're building your business legally and safely.



Chapter 1

The Charcuterie Universe: Boards, Tables, Cups, Boxes, and Carts

Charcuterie has come a long way from the traditional wooden board at a wine night. What started as a simple platter of meats and cheeses has exploded into an entire universe of formats — each one with its own vibe, purpose, and pricing strategy. Today, you might deliver an intimate box for two, set up a full-scale grazing table for a wedding, roll out a mobile charcuterie cart at a street fair, or prep 50 handheld cones for a corporate happy hour.

This chapter is your map to navigating that expanding universe. Because while everything falls under the charcuterie umbrella, not all products are created — or priced — equally. Each format comes with its own ingredients, prep flow, packaging, and yes, profit potential. Understanding the nuances between them isn't just helpful... it is essential if you want to grow a business that doesn't burn you out or leave money on the table (pun intended).

If you're reading this, chances are you're already knee-deep in the world of grazing — or at least grazing-curious. Maybe you've already built a few small boards for friends and family. Or maybe you've been watching the explosion of charcuterie carts on Instagram and thinking, "Could I really make a business out of this?"

Either way, it's important to know: not all charcuterie is created equal.

Each type — boards, tables, cups, boxes, carts — serves a unique purpose, targets a different customer, and requires its own approach to planning, purchasing, and, most importantly **PRICING FOR PROFIT!**

Let's break down each one in detail throughout the rest of this chapter below.

Charcuterie Boards: The Classic Crowd-Pleaser

Boards are the traditional charcuterie experience. Think wood slabs, slate platters, marble trays. Sizes range from a cozy date-night board for two all the way up to party platters that can feed 20 guests.

Boards are perfect for:

- Date nights
- Small family gatherings
- Realtor open houses
- Housewarmings
- Holiday dinners

They typically feature 3-4 cheeses, 2-3 meats, a couple types of crackers or bread, plus fresh and dried fruits, nuts, olives, jams, and a drizzle of honey.

“The Anniversary Mix-Up”

Emily, a new charcuterie business owner in Michigan, booked her first anniversary board for a couple celebrating 10 years. She thought, “It’s just two people – I’ll do a small 10-inch board.”

Turns out, the husband planned for this to replace dinner. They were both big eaters, expecting a lush spread. Emily’s petite board disappeared in minutes, leaving them awkwardly nibbling leftover crackers. Lesson? Always ask your customer: “Is this to accompany a meal, or is it the meal?”

Boards can look generous or sparse depending on expectations.



Grazing Tables: The Jaw-Droppers

Grazing tables are sprawling, luxurious displays — often measured by feet rather than by pieces. They're designed to impress at weddings, large birthdays, corporate cocktail hours, fundraisers, and more.

A typical grazing table will feature:

- Large wheels of brie or gouda
- Mounds of prosciutto and salami
- Bowls of olives, nuts, dips
- Baskets of breads
- Piles of berries and citrus slices
- Decorative greenery, florals, candles

Setup can take **2 to 5 hours**, depending on size.



“The Gala Curveball”

Javier runs a small catering company in Austin. His first corporate grazing table was booked for a tech company’s annual gala. They wanted it to feed 120 during a two-hour cocktail reception.

His mistake? He planned quantities as if this was a sit-down dinner. Guests grazed constantly, many returning three or four times. By the 90-minute mark, his table was picked over, with empty banana leaves and stray grapes.

Javier learned to plan at least 30% more food for grazing tables than plated service. People eat with their eyes first — and a half-empty table is not the Instagram shot your clients expect.

Cups and Boxes: Personal & Portable

Charcuterie cups and boxes exploded during the pandemic for obvious reasons – everyone wanted contactless, individual servings. But they’ve stuck around because they’re adorable, easy to brand, and perfect for grab-and-go events.

Ideal for:

- Office lunches
- Baby and bridal showers
- Graduation parties
- Conference break snacks
- Realtor closing gifts

Cups typically include:

- 1-2 small cheese cubes
- A rolled slice of salami or prosciutto
- 2-3 crackers
- A few berries or dried apricots
- A couple nuts
- Sometimes a chocolate or cookie



Boxes can be more generous, often feeding one to two people.

“The Office Order” Marissa started her business selling boards but noticed offices were calling for quick, portable options. She designed a cute branded box, complete with her logo sticker, and pitched it to a local insurance office. They ordered **120 boxes at \$14 each** for an employee appreciation event. It only took Marissa about 6 hours of prep with one helper, plus simple drop-off. No on-site setup. She realized these small packages were actually *far more profitable per hour than her massive tables.*

Charcuterie Carts: The Ultimate Showstopper

A cart is a rolling mini shop – often styled with a canopy, chalkboard menu, and rows of pre-packed items. They work like a hybrid between catering and retail. Perfect for:

- Markets and fairs
- Hotel lobbies or breweries
- Boutique pop-up events
- Brand launches
- Private parties (yes, people rent carts to park in their backyard!)

They require more initial investment (the cart itself, transport, signage), but can scale beautifully. You can start with pre-packed cones or boxes, then upsell grazing cups, custom boxes, and even drinks.

" A Fair Day Fiasco"

Sienna and her sister built a gorgeous cart and brought it to a Saturday artisan fair. They didn't know to stagger prepping their cones – everything was out in the sun from the start. By 1pm, the cheese was sweaty, crackers limp, strawberries wilted. Sales tanked.

Next event? They kept most of their inventory iced in coolers, restocked the cart every 30 minutes, and nearly sold out.

Presentation is everything, but **product integrity matters more.**



Comparison table: boards, tables, cups, boxes & carts

Here's a quick reference table to help you determine what to offer and how to plan for various types of services. Remember, you own the business. Offer services that work best for your personal and financial goals. In other words...it's okay to offer just a charcuterie cart service for private events only.

Worksheet: What Fits YOUR Business Goals?

Product Type	Guests Served	Average Prep Time	Typical Price Range	Event Fit
Boards	2-20	20-60 min	\$40-\$250	Small parties, gifts
Tables	30-300	2-5 hours	\$600-\$4000+	Weddings, galas
Cups/Boxes	1 each	50-100/hour	\$10-\$18 each	Offices, showers
Carts	Varies	4-8 hours prep	\$500-\$2000+/day	Markets, pop-ups

Take a moment to reflect. This simple worksheet will help you decide what products to focus on.

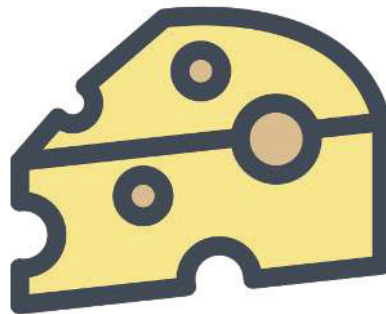
Product Type	Love This? (Y/N)	Have Storage Space?	Confident with Prep?	Need to Learn More?
Boards				
Tables				
Cups/Boxes				
Carts				

Tip: Start by mastering **one or two** of these offerings. You can always expand later. Overloading your menu early leads to logistical headaches and inventory waste.

Recap: Master the basics before growing into other offers

Before expanding into every possible product, it's important to master the basics and understand what each offer really brings to your business. Boards are where your creativity and presentation skills shine — they help build your brand's reputation for beauty and detail. Grazing tables, on the other hand, position you as a premium, full-service provider and can command top-dollar pricing. Cups and boxes are your scalable go-tos, perfect for offices, gifts, and grab-and-go situations that don't require a massive setup. Then there's the cart — fun, eye-catching, and full of marketing potential, but definitely requiring more logistical planning and prep. Each format plays a different role in your business growth, and understanding when (and why) to offer each is the secret to scaling with purpose.

Now that you've seen the differences, in Chapter 2 we'll explore how **event types change everything** — from how you purchase to how you set your prices.





Chapter 2

Event Types & How They Impact Your Buying and Pricing Decisions

If there's one golden rule of charcuterie that gets overlooked by new business owners, it's this:

Not all events are created equal!

Stepping into the world of charcuterie means you're not just making boards—you're stepping into a business built on events, special moments, and the joy of shared gatherings. That means every order you take is a little different. No two birthday brunches, wedding cocktail hours, or holiday open houses ever look exactly the same.

It's tempting, especially early on, to think of each event purely in creative terms: how stunning can I make this table? What clever flavor pairing can I add this time? And while your artistry is absolutely a core part of what sets you apart, there's another layer that quietly decides whether your business grows—or drains you. That's understanding the different types of orders and events you'll serve, and how they shape everything from your prep schedule to your grocery list.

An order for a backyard baby shower is worlds apart from a 150-person wedding, or a pop-up at the local Sunday market. If you try to plan, purchase, and price them the same way, you're guaranteed to either overbuy (and eat your profits) or under-deliver (and risk your reputation).

