



Rapid Market Assessment



August 16, 2016 – Payette, Idaho

Report Prepared for Payette Farmers Market by:
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Market Overview

<i>Market Name:</i>	Payette Farmers Market
<i>Date, Time and Location of Assessment:</i>	August 16, 2016 4:00 pm – 7:00 pm Agape Coffee House 20 S 16th St., Payette, ID 83661
<i>Market Manager:</i>	Laura Gross
<i>RMA Team:</i>	Ariel Agenbroad, Laura Gross, Joey Peutz
<i>Report Author:</i>	Ariel Agenbroad, <i>University of Idaho Extension</i>



Introduction

About the Payette Farmers Market/Payette Valley Food Connection

Vision

Supporting the Farm-to-Table process improves community health and encourages local food production for generations to come.

Mission

The mission of the Payette Valley Food Connection is to support, promote and increase community awareness and access to locally grown & produced foods in the Payette Valley area.

Market Theme

“Local Food for Local People, It’s a Community Thing!”

History and Background of the Market

Payette Farmers’ Market (PFM) is a community based effort to support local agriculture, food production and healthy food access. PFM is sponsored by Payette Community Alliance Network (PCAN), a non-profit corporation, partnered with Payette Valley Food Connection, a grassroots group and hosted by Agape Coffee House, a local business that values community. In addition, the market is an Idaho Preferred® member and listed in the Idaho State Dept. of Agriculture’s 2016 Farmers’ Market Guide.

For the inaugural 2016 season, the market was scheduled for Tuesday evenings, July 12 through August 23, from 4 pm to 7 pm, at the Agape Coffeehouse.

Initial vendors included:

- Crawford Farms, Payette
- Johnson Produce, New Plymouth
- Thunderegg Gardens, Nyssa
- Graversen Gardens, Fruitland
- Kelie's Korner Jams, Payette
- Save the Day Seasoning, Payette
- Healing Herb Creations, Payette
- Rainytale Studio, Payette
- Connie's Arts & Crafts, Payette
- Emerj produce, New Plymouth

The market accepts EBT/SNAP benefits.



Rapid Market Assessment

Rapid Market Assessment (RMA) is