

Kootenai County Farmer's Market
Rapid Market Assessment
August 1, 2003

Market Name: Kootenai County Farmers' Market
Date of Assessment: September 21, 2002
Market Hours: Saturdays 8am to 1pm
Location: Corner of Hwy 95 & Prairie Ave, Hayden, Idaho
Market Staff: Ali Hakala, On-site manager
Market Supervision: Board of Directors
Ellen Scriven, Board President
Barb Arnold, Board Vice-President
Fees: Member Season Pass (Non-Working) \$100
Member Season Pass (Working) \$30
Vendors: Approximately 50 Vendors
10 Produce and Meats
7 Nursery Stock and Flowers
25 Crafts
4 Prepared Goods
2 Eclectic
1 Massage
1 Education
Estimated Market Sales: \$14,277
RMA Team Members: Estar Holmes, Spokane Community
Cathy Weston, Rural Roots
Deena Heath, Moscow Market Manager
Vance Corum, WSU
Colette DePhelps Brown, Executive Director, Rural Roots
Skeeter Lynch, Rural Roots
RMA Report Writers: John Potter, Research Assistant, NW Direct Project, Rural Roots
Brooke Davidson, Communications Coordinator, Rural Roots

Part 1: Consumer Information

Estimate Total Attendance: 1542

8am to 9am	312
9am to 10am	306
10am to 11am	336
11am to Noon	300
Noon to 1pm	288

The following questions were asked of shoppers at the Kootenai County Farmers' Market on September 21, 2002. Responses were compiled in hourly time frames starting at 8am and continuing until 1pm.

Question #1 Where do you Live?

Coeur d'Alene	38%
Hayden	26%
Post Falls	17%
Spokane	5%
Other	14%

Coeur d'Alene and Hayden Lake accounted for 64% of the total of market shoppers on the day of our survey. The "Other" category was intended for tourists, but may have included shoppers from Cocalala, Deer Park, Rathdrum, etc. Attendance from Hayden Lake and Post Falls remained relatively stable throughout the course of the day.

Attendance from Coeur d'Alene shoppers accounted for 55% of total market attendance from 8am to 9am. Over the course of the next hour (9am to 10am) the percentage of respondents from Coeur d'Alene dropped to 39% of market total for that time frame. Percentage of Coeur d'Alene shoppers fell steadily there after to 28% from Noon to 1pm. Likewise, the percentage of shoppers from Spokane and out-of-area respondents rose from 9% of total shoppers from 8am to 9am to 28% of shoppers from Noon to 1pm.

Comment: It is important to note that the balance of shoppers shifted from predominately Coeur d'Alene residents (55%) in the morning (8am to 9am) to an even split with Coeur d'Alene and Spokane/Other from 11am to 1pm.

Question#2: What is your primary reason for coming to the market today?

Agricultural Products	49%
Music	2%
Crafts	21%
Atmosphere	20%
Prepared Foods	4%
Specific Vendor	5%

Half of all respondents surveyed (49%) indicated that they came to the market primarily for agricultural products. Crafts and atmosphere was evenly split at 21% and 20% respectively.

Of the 207 respondents surveyed from 8am to 10am, 61% indicated that their primary reason for attending the market was agricultural products, whereas crafts and atmosphere each received 14% of the vote. From 10am to 1pm there was a shift in answers from all three categories. Agricultural products dropped to 39% of the vote and crafts and atmosphere rose to account for 26% and 24% of the vote, respectively.

The following 4 questions were not asked during the entire market day. They were split between the times shown next to the question asked.

Question #3: How much will you spend at the market today?
(Asked from 8 am to 11 am)

Less than \$20	55%
\$20 to \$30	30%
\$30 to \$40	8%
\$40 to \$50	3%
More than \$50	4%

The range for the average amount of money spent per shopping group is estimated at \$16.67.

Total market sales can be estimated as follows:
(1542 people/1.8 people per shopping group) * \$16.67 = \$14,277

Comment: Spending is by shopping group (adults who spend from one “wallet”) and not per individual. Earlier arrivers typically spend more at farmers’ markets than later shoppers do. This is attributed to the idea that early arrivers do so to take advantage of the larger produce selections, and because of this, they are more likely to buy.