This chapter is going to ground you in the real-life logistics of running a charcuterie business. We'll explore why a grazing table for 80 guests at a wedding needs to be approached differently than an office ordering a dozen medium boxes. You'll start to see how timelines, portions, and even customer expectations change depending on whether it's a pop-up baby shower brunch or a high-stakes corporate launch party.

As you keep reading, pay attention to the subtle shifts: how portion planning changes for afternoon events versus evening, how delivery needs affect what you buy, and why last-minute parties often deserve premium pricing. The more you understand these nuances, the more confident you'll be quoting, shopping, prepping—and the more your clients will trust you as the expert.

By the end of this chapter, you'll look at every new inquiry not with nerves, but with a strategic eye that instantly starts calculating what it will take to deliver, both in your time and your costs.

Understanding **the psychology, expectations, and pricing elasticity** for each type of event is what separates hobbyists from profitable charcuterie entrepreneurs.



" The Budget-Conscious Birthday"

Tasha in San Diego was approached by a mom wanting a grazing table for her daughter's sweet 16. They'd seen Pinterest photos dripping in flowers and elaborate cheeses. The mom's budget? \$300 for 50 people. Tasha walked her through realistic options, ultimately converting her to three medium boards instead of a full table. It looked beautiful, stayed within budget, and earned her glowing referrals. **Key takeaway:** Always guide private party clients to the most cost-effective options that still look abundant.

The Four Main Event Categories

Through hundreds of events (and plenty of hard lessons), most charcuterie orders tend to fall into four big buckets. Let's break them down.

1. Private parties

- Anniversary dinners
- Graduation celebrations
- Holiday open houses

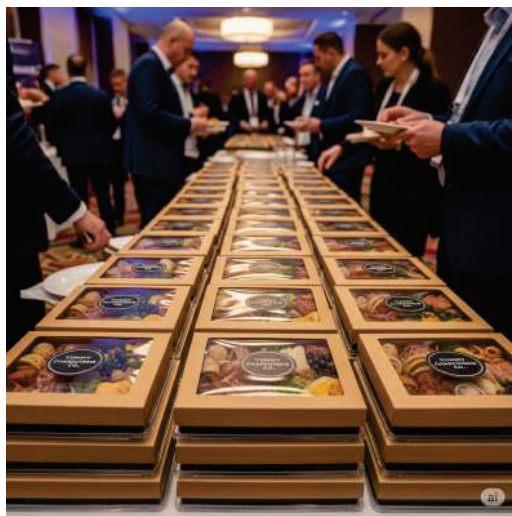
These events are often **paid out of someone's personal pocket**, which means budgets can be tighter and decisions more emotional. People are price-sensitive but still want to impress.

2. Corporate events

- Office holiday parties
- Team appreciation lunches
- Client gifts
- Conference break snacks

Corporate clients are often easier in one key way: **It's not their money!**

Budgets come from marketing or HR allocations, which means they'll frequently pay a premium for convenience, presentation, and brand alignment. They also love **packaged, individual options** for easy distribution and minimal cleanup.



3. Weddings

The big one. Weddings aren't just parties — they're emotional, photo-driven, "no expense spared" experiences.

That means:

- Couples (or parents) are often willing to pay more for wow-factor grazing tables.
- Last-minute upgrades are common — florals, larger tables, themed props.
- Expect more logistics: delivery windows, rental tables, coordination with planners.



"The Spontaneous Upgrade"

Janelle in North Carolina quoted a couple \$1,800 for a 6-foot grazing table. The bride's mother saw the mockup photo and decided on the spot to double the table length — bumping the invoice to \$3,600. Weddings are where impulse upgrades thrive.

Key takeaway: Always have scalable pricing ready for weddings. Quote by linear foot or by person, so upsells are seamless.

4. Public Markets & Pop-Ups

These are a different beast altogether. You're selling directly to the public, usually with **unpredictable foot traffic** and a need to keep items fresh and safe.

- Pricing tends to be **lower per unit** but higher volume.
- Best sellers: charcuterie cups, cones, small boxes.
- You'll want to prepare in smaller batches to replenish stock through the day.

" The Farmers Market Lesson"

John launched his cart at a weekend farmers market with 60 pre-packed ups. He sold out by noon and had to turn away dozens of hungry shoppers. The next week, she brought coolers of backup product and restocked throughout the day, doubling his sales.

Key takeaway: For markets, always have 2x your expected volume prepped in coolers. Keep restocking so the cart always looks full, but also to keep food fresh



How event types change your buying approach

This isn't just about quantity – it changes your whole shopping strategy.

For a wedding, you might buy:

- Extra brie wheels for stacking (visual impact)
- Multiple colors of grapes and berries to refresh through the evening
- Two kinds of crackers for variety

At a farmers market, you're better off with:

- Small wheels of firmer cheeses that hold up all day
- Salamis that stay visually appealing without refrigeration
- Pre-portioned nuts & dried fruits that won't wilt

Event Type	Portion Plan	Extra Inventory?	Buying Strategy
Private	Exact headcount	Minimal extra	Shop to precise guest count
Corporate	Exact or slightly padded	Little extra	Boxes often pre-sold by qty
Weddings	+20-30% buffer	Always more	Buy extra for wow-factor + seconds
Markets	Prep small batches	Double or triple	Refill inventory through day

Quick Reference Event Strategies

Pricing isn't just about covering costs. It's about understanding what people value. A bride is willing to pay extra to see a table dripping with fresh roses and fig halves. A dad throwing a backyard BBQ isn't.

Event Type	How They Evaluate Price	How You Should Price
Private	Out of personal wallet	Price by board size or guest
Corporate	Less price sensitive	Add fees for branding, delivery
Weddings	Emotional, visual driven	Price by person or linear foot
Markets	Price sticker shock	Keep impulse buys under \$15



Worksheet: Match the event to your offer

This simple exercise will keep you from pitching the wrong product at the wrong time. Here is a breakdown of recommended products for particular event types.

Event Type	Best Product Fit	Why?
Birthday	Medium boards	Feels generous, affordable
Office party	Boxes or cups	Easy to distribute, low cleanup
Wedding	Grazing table	Stunning centerpiece, photo-ready
Pop-up fair	Cones & small boxes	Quick sales, low per-unit price

A Final Note: Always Ask About Expectations

Never assume. Your client may say “small party” but expect a lush spread that replaces dinner. Or a corporate manager may say “about 30 people” but want extras for employees working late.

Three essential questions to ask every client:

1. Is this meant to be the entire meal, or a light snack?
2. Are you expecting leftovers, or do you want just enough?
3. Will people be serving themselves all at once, or grazing over hours?

Knowing the answers will save you from embarrassment – and keep your margins healthy.

Adapt or Struggle

Not all events are created equal when it comes to profitability, so it's important to plan accordingly. Weddings offer the opportunity to scale both your visual presentation and your pricing – they're where your lavish tables and premium ingredients can shine, and clients expect to pay more for that kind of experience.

Corporate office events are more about simplicity and convenience; here, it's all about clean presentation, easy distribution, and sometimes charging extra for branded touches like labeled boxes or custom inserts.

When it comes to backyard parties, it's often best to keep things down to earth. These clients may love the idea of a grazing table, but often, a beautifully styled board or a few shareable boxes will meet the moment – and the budget.

As for markets and pop-up events, the key is speed, volume, and price. People are making snap decisions, so smaller, lower-cost items like cones or cups tend to move quickly. Understanding the difference between these types of events helps you offer the right product at the right price – and ensures your energy is going where the money is.





Chapter 3

How to Purchase - How Much, What to Buy, and How to Shop Smart

Most charcuterie business owners love the thrill of shopping. It's fun to pick out vibrant berries, smell wedges of creamy brie, or snag a few impulse treats you think might look pretty on the board. But behind the magic of your cart or grazing table is the serious backbone of your business: how you buy and where you source.

Let's get real for a second - guessing may be killing your profits. Most charcuterie business owners start by winging it. They think, "Oh, I'll just pick up a few wedges of cheese, a couple packs of salami, a box of crackers. Should be plenty."

Then they show up at the event — and the board looks half-empty. Or worse, they overbuy, end up with \$80 in leftover goat cheese and sweaty strawberries that can't be salvaged.

This chapter is all about helping you shift from thinking like a hobbyist—buying whatever strikes your fancy—to a true business owner who purchases with purpose. That doesn't mean sacrificing your creative spark. In fact, learning to source intentionally and buy in exactly the right quantities is what lets you keep doing this long term, without the stress of wasted money or spoiled leftovers.

We'll talk about how to decide what ingredients to buy at grocery stores versus bulk suppliers, why seasonality matters for both flavor and your bottom line, and how to think about packaging costs (hint: they're often the sneaky margin killers). You'll also see why it pays to develop relationships with local cheesemongers or small farms—often they'll give you early access to deals or ideas that make your offerings stand out.