Question #4: What one change would you recommend to improve this market?
(Asked from 8 am to 10 am)

	8am to 9am	9am to 10am
OK As Is	69%	54%
More Produce	11%	13%
More Food Vendors	4%	6%
Better Parking	7%	3%
Carry Out Assistance	2%	3%
Different Day	0%	0%
Later Hours	7%	20%

Respondents overwhelmingly (61% average) indicated that they were happy with the market as is. We do however see a drastic shift between the level of satisfaction between the earlier (69%) and later (54%) groups. Not so surprisingly, the shoppers who arrived later indicated that later

hours would improve the market. The 15% slide in satisfaction is made up almost entirely by the shift in people who would like to see the market have later hours. Because of the general way this question's answer categories were defined, we cannot say whether shoppers assumed later hours meant opening hours or closing hours.

Question #5: What product would you buy if they were sold in the market?

(Asked 10am to 1pm)

Soft Fruit, Apricots	51%
Melons	3%
Poultry, Meat, Fish	9%
Eggs, Cheese	10%
Cider, Juice	8%
Foods to Eat on Premises	19%

Fifty-one percent of the respondents questioned indicated that they would buy soft fruits if available at the market. It is also significant to note that 19% of shoppers indicated they would like to see more foods to eat on premises. Outside of bakery items and an espresso cart, the Kootenai County market doesn't offer many ready to eat foods. The responses to this question remained stable during the course of the 3-hour time frame.

Question #6: How often do you shop at this market?

(Asked from 11am to 1pm)

1 st Time	28%
Weekly	19%
Bi-Monthly	12%
Monthly	7%
Occasionally	34%

This question is biased in a couple different ways. First, the 11am to 1pm group sampled from only accounted for 30% of the total population. Secondly, within this group there was a much higher percentage of tourists and Spokane residents than there are in the earlier samples of shoppers (refer to question #1, Where do you live?). This shift in the population sample undoubtedly affected the answers in this question. It is possible that if this question would have been asked earlier in the day we would find that there would be an increase in shoppers indicating that they were more regular customers of the market.

Part 2: Team Observations

Physical Site

What the Team Appreciated:

- There is easy access as market is on busy intersection – the parking is convenient across the street. I observed several people – most older women – making 2,3, and 4 trips from market to parking lot w. their purchases. The “greeter” a friendly, old guy with a booth at the #2 entrance who says “hello” and “Have a nice day” to everyone said these folks don’t mind making several trips back & forth (he hasn’t heard any complaints).
- The access is from a side street so most traffic there is market traffic.
- Porta Potties had facility to wash hands
- Lovely atmosphere, shade helps.
- Surface is friendly.

Comments, Suggestions or Questions:

- It appeared the vendors use the parking spaces closest to and on same side of street as the market.
- Are there market signs within blocks of the market? (I only saw signs about market on the site.)
- Outside aisle very (too) wide.

Vendors and Products

What the Team Appreciated:

- Setting / Atmosphere – perfect.
- Beautiful setting – most producers do a great job of making stalls attractive. I like the old-fashioned, strolling through the country feel.
- Product mix: I counted booths by product. There were 2 that were completely eclectic, but the rest were totally or predominately as follows: plants & flowers 7; produce/ meat products 10; crafts 25; breads 4; massage 1; education 1
- I made a subjective assessment about signage at the booths. I counted “nice” signs – those that were attractive and prominently displayed the business name and/or price information. Good signs: 8.
- I spoke with 6 vendors – all were outgoing & friendly
- Customer service: here is a suggestion box on a tree in the eating area. Nice touch.
- Intriguing products – apple gourds, huckleberries (15 @ \$25 ea. in 1 hour)
- Market stands’ uniformity provides backdrop for individuality
- Produce stands – earthy, welcoming, good service
- Most crafts original – some base products bought & decorated
- Nice mix of crafts and produce, etc. The produce is beautiful – obviously “right off the farm.”
- I like the benches in the middle for people to take a break.
- Nice, nice people!

Comments, Suggestions, Questions:

- Need more produce competition – customers talked about this as well

- Would healthier prepared foods sell vs. coffee truck items?
- Espresso cart has store bought product – looks like Circle K @ Farmers' Market. Doesn't fit rules.
- No organic prepared food products.
- Could use more information re: local producers – supporting community
- The woman doing back rubs threw me off.
- The aviation art person's plastic setup was a distraction. Would it be possible to "blend" him in with the rest of the setting?
- Trash cans?
- The introduction to the south end of the market is the concession truck with fast food fare. Doesn't fit your homemade / home grown philosophy.
- I thought the rest rooms looked bad by 10:30 considering it was a small crowd. Do you inspect them when they are dropped off?