By the end of this chapter, you'll start shopping differently. Instead of wandering the aisles hoping inspiration strikes, you'll walk in with confidence, knowing exactly what to pick up, how much of it you need, and how it all fits into your pricing so your business stays solidly in the black.

Portion planning 101

Here's a baseline formula you can adjust for almost any event.

This is for a light meal replacement or a hearty appetizer. If your board is meant to be a nibble before dinner, you can cut these roughly by a third.

Item	Portion Per Person
Cheese	2 oz
Meat	2 oz
Crackers/Bread	3 oz
Fruit	3-4 pieces or 2 oz
Nuts	2 tbsp

"Open House Disaster"

Kristin, a real estate agent, hired a new charcuterie company for her luxury home showing. They made a stunning display — but only planned for half an ounce of cheese per person. It was demolished in twenty minutes. The result? Hungry guests who trickled out faster than they came in. Kristin never hired them again.



Sample shopping lists by event type

Let's build out real-world shopping examples for you. These are approximate and should always be adjusted by seasonality (berries in June are cheaper than December), regional pricing, and the style you offer.

Example 1: A 10-person private brunch board

Customer says: “This is the whole brunch – no other food. We want it pretty, but not wedding-level.”

Shopping List

Product	Quantity	Notes
Brie	1 wheel (8 oz)	Centerpiece, drizzle honey
Cheddar	8 oz	Cubes, mild for kids
Gouda	8 oz	Slices, color contrast
Salami	12 oz	Roll into roses
Prosciutto	8 oz	Drape for texture
Grapes	2 lbs	Red & green mix
Strawberries	1 lb	Halved, leaf on
Crackers	12 oz (3 boxes)	Variety (seeded, butter, wheat)
Almonds	4 oz	Scatter for texture
Honey	Small jar	Drizzle or mini dipper
Fresh herbs	1 bunch	Rosemary for decoration

Estimated cost breakdown

Category	Est. Total Cost
Cheese	\$15
Meat	\$12
Produce	\$9
Crackers	\$7
Nuts/Honey/Herbs	\$5
Total Food	\$48

Apply your markup (3.5x typical), this becomes roughly a \$170 board.



Example 2: 50-person wedding cocktail grazing table

Customer says: “This is during cocktail hour. We’ll have passed hors d’oeuvres after, but we want a big ‘wow’ when guests walk in.”

Shopping list

Product	Quantity	Notes
Brie	3 wheels (24 oz)	Stack them for impact
Manchego	2 lbs	Sliced
Cheddar	2 lbs	Cubes
Blue cheese	1 lb	Crumbles in mini bowls
Salami	4 lbs	Mix with hard soppressata
Prosciutto	3 lbs	Drape
Grapes	5 lbs	Both colors
Berries	3 lbs	Mix of strawberries, blackberries
Dried apricots	1 lb	Color and texture
Nuts	2 lbs	Almonds + candied pecans
Crackers/Bread	8 boxes + 2 baguettes	Slice baguettes on site
Honey, fig jam	2 jars each	In mini bowls
Fresh herbs	3 bunches	To tuck into edges
Greenery	2 bags eucalyptus	Or floral shop scraps

Estimated food cost for wedding grazing table 50 people



Category	Est. Total Cost
Cheese	\$55
Meat	\$55
Produce	\$30
Crackers/Bread	\$20
Nuts/Jams/Herbs	\$15
Total Food	\$175

With 3.5x markup: roughly a \$600+ grazing table.

Example 3: 100 cups for a farmers market

Customer says: "People will be walking around with these. Keep it simple."

Shopping List

Product	Quantity	Notes
Cheese cubes	8 lbs total	Mix cheddar, gouda, jack
Salami slices	6 lbs	Folded into triangles
Grapes	8 lbs	A few in each cup
Crackers	3 boxes	Snap into smaller pieces
Almonds	2 lbs	Small pinch in each cup

Portion per cup

- 1 oz cheese (3 cubes)
- 1 oz meat (3 slices)
- 2-3 grapes, 1 tomato, 3 olives
- 1-2 small cracker pieces
- Pinch of nuts



Estimated cost

Category	Est. Total Cost
Cheese & Meat	\$80
Produce	\$12
Crackers/Nuts	\$10
Cups/skewers	\$15
Total Food + Packaging	\$117

At \$10/cup = \$1000 gross. That's a pretty healthy margin.

As you can see, purchasing isn't just about filling a cart...it's about making smart, strategic decisions that protect your profit and support your workflow. By understanding how much to buy, what ingredients offer the best value and shelf life, and where to source them reliably, you set yourself up for smooth prep days and consistent quality. The more intentional you are with your buying habits, the more confident you'll be in your pricing — and the more money you'll keep in your pocket. Smart shopping is the secret sauce behind every profitable charcuterie business.



Chapter 4

Buying & Pricing for Charcuterie Carts

Charcuterie carts are basically a pop-up shop on wheels. We have separated buying and pricing for carts into it's own chapter because the cart has many factors that give your business a unique retail opportunity and lets you reach customers at farmers markets, wedding cocktail hours, breweries, hotel lobbies, or private parties.



Charcuterie carts are wildly popular for good reason—they're portable, adorable, and let people experience your gorgeous spreads up close. Markets, pop-ups, brewery nights, and local festivals are also incredible ways to build your brand, reach new customers, and book bigger private events down the line. But they're also risky if you don't understand how to price for them.

Charcuterie Profit Secrets

Unlike weddings or pre-ordered grazing tables where your payout is locked in before you buy a single wedge of cheese, markets and public cart events rely entirely on real-time sales. That means you could sell out in two hours—or end up packing boxes of leftover cups into your fridge at the end of the day, hoping to offload them on Instagram tomorrow.

This chapter is going to help you price and plan for carts like the pro you're becoming. We'll talk through how to decide on your per-cup or per-box pricing, factoring in not just the direct food costs but your time, vendor fees, and even the hours you'll spend standing on asphalt in the sun. You'll learn why a slightly higher price is often safer, even if it feels scarier, and how to plan your inventory so you can scale up or slow down mid-event without waste.

We'll also look at little psychology tricks—like combo offers or “VIP upgrades”—that subtly raise your average sale without customers blinking twice. By the end of this chapter, you'll walk into any public event with calm confidence, knowing your pricing is set up to cover every last grape, toothpick, and minute of your time.



Wanna start a charcuterie cart business? So you know...we also offer cart builds and all the training and marketing to get it *"rolling"* and earning. **Learn more at [GrazingBiz.com](https://www.GrazingBiz.com).**

Helpful Comparison Chart for Public vs. Private Events with a Charcuterie Cart

	Public Events (Markets, Fairs, Pop-Ups)	Private Events (Weddings, Corporate, Parties)
How you charge	Per cup or box (\$8–\$15 each)	By headcount (\$18–\$25/person), by hour, or by foot
When you get paid	Day of, pay-as-you-go	In advance (often deposit + final payment)
Sales volume certainty	Completely unpredictable	Guaranteed volume & income
Buying strategy	Buy bulk ingredients, prep in stages, restock cart as needed	Buy exact amounts for guest count + small overage
Ingredient choices	Favor stable, long-lasting cheeses, fruits & meats that hold up outdoors	Can include delicate cheeses, florals, honeycombs
Goal for costs	Food & packaging = ~25-30% of retail price	Controlled cost planned against fixed income
Main advantage	Brand exposure, cash flow, testing new ideas	Predictable profit, big payouts, stunning displays
Main risk	Low turnout = leftover stock & wasted prep	Requires more detailed contracts & advance planning

Understanding Pricing & Buying: Public Events vs. Private Events

Let's discuss the various options for pricing your cart products for a public event verses a private event for your charcuterie cart.

Charcuterie Carts for Public events – charging *per cup or box* (and why your buying strategy changes)

When you take your charcuterie cart to a public event – a farmers market, art festival, brewery night, or pop-up fair – you're essentially running a small retail shop for the day. People walk by, see your cart, and decide on the spot whether to buy. That means:

- You're pricing per serving, typically under \$15 to encourage impulse buys.
- You have no guaranteed sales volume. Some days you might sell 200 cups, some days only 60.
- You pay a booth fee or vendor fee (often \$50–\$300 depending on the event).

Because of this unpredictability, your buying approach is totally different. You'll:

- Prep enough ingredients to fill cups or boxes in small batches.
- Store extra stock in coolers and restock the cart as needed.
- Choose hard cheeses, salami, and fruits that can hold up for hours without refrigeration.

Your profit depends on hitting the sweet spot where your average cost per cup (including food, packaging, time, and vendor fees) is around 25-30% of your retail price. If you sell a cup for \$10, your total cost to produce should ideally be \$2.50–\$3.00.

This model is amazing for brand exposure, gathering social media followers, and testing new menu ideas – but it requires smart inventory control to avoid overbuying or costly waste.



IMPORTANT NOTE: Do your best to ask the event organizer (and research on your own) about the anticipated attendance of the crowd for the event before you go shopping. And then check out this quick reference table to determine how much to prep for anticipated crowd attendance size.

Expected Attendance	Plan To Sell	Buy This Much (double prep rule)
1000 Attendees	Aim for 10-15% conversion of the anticipated attendees (100-150 sales in this example)	Prep ingredients for 300 servings, keep half in coolers to restock

Most carts can control costs best when they sell preset products with predetermined ingredient vs. allowing people to pick and choose from your cart what they want. You will have much better control over how much to buy and how much to charge by going this route. If they remove the nuts, you will charge the same. Or, you could choose to replace a product by doubling up the dried fruit or adding an extra cookie or sweet treat, but don't give two salami roses to make up for someone who says they do not want nuts. That is not an even cost trade. Make sense?

Here are some suggestions on pricing out your products on a cart:

- Cups or cones: \$8-\$12 each
- Mini boxes: \$12-\$20 each
- Add-ons: sparkling water, lemonade, ice tea, dipped pretzels or strawberries, chocolate bark. *Hint:* Dry drink mixes - like ice tea or lemonade - can be huge cash cows!!!

This way you now can control how much to prepare because you know each one of your servings are exactly the same (for the most part). How much to prepare will depend on headcount estimates per the table above.

Charcuterie Carts for Private events

Charging by *headcount, how long you are there, and time of day* (and why it's guaranteed income)

A wedding cocktail hour, corporate holiday mixer, or big birthday bash is a totally different business model. You're hired to show up, feed a set number of people, and often stay for a set number of hours.

Here's what makes it different:

- You get paid up front, often weeks or months before the event.
- Your price is typically based on:
 - Per person: e.g. \$18-\$25/person for a grazing table or cart.
 - Per hour: e.g. \$400/hour with a 2-hour minimum.

This means your buying is precisely planned. If you're serving 100 guests, you buy exactly enough cheese, meats, fruit, nuts, and crackers to cover 100 people – plus about 10-15% extra to handle heavier grazers and keep the cart looking abundant.

You're also free to use more delicate cheeses and add decorative touches (like brie wheels with honeycombs or fresh florals) because you control the timing, serving style, and environment.

Why Private vs. Public Matters for Your Purchasing Strategy

If you try to run your public cart like a private event – by buying tons of premium cheeses, prepping elaborate boards, and hoping people buy enough to cover it – you'll often lose money. You can't control how many people show up or how quickly they buy.

Likewise, if you price a private wedding based on your \$10-per-cup market rate, you'll severely undercharge. A wedding isn't buying one serving – they're buying an experience, the display, the guaranteed service, and your dedicated time onsite. Inevitably, you'll have a budget that you are requested to stay within, but that does not mean you need to take a beating on the event. In fact, it really could be the opposite. You have much more control over waste when you are given a budget, and you can offer to leave any leftovers too, which will give your customer assurance that they will be getting everything they pay for, one way or another.

What you'll be buying. A typical cart's purchase list looks like this for 100 servings:

Charcuterie Profit Secrets

Item	For 100 cups	Notes
Cheese	8 lbs	Mix 2-3 types
Salami	6 lbs	Easy to roll/fold
Grapes	8 lbs	Holds up all day
Crackers	3 boxes	Pre-snap into halves
Nuts	2 lbs	Almonds or pistachios
Strawberries	2 lbs	Only if under canopy
Honey sticks	50-100	Fun upsell

Example cart cost + price breakdown selling 100 cups at \$10 each = \$1,000 gross

Item	Qty	Cost
Cheese	8 lbs	\$64
Salami	6 lbs	\$42
Grapes	8 lbs	\$24
Crackers	3 boxes	\$12
Nuts	2 lbs	\$16
Cones	100	\$35
Napkins, stickers, decor	—	\$20
Total cost	—	\$213

Profit: \$787 before market fees, gas, and labor, but still a very healthy margin.

Special price considerations for carts

- Always check local licensing and health codes for mobile food sales. You may need a special cart inspection, handwashing station, or additional permits. These will factor into your event costs.
- Build in a small cart fee when doing private events (setup, transport, tear down). Many people underestimate the labor of rolling out a cart vs dropping off boxes.

Quick tips for cart success

- Always stage small. An overflowing cart sells more than a half-empty one – even if you have the same amount of product in coolers.
- Upsell drinks or small sweet packs.
- Use a portable card reader (Square, Clover, Stripe) so people impulse buy without cash.
- Smile and stand close to the cart – energy sells. An unattended cart is invisible.
- Plan to buy 2x your expected traffic, staging throughout the day.
- Keep food costs low by sticking to sturdy basics: cheddar, gouda, salami, grapes, almonds.
- Price for quick “yes” decisions: under \$15 per cup/box.
- Always have extra when possible – running out early is lost money.
- Depending on the event type, you may be able to pre-slice or cube all your cheese and make your salami roses at home or commissary kitchen before the event. ******Be sure to check or local health code regulations to determine if you can prep perishable food ahead of time for your cart business!!!***
- Roll your salami into roses or simple folds, keep them layered in deli containers.
- Keep everything in coolers. Only load 10-20 cones or boxes on the cart at once. Keep in mind that the more you add to the cart container, the harder it will be to keep the temps under 41 degrees fahrenheit. So, keep amounts at minimums within the containers on your cart and plan to replenish every 30-45 minutes so it stays visually abundant, but also temperature controlled.



How to keep costs predictable

- Always shop with a calculator and notes from previous events.
- Count or weigh standard cheese wedges/cubes/slices and salami roses (and for all items you purchase by the package) to get a sense for how many slices/servings you get per package. Do this ahead of time and track this in a table to keep handy. This will help you with purchasing for any size event in the future.
- **Example:** If you know that you will create a rose out of 5 salami slices, determine ahead of time how many roses you can make from a package of Costco dry salami. Now you know how many packages you need to buy based on the recommendations in this chapter. Do this for all prepackaged items you usually buy.
- Remember, how much you buy will be based on how you create your offer/product. If you give everyone a cup or cone who comes to your cart, and each cup has 1 salami rose and 3 slices of cheddar, 2 wedges of brie, 5 grapes, 3 crackers, a tablespoon of nuts, and 1 cookie - and you follow this counting recommendation - you should be able to determine exactly how much to purchase based on headcount or attendee numbers and in turn, understand how much you should prepare and charge to make a large profit.
- Track waste. If you consistently throw out 20% of grapes, reduce next time.



Key take-aways for Cart Pricing:

Public events (charging by cup/box):

- Low per-unit price, high volume, unpredictable sales.
- Buy to stage and restock, using sturdy ingredients.
- Goal: keep total food + packaging costs at 25-30% of your retail price.

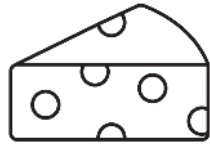
Private events (charging by headcount, hours on site, and time of day):

- Guaranteed money, pre-booked volume.
- Buy precisely for guest count + hours on site and whether it's dinner or just appetizers.
- Allows more specialty ingredients and show-stopping setups.

Become the Cart Champion

Charcuterie carts are show-stoppers and with the right strategy, they can be profit-makers too. Whether you're charging per cup at a public event or quoting by the hour for a private wedding, success comes down to precise planning and smart buying. Understanding your portions, knowing your crowd, and adjusting your pricing model to fit the occasion are what keep your cart moving and your margins healthy. The key is flexibility: tailor your ingredients, packaging, and pricing to match the vibe and value of the event. With the right prep, your cart becomes more than a cute setup...it becomes a revenue-generating powerhouse on wheels.





Chapter 5

Your Charcuterie Pricing – The Math & Hidden Costs

When most people dream about starting a charcuterie business, they picture the fun parts: swirling slices of prosciutto into delicate ribbons, arranging jewel-toned berries between wedges of brie, maybe sprinkling edible flowers across a lush wooden board. And that is absolutely part of the magic. But the secret reality – the thing that makes or breaks whether this stays a beloved hobby or grows into a thriving business – is all in the math that happens behind the scenes.

Pricing is where your creativity meets your calculator. It's where you turn art into income. It's also, candidly, where so many hopeful charcuterie business owners falter. They might price a beautiful board at \$75 thinking, "This feels fair, it covers the cheese and meats, right?" only to realize later that they forgot to include the cost of the crackers, the honey jar, the sprigs of rosemary, or the time they spent driving to three different stores to find ripe figs. By the time the event is over, they've poured hours into something that paid them pennies – or worse, nothing at all.

The math matters. Not because you're destined to become an accountant (you absolutely won't). But because it gives you power. When you understand how to break down every part of your pricing – the visible costs like meats and cheeses, the hidden ones like gas and packaging, and even the harder-to-quantify expenses like your time and your skill – you can set your rates with calm confidence. You'll never again hesitate when a client asks, "Can you send over a quote?" because you'll know exactly why your boards cost what they do.