Market Atmosphere

What the Team Appreciated:

- People seemed relaxed and friendly.
- Nice to have market open at 8:00 w/ a song.
- Conducive to conversation – one couple w/ child spent 2.5 hours.
- The market is situated on a busy intersection amidst malls and office buildings. It is an active hub of interesting tastes, sights and sounds beneath a stand of tall Ponderosa pine. Pine needles cover the ground to hold down dust and mud. All booths and tables are uniform (picnic table red) and nicely arranged to move people around the circle. With a stage and eating area in the center. A lady sang on the stage most of the time. She was promoting her vocal entertainment business. I think music added great value to the experience.
- I counted 3 educational activities: 1. leather tooling; 2. Spinning wool on wheel; 3. Master Gardeners booth.

Comments, Suggestions, Questions:

- Produce shoppers come earlier in day, craft shoppers later. Nobody had bad things to say.
- Feel of market: At the most used entrance, shoppers are greeted by a big white van selling commercial/corporate food – it does not give a good first impression of the natural atmosphere.
- Coffee truck takes away from natural feeling.

Part 3: Customer and Vendor Comments

Customer Comments

What was appreciated about the market:

- Love produce & atmosphere, lack of hawking (choose freely where you shop) and rustic atmosphere
- Survey really great idea

- This is a worthy survey.
- The survey is really great. I would not answer the questions if you asked me.
- Really appreciated the older gentleman from Greenvalley who has produce, would like to see more senior citizens w/ booths.
- Really enjoy the market.
- I like the rustic atmosphere.
- I'm impressed with it all!
- I think its great!
- Couple spent \$140 incl. Birdhouse, wallet, etc.

Changes or improvements that may be needed:

- No trash cans!
- Longer hours 8 – (2)
- Lots more produce
- Food bank seems always empty – brought stuff but wasn't sure if it was “open”
- More flowers, bedding plant – nursery stock.
- You might want to inspect the rest room first thing in the am, they seemed pretty grungy by 10:30.
- Dot poster question #4 How much will you spend in the market today? - Suggestion to change question to “What's the AVERAGE amount you spend?”
- Have volunteers at market with vests that will be designated to help carry out.
- Get walkie talkies (two or three in the market) could help act quickly in an emergency.
- Drinking water would be great.
- Seems like sometimes there are vendors here that sell items that are not “home made” like the truck with the muffins – maybe it's a different rule or something.

Vendor Comments:

What was appreciated about the market:

- Good tables are here, good traffic.
- Amount of advertising is good.
- I come because of nice, clean, family atmosphere.
- I'm totally satisfied & impressed, great atmosphere.
- (Produce) we do very well at this market. It supports us very well.
- Well organized. We need the rules we have.
- It's good to jury art.

Changes or improvements that may be needed:

- They are very careful but too many rules (?)
- Need new, younger produce vendors.
- Frustrated with some rules & regulations.
- Due to 80-20 membership goal isn't good for day craft vendors who keep getting bumped.
- I think the rules & regulations are a bit nit-picky on crafters
- Uneven enforcement of rules.
- We need to buy our own space.

- Vendor up at 4 am, gets there at 5:00 to be in line, but doesn't get assigned until 7 am – would rather pay up front and arrive at 7 am.
- Two vendors said it is much slower today. (The people count should be end of July to mid-August.)

Issues and Discussion

- Examine the rules and how they are enforced. Are they fair for everyone? Does each vendor (craft, produce, other) reflect your rules? Several comments on the “coffee truck”.
- Consider market providing drinking water, carry out help, more trash cans, cleanliness upkeep of Porta Potties, and other amenities that would make things more customer/vendor friendly.
- Explore vendor recruitment to include senior produce vendors, soft fruits, and more produce if needed.
- Question 5 indicates many shoppers would like soft fruits to buy at the market. May consider a soft fruit stipulation and or an acceptable vendor/representative for soft fruit sales until someone within the local region can supply soft fruits to the market.
- Question 2 results may indicate an opportunity to increase quality produce vendors to meet customers that arrive between 10 and 12. If the popular farm sells out most of its selection by 10, customers would still have a reasonable variety and selection to choose from after 10.