Most people get into charcuterie because they love styling beautiful boards, feeding people, and hearing guests say, *"Wow, this is gorgeous!"*

But pretty boards don't pay the bills. Profitable boards do.

In fact, the biggest killer of small charcuterie businesses isn't lack of talent – it's underpricing. Owners fail to charge enough to cover all the *actual* costs (including their own time and sanity).

By the end of this chapter, you'll know exactly:

- How to calculate your costs
- The different pricing models for boards, tables, cups, boxes, and carts
- All the sneaky expenses that eat into margins
- How to confidently set prices that protect your business (and your peace of mind)

This chapter is going to take you by the hand through all those details. We'll look at how to calculate your actual costs, how to add a markup that ensures you're not just covering expenses but actually turning a healthy profit, and why certain overlooked factors (like the cost of your gorgeous boxes or the handfuls of extra fruit you always keep on hand "just in case") quietly eat away at your margins if you're not careful.

The Foundation: Your Real Cost per Product

It starts by knowing exactly what it costs to create your product. This means more than just your cheese and meat bill.

Actual costs include:

Cost Type	Examples
Food	Cheese, meats, fruit, nuts, crackers
Packaging	Boxes, cups, cones, napkins, stickers
Decor	Flowers, fresh herbs, small signage
Operations	Fuel for delivery, ice packs, coolers, licenses
Labor	Your time to shop, prep, style, clean up

"The Undercharging Disaster"

Mia priced her medium boards at \$65, thinking “that seems fair.” After her first six orders, she realized she was spending \$48 just on ingredients and packaging — not including the three hours to shop, prep, and clean up. By the time she finished her calculations, she was making about \$3 an hour. Ouch.

A Basic Pricing Formula to Protect Yourself

Here's a simple way to start:

(Total food + packaging + decor cost) x 3.5 markup = retail price

That 3.5 multiplier covers your time, taxes, business overhead, little mistakes (like that time the dog ran off with your prosciutto), and leaves you with a healthy profit.

Why 3.5x Costs?

It might sound steep, but remember:

- Grocery stores mark up cheese by 50-100%.
- Restaurants often price menu items at 3-4x the ingredient cost.
- You're not just selling cheese. You're selling convenience, expertise, style, time, and a memorable experience.

Pricing Models by Product Types

By now you know that not all products/services you offer should be priced the same. Let's hit home a few key things to remember when you price your different offers.

Boards: price by size or headcount

Most common for casual parties and realtor events.

- 12" board for 4-6 people = \$130
- 16" board for 8-12 people = \$200

Easy to market on your website with pretty photos.

Grazing tables: Price by person or by foot

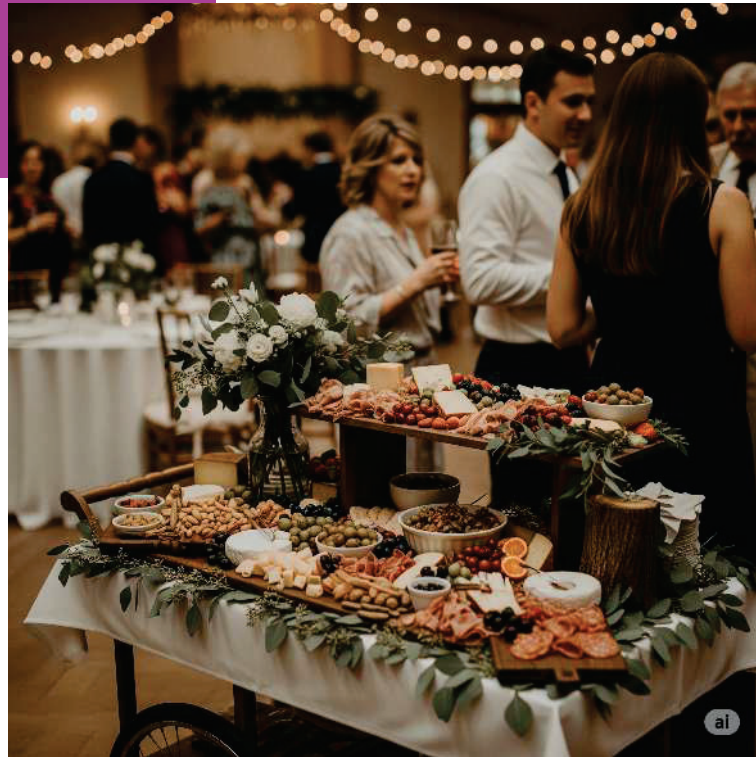
For large events, you'll either:

- Price per person (typical is \$20-\$30), or
- Price by linear foot (typical is \$75-\$100 per foot of table length).

This makes it easy when a client says, *"We have 80 people."* You just do the math.

"The Upsell Power of "By-the-Foot"

Carlos in Denver quoted a bride \$1,500 for a 6-foot table. At the tasting, she loved it so much she added two more feet. Simple math: $\$250/\text{foot} \times 8 \text{ feet} = \$2,000$. Carlos didn't have to re-quote or justify — it was clear from the start.



Cups & boxes: price per piece

Perfect for offices, markets, party favors.

- Cups: \$8-\$12
- Boxes: \$12-\$20
- Don't forget to build packaging and printing into this price. A cute branded sticker and a sturdy box might cost \$1.50 each.



Carts: Price for impulse at public events

You're targeting fast "yes" decisions.

- Keep most items under \$15.
- Offer combo deals (3 cones + sparkling water for \$30).

(see Chapter 4 for more pricing tips on carts)



Charcuterie Profit Secrets

Hidden Cost	Typical Range
Fuel & delivery	\$10-\$20/trip
Time shopping	1-2 hours
Setup labor	1-4 hours
Insurance & licenses	Varies by state
Ice packs, coolers	\$2-\$5 per event
Credit card fees	~3% per transaction

Worksheet: Build your true cost

Cost Component	Amount
Total food cost	
Packaging & decor	
Delivery/gas	
Labor (your time) @ \$20/hr	
Licensing/insurance slice	
Total cost	
Retail @ x3.5	

When to add flat fees

For Grazing Tables:

- Setup fee (\$75-\$200)
- Tear-down fee if you stay to clean up.
- Florals fee if providing premium blooms.

For Carts:

- Booking fee (\$100-\$300) for private events.
- Includes moving it, decorating it, hauling it back.

For Distance:

- Delivery fee beyond your main radius.
- Example: free within 10 miles, then \$1.50/mile.



Pricing Psychology: How Customers Actually Think

A bride shopping for a grazing table cares about the aesthetics and the emotion of the display – she’s imagining how it will look in her photos and how her guests will gasp when they walk in, not obsessing over how many ounces of manchego you’ve used.

Meanwhile, an office HR manager planning a corporate meeting is focused on sticking to a budget, getting clear invoices, and maybe impressing the boss with something on-brand; they’re not paying extra just for floral sprigs and honeycomb.

Then there’s the family at a farmers market strolling past your cart – they’re instinctively comparing your \$12 charcuterie cone to a \$5 fresh lemonade and deciding in a split second if your product feels worth the upgrade.

This is exactly why your pricing model has to adapt to speak to what each type of customer values most. For weddings, you’ll lean on lush, overflowing photos and language like “priced by the foot,” creating that sense of indulgence. For offices, you’ll offer straightforward per-box rates and even highlight ways to add logos or brand colors. And when you’re out at markets or festivals, simple signs that shout “Any cup \$10” make the choice easy and quick.

Knowing how to tailor your approach is what ensures your pricing resonates, no matter who’s standing in front of you.

Secrets to Up-charging; Add Value and Earn More

Added value helps you to earn even more by up-charging. Here are some great examples on how to add value that are inexpensive, yet you can charge more so you can earn more.



Up-charging Ideas to Grow Your Income:

Scenario	How you Up-charge
Client requests premium cheeses (like truffle gouda, manchego, burrata)	You add a specialty cheese fee (e.g. +\$30 per table)
They want fresh florals or eucalyptus runners on the table	Charge a floral decor fee (covers flowers + your styling time)
They ask for logo branded cookies, picks, or boxes	Add a custom packaging / branding fee
Extra portion sizes ("Can you make these cones <i>really loaded?</i> ")	Increase per serving price from \$10 to \$14
Request for staff to stay & serve for 3 hours vs drop-off	Charge an hourly staffing rate (\$75/hr extra)
Last-minute booking (under 5 days notice)	Add a rush fee

20 Hot Tips to Test Your Prices Without Losing Business

- 1. Gradually increase prices by 10-15% each season.**
Most clients won't notice small incremental bumps — they'll just accept it.
- 2. Offer a “premium” option alongside your standard board.**
Let customers self-select. You'll learn if there's demand for a \$300 board with fancier cheeses.
- 3. Bundle a small add-on (like mini jam jars or crackers) into a slightly higher price.**
It adds perceived value without huge extra cost.
- 4. Use limited-time “launch specials.”**
Raise prices after the promo ends. This creates urgency, lets you measure demand, then sets a higher base.
- 5. Split your boards into “everyday” vs. “luxury” lines.**
Like a \$95 weekday board vs. a \$150 weekend celebration board.
- 6. Charge more for same-day or rush orders.**
It subtly tests if people will pay a premium under pressure.
- 7. Offer volume discounts only above certain thresholds.**
E.g. “Order 5 boards and get 5% off.” This maintains strong margins on singles.
- 8. Test your pricing in different ZIP codes.**
Deliveries to luxury neighborhoods can bear higher pricing.
- 9. Add an optional “customization fee.”**
E.g. +\$25 to have a special cheese cut-out letter or themed shape.
- 10. Quote slightly higher when very booked.**
When your calendar's already full, quote +15%. If they say yes — you've validated higher pricing.
- 11. Use “starting at” language on your menu.**
This signals flexibility and gives you room to quote higher for add-ons.
- 12. Charge extra for branded or logo picks, boxes, or edible prints.**
A subtle test to see if corporate or party clients pay a premium.
- 13. Offer seasonal features at a slightly higher price.**
Holiday boards, Valentine's brie, summer fruit overloads — people pay more for themed experiences.
- 14. Try pricing by headcount vs by board size.**
See which feels more comfortable for clients (and which nets better margins).
- 15. Introduce a minimum order value for delivery.**
Test it by increasing from \$75 to \$100 — see if clients adjust without pushback.
- 16. Frame your price around convenience.**
“Only \$14/person for a stunning graze delivered to your door.” Testing per-person language often feels more digestible.
- 17. Use “early bird” or “book by X date” pricing.**
Raise your rates after the cut-off, which naturally tests what people will pay last minute.
- 18. Charge by linear foot for grazing tables.**
Try moving from \$85/ft to \$95/ft for your next proposal and gauge acceptance.
- 19. Offer a new upsell like chocolate-covered strawberries or dessert add-ons at a premium.**
If they sell well, you know your customers are comfortable paying more.
- 20. Raise prices on new inquiries first, while keeping repeat client rates stable.**
New leads don't know your old pricing — so you can test higher without risking loyalty.

"The Market Mistake That Paid Off"

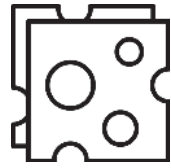
Jamie took her cart to her first festival and priced her cones at \$6. She sold out in three hours — and realized people would have paid \$10 easily.

The next event she tested \$9 cones and still sold out, with nearly double the profit. Testing matters!

Advice to Price Right to Earn Profits with Confidence

Here are a few tips and advice to price for the most profits at every event or order:

- Know your true costs — not just the cheese.
- Use a clear markup (3.5-4x) to protect your business.
- Charge extra for what's extra: flowers, delivery, distant venues.
- Be brave. Underpricing to get business just makes you broke and exhausted.
- Small orders (boards for <20 people): Costco or local grocery with a good deli is perfectly fine. You'll pay more, but no minimum orders.
- Tables & large events: Check local restaurant supply, cash & carry places like Smart Foodservice, or wholesalers like US Foods or Sysco.
- Markets & high-volume: Build relationships with local farms for fruit, specialty cheesemakers, and buy dry goods by the case online (Webstaurant, Uline for boxes).



Chapter 6

Tools and Ingredient Sourcing to Make Your Buying & Pricing Easy

One of the most overwhelming parts of running a charcuterie business, especially in the early days, is figuring out where to buy everything. From meats and cheeses to crackers, cups, boxes, and those perfect little gold forks, it can feel like a scavenger hunt just to prepare a single order. But sourcing doesn't have to be stressful. In fact, once you know which tools help streamline your buying decisions — and which stores or suppliers consistently offer the best bang for your buck — shopping becomes strategic, not scatterbrained.

Let's be real. Running a charcuterie business isn't just about pretty boards and Instagram stories...it's about:

- Managing costs
- Keeping accurate orders
- Avoiding last-minute grocery panic
- sProtecting your time and profit

And by the way...here at the Charcuterie Launch Lab, we have all the tools you need to start and grow your charcuterie business, including coaching, websites, payment processors, calendars, calculators and AI board building prompts to help you source, price, and market online to make huge profits!

Learn more at : GrazingBiz.com/Launch

This chapter will walk you through the smart ways to plan your ingredient runs, the tech and templates, calculators and worksheets that simplify inventory and pricing, and our favorite go-to sources (both in-person and online) for finding everything you need to serve, style, and sell — without breaking the bank.

Best Places to Source Ingredients In-Store

Local stores can often beat big-box retailers when it comes to freshness, seasonal variety, and specialty items — especially for cheeses, fruits, and baked goods.

- **Restaurant supply stores** (like Smart & Final or Restaurant Depot) are fantastic for bulk nuts, meats, and cheeses. You'll often save more per ounce than traditional grocery chains — especially if you're doing large events or high-volume boxes.
- **Warehouse clubs** like Costco and Sam's Club are goldmines for high-quality staples at lower prices. Their sliced meats, hard cheeses, and crackers are consistent and easy to portion.
- **Trader Joe's and Aldi** offers specialty cheeses and spreads at budget-friendly prices with beautiful packaging — great for boutique-style boards.
- **Sprouts, Whole Foods, and local grocers** are where you'll find unique seasonal fruits, honeycomb, edible flowers, and gourmet extras that add high-end flair.
- **Farmers markets** are excellent for sourcing local, artisanal cheeses, breads, and even small-batch jams or pickled veggies that can become a signature item for your boards.

Where to Buy Packaging and Serving Supplies

Packaging is part of your brand — and it's also a cost you need to track! Here's where to look for boxes, cups, trays, utensils, and labels:

- **Uline** is a solid choice for boxes, cups, gloves, deli sheets, and bulk paper goods.
- **WebstaurantStore.com** offers restaurant-grade packaging, from charcuterie cups to plastic mini forks to eco-friendly bamboo trays.
- **Amazon** (with care!) can be great for quick reorders of cello bags, stickers, and themed accessories — just watch shipping costs and product consistency.
- **Papermart.com** is fantastic for gift-style packaging, tissue paper, and ribbons for elevated presentation.
- **Etsy** is perfect for finding custom stickers, logo stamps, or packaging with a boutique vibe — especially when you want something unique.

Your basic event planning worksheet

Use this for *any event*, whether it's a small board, a giant wedding grazing table, or a pop-up cart day.

Charcuterie Profit Secrets

Create columns on your worksheet for: Event Type, Location, Guest Count, Product Type, Add-Ons, Delivery Time, Set up Time Needed, Tear-Down Time, Notes and Quoted Price (sample below small, but productive)

NOTE: Since it's a large table we are smashing into this page, we broke down the column headers for you above.

Event Type	Location	Guest Count	Main Product Type	Add-ons (flowers, branding, desserts)	Delivery Time	Setup Time Needed	Tear-down Time	Notes (dietary requests, theme colors, surprises)	Quoted Price
Wedding	The Hilton	200	Charcuterie Cart	Western Theme	4:00 PM	1 hour	1 hour	Rustic	\$22/person plus set up

Shopping & quantity cheat sheet

Never walk into Costco or Restaurant Depot guessing again. Use something like this sheet to help you shop for profits!

Food Type	Portion Per Person	Total for 50 guests	Notes
Cheese	2 oz	6.25 lbs	Buy 3 types
Meat	2 oz	6.25 lbs	Mix hard & soft
Crackers/Bread	3 oz	9.4 lbs	Bread baskets add visual bulk
Fruit	2 oz (or 3-4 pieces)	6.25 lbs	Grapes, berries hold best
Nuts	2 tbsp	4 cups	Bulk bins are cheapest
Honey/Jam	1 tsp+	2 small jars	Display in mini bowls

Pricing Calculation Help from the GrazingBiz Sisters!

So you're not guessing (or underpricing) consider using our **Charcuterie Launch Lab calculator**. With our calculator, we do all the calculations after you add in your headcount and local prices. Here's a screenshot of the top portion of the calculator spreadsheet we offer. Simply add the number of people attending and prices for products in your area and get all the numbers you need to make money on your next order or event (and not lose it).

You can access our free calculator at <https://grazingbiz.com/earnwithcheese>

Charcuterie Board Calculator from GrazingBiz.com

Number of People Attending (5 - 200)

Recommended Size of Board or Table Large

Recommendations	oz/person	Total Amount (lb)
Amount of Meats	2	6.3
Amount of Cheese	2	6.3
Amount of Fruits	2	6.3
Amount of Nuts	1	3.1
Amount of Crackers/Breads	1	3.1

MEATS (Space To Clear)	Price/lbs (0 To Clear)	Pounds to Purchase	Cost/Meat
Salami	\$5.00	1.6	\$7.81
Ham/Proscuitto	\$5.00	1.6	\$7.81
Mortadella	\$5.00	1.6	\$7.81
Dry Sausage	\$5.00	1.6	\$7.81
	\$0.00		
	\$0.00		
	\$0.00		
	\$0.00		
Meat Totals		6.3	\$31.25

CHEESES (Space To Clear)	Price/lbs (0 To Clear)	Pounds to Purchase	Cost/Cheeses
Cheddar	\$5.00	1.6	\$7.81
Parmesan	\$5.00	1.6	\$7.81
Gouda	\$5.00	1.6	\$7.81
Brie	\$5.00	1.6	\$7.81
	\$0.00		
	\$0.00		
	\$0.00		
	\$0.00		
Cheese Totals		6.3	\$31.25

Fruits (Space To Clear)	Price/lbs (0 To Clear)	Pounds to Purchase	Cost/Fruits
Dried Fruit	\$4.00	1.6	\$6.25
Grapes	\$4.00	1.6	\$6.25
Berries	\$4.00	1.6	\$6.25
Pineapple	\$4.00	1.6	\$6.25
	\$0.00		

Your must-have prep checklist

Add in anything you know you will need for your business to the list below and plan to print this and tape it somewhere where you can have easy access to reference.

- ✓ Shopping list printed
- ✓ Cheese cut & prepped
- ✓ Salami rolled (roses, folds)
- ✓ Crackers sorted into baskets/boxes
- ✓ Fruit washed & dried
- ✓ Nuts portioned
- ✓ Herb bunches trimmed
- ✓ Boards / boxes / cones labeled & stacked
- ✓ Ice packs frozen
- ✓ Delivery gas tank full
- ✓ Invoice printed or emailed
- ✓ Payment received (or final due on delivery)

Create Quick pricing tables for fast quoting like this:

Guests	Small Event	Large Event (tables)
10	\$150	—
25	\$400	—
50	—	\$1,200
100	—	\$2,500

Here is an example table for cups and boxes

Cups / Boxes	Each	Total for 100
Cup	\$10	~\$1,000
Box	\$15	~\$1,500

Worksheet: prep day vs event day tasks

Task	Prep Day (before)	Event Day (morning)	On-Site
Cut & portion cheese	✓		
Roll meats	✓		
Wash & dry fruits	✓		
Style crackers		✓	
Assemble table or board			✓
Final drizzle/honey decor			✓

Notes on packaging & branding worksheets

Have a special section where you can list out:

Your cone suppliers (size, cost per piece)

Your box suppliers

Your sticker printer info

Social handle tags for branding



Planning Tools will Save Your Sanity and Increase Profits!

Imagine heading into wedding week not feeling frantic or foggy, but completely prepared with your entire shopping list already printed and ready to go. You've got a spreadsheet telling you exactly how many pounds of brie to buy, how many bags of crackers you'll need, and a clear final price that ensures you're actually making money instead of just looking busy. This level of organization isn't just nice to have...it's your sanity-saver.

Most charcuterie businesses that fail or burn out do so because they skip this part. They eyeball ingredients, undercharge, or scramble through prep day after day. But when you take the time to get your tools in place, you're not just protecting your profits, you're building a business that's sustainable, stress-free, and truly built to grow. This is your insurance policy against burnout and guesswork, and it will become one of the most valuable habits you build as a charcuterie entrepreneur.





Chapter 7

How to Reduce Waste, Shop Smarter, and Keep More Money in Your Pocket

Ask any seasoned charcuterie business owner what eats into profits most. It's not competitor pricing. It's not even delivery gas or stickers.

It's waste.

That half pint of raspberries that molds in two days. The leftover sliced gouda from last Saturday's grazing table that can't go on next week's wedding display. The crackers that go stale or break into unusable crumbs.

A few dollars here, a few ounces there, doesn't seem like much — until you do the math over a month.

In a business where your profit margins are tied directly to what you buy and what gets left behind on the prep table, waste is more than just annoying — it's expensive. Overbuying "just in case," tossing out unused ingredients, or watching premium items spoil before they're used is a quiet profit killer for many charcuterie businesses.

But it doesn't have to be that way. In this chapter, you'll learn how to shift from reactive shopping to strategic sourcing — buying only what you need, when you need it, and using every ounce wisely. We'll break down how to build smarter shopping routines, rotate inventory like a pro, and make decisions that not only keep your fridge organized but also keep more money in your bank account. Because the truth is, reducing waste isn't just good for the planet — it's great for your bottom line.

Hannah in Dallas catered three events in one weekend. She over-purchased berries “just to be safe,” figuring it’s always good to have extra. By Monday, she had nearly \$200 of mushy strawberries, blackberries, and blueberries that couldn’t be saved. That wiped out the profit from one of her small events. Lesson learned: it’s better to run slightly under and use smart substitutions, than to grossly overbuy perishable items.

Shop smarter: your essential habits

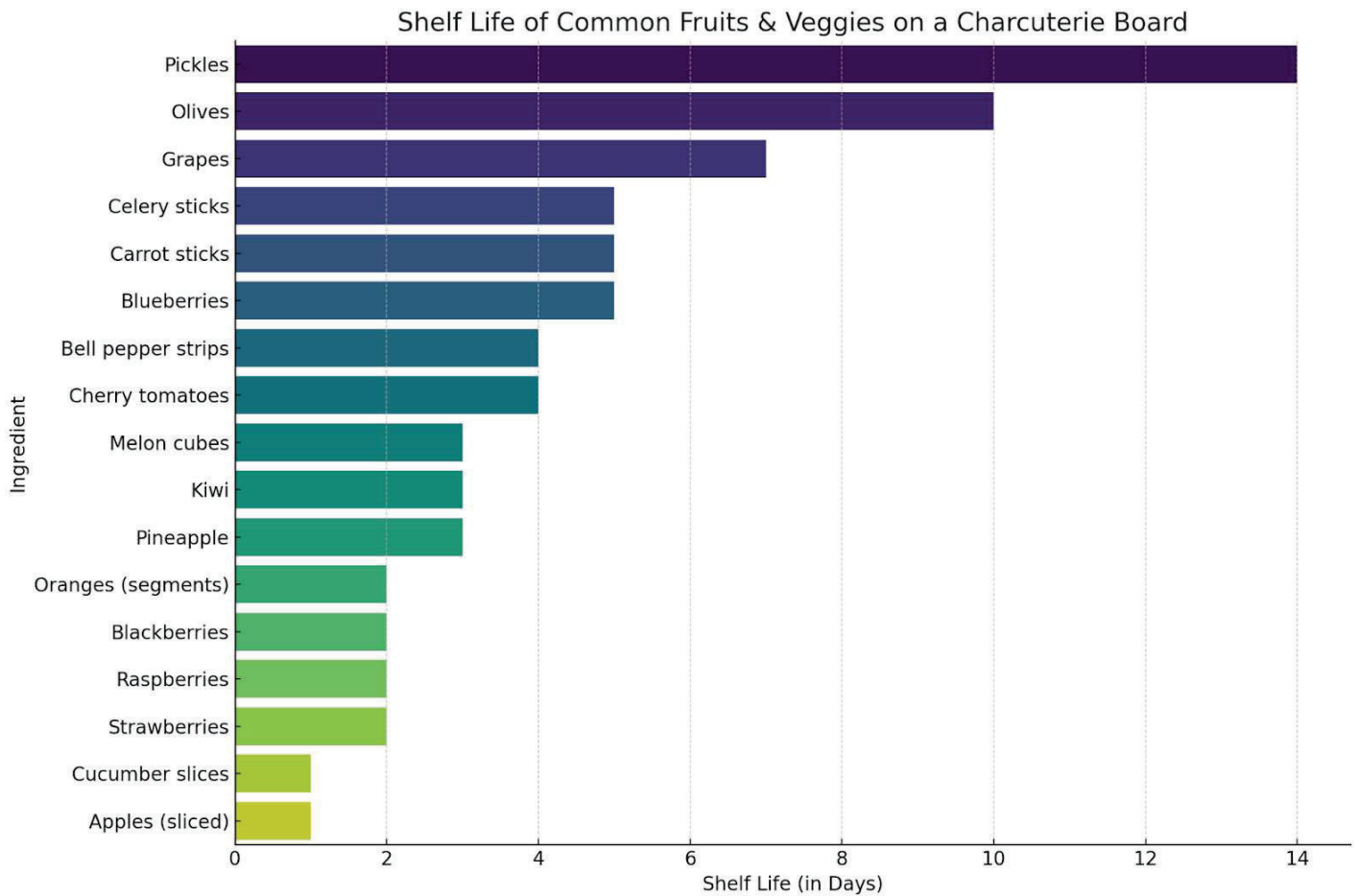
Here are some purchasing tips to help you reduce waste at your upcoming events:

1) Buy “harder” fruits & veggies

- Grapes last longer than berries.
- Mandarin oranges hold up better than soft strawberries.
- Baby carrots and sliced peppers stay crisp for crudités even after two days in the fridge.



Here is a chart showing the shelf life of common fruits and veggies used on charcuterie boards. You can use this to help plan your ingredient sourcing and reduce waste in your business.



2) Stick to firmer cheeses for markets & carts

- Aged gouda, cheddar, manchego, parmesan rinds – they hold shape and temperature longer.
- Save brie, camembert, or burrata for weddings and premium boards where they’ll be eaten quickly.

3) Only cut what you need

Slice cheese and prep fruit as close to the event as possible. That keeps leftover blocks and whole fruits viable for your next order.

4) Shop with your next week in mind

If you have:

- A wedding on Saturday with big wheels of brie,
- Followed by a market day Sunday selling cones, and then plan your Sunday cones to use up cubed leftover brie + fruit.

How to save leftovers and keep them profitable

Leftover Item	Save it by...	Next use
Cheese wedges	Vacuum seal or tight wrap	Next boards or small boxes
Rolled salami	Freeze in small batches	Pop into cones/cups later
Berries/grapes	Make compote or jam jars	Sell as add-on
Cracker crumbs	Mix with herbs for crostini topping	Use on house snacks

"The Day-Old Snack Hit"

Claire started boxing up leftover cheese and fruit odds into “Day-After Snack Packs” for \$8 each. Sold them on her Instagram stories the morning after big grazing tables – porch pickup only. They flew off her porch every time, turning what used to be trash into quick extra cash.



Reduce last-minute panic buying

Nothing destroys your margins like running back to the store because you forgot two wheels of brie.

- Always shop 48 hours before your event day. Gives you time to realize what you missed.
- Keep an *emergency stock* of stable cheeses (cheddar, gouda) in your fridge.
- Have decorative dry fillers on hand: pretzel sticks, breadsticks, nuts. They can bulk up any last-minute shortfall.

Waste-reducing portion control

Use small bowls, ramekins, and bundles of herbs to break up space on tables and boards. It looks luxurious but requires less cheese and meat.

Worksheets: your “waste audit” & next-week plan

Consider creating yourself a Waste-Audit worksheet to track how you are doing from event to event with your purchases and waste. This should significantly reduce future waste as you get a better understanding of what to expect for various events of all sizes and types:

Last Event Type	Leftover Cheese	Leftover Meat	Leftover Fruit	Total Waste \$	Plan to Reduce Next Time
Cart	3 lbs	2 lbs	2 baskets of grapes	\$40	Meats and cheeses for 100 person event

Use this after every event for 30 days. You’ll spot patterns fast – maybe you always overbuy grapes or underestimate crackers.



Set up a buying calendar

If you're busy enough to have multiple orders each week, create a small buying calendar like this:

Day	Prep or Buy	For Event On
Tuesday	Buy cheeses, nuts	Saturday
Thursday	Buy berries, herbs	Saturday
Friday	Prep salami, wash grapes	Saturday
Saturday	Final cut & style	Saturday

Smart habits to reduce waste

- Only shop with a written list – no impulse “this wedge looks fun.”
- Break down bulk items at home right away: split nuts into smaller containers, cut cheese into rough blocks.
- Keep greens (rosemary, eucalyptus) in a jar of water. They'll last weeks and still look great tucked on a board.
- Rotate your inventory. Oldest items get used first.

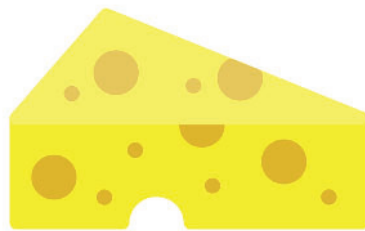
The Power of Tight Systems

Marcus did markets on Saturdays and booked boards for Sundays. At first he was constantly out of grapes or cheese, or overbuying. Once he implemented a buying calendar and did a quick waste audit every Sunday night, he cut his average leftover waste from \$90/week to under \$20. That money dropped straight into his bank account instead.

Summary: your leftover rule

A smart charcuterie business owner doesn't see leftovers as waste — they see them as opportunity. Instead of tossing unused meats, they freeze them for future grazing cups. Extra cheese? It can be vacuum sealed and kept fresh for the next event. Soft fruits that are just past their prime for display can be transformed into homemade jams or compotes. And don't overlook the power of quick-turn snack packs — bundle up leftover ingredients into next-day mini boxes and post them on social media as limited-time offers.

These little moves add up. Because every dollar you save from hitting the trash is a dollar you've effectively earned — and a step closer to running a profitable, sustainable business.





CHAPTER 8

Final Chapter: Wrapping the Board and Your Business With Purpose

If you've made it this far, give yourself a high-five...or better yet, go slice a little brie and celebrate. You've just taken a giant step toward building a business that's creative, profitable, and purpose-driven. Whether you're dreaming of grazing tables that wow wedding guests or portable cones flying off your market cart, the secret to lasting success is understanding how to price with confidence and source with strategy.

Throughout this book, we've uncovered the real numbers behind the beauty. You've learned how each product type — boards, boxes, carts, and grazing tables — comes with its own pricing logic, buying habits, and profit potential. You've seen how public events and private events require different prep strategies. You've explored how to reduce waste, simplify sourcing, and use tools and calculators to take the guesswork out of the money side of your charcuterie business.

Celebrate Your Pricing & Buying Transformation

When you started reading this book, pricing probably felt like guesswork. Maybe you were undercharging, overbuying, or both. Now you have the tools, formulas, and confidence to quote any event with precision. You understand the psychology behind different event types, you know exactly how much to buy for any size gathering, and you've mastered the art of profitable pricing. This isn't just knowledge—it's your competitive advantage.

Your Profitable Future Starts Today

You're no longer just someone who makes beautiful boards; you're a strategic business owner who knows how to turn artistry into income. Every technique in this book—from the 3.5x markup formula to waste reduction strategies—is designed to put more money in your pocket while reducing stress and guesswork. The difference between a charcuterie hobby and a charcuterie business isn't talent (you already have that)—it's the systematic approach to pricing and buying that you now possess.

Time to Build the Business You've Been Dreaming About

With your newfound profit-growth knowledge, you're ready to scale beyond single boards to recurring corporate clients, premium wedding packages, and profitable market operations. The foundation is solid: you know your numbers, you understand your costs, and you price with confidence. Now it's time to implement these strategies consistently and watch your passion transform into the profitable, sustainable business you've always envisioned. Your charcuterie empire starts with your very next quote—make it count! --- These paragraphs celebrate their progress, reinforce their transformation, and motivate immediate action while maintaining an encouraging, empowering tone.

Get the Help You Need - No Matter Where you Are in Your Business

At the [Charcuterie Launch Lab](#), we're not just handing you spreadsheets and waving goodbye. We're walking with you, step-by-step, as you build a business you love. From naming your offerings to legally setting up your business, from sourcing ingredients to building your website and automating orders — we teach it all, and we provide the templates, websites, point of sale software, marketing advice, social media templates and all the support to make it all doable.

No matter where you are in your business growth journey... we have ways to help you. Even if you're not techy...*especially if you're not techy.*

Inside the Launch Lab, you'll gain access to everything you need:

- Live Weekly and On-Demand Coaching from Chef Andrea and marketing guru, Patti
- Pre-built pricing calculators and sourcing spreadsheets
- Website, ordering and calendars and all the software to get your business online
- Social media tools to promote your brand
- Tutorials on email, SMS, and website setup
- Step-by-step guidance on licensing, board creation, charcuterie carts, marketing and selling
- Real community support from people just like you

Whether you're starting from scratch or refining an existing brand, our goal is simple...to help you turn your passion for grazing into income, impact, and a business you're proud to show off.

Learn more about how we help charcuterie entrepreneurs grow their businesses at: <https://GrazingBiz.com/Launch>

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Chef Andrea

Hungry for more insight? Don't forget to check out our podcast, where we dive deeper into topics like packaging hacks, vendor fairs, pricing strategies, and inspiring stories from real charcuterie pros. You'll find it at <https://GrazingBiz.com/Podcast> – we keep it casual, practical, and 100% real.



Your Time is Now

There's never been a better time to start a charcuterie business. This industry is still growing, still hungry for innovation, and still wide open for passionate creators like you. People are craving connection, beauty, and experience, and you've got the goods to deliver it.

So as you close this book, ask yourself: *What's one small step I can take today?* Maybe it's pricing your first menu. Maybe it's signing up for the Launch Lab. Maybe it's just believing that you're ready.

Charcuterie Profit Secrets

We wish you the very best as you navigate the exciting world of owning your own business and making a real living from your passion of creating charcuterie. You got this!!!

Now go out and take your passion to profits! We believe in your success!



Chef Andrea & Patti - The GrazingBiz Sisters

Start & Grow a Successful Charcuterie Business!

Watch a FREE webinar at [GrazingBiz.com](https://www.GrazingBiz.com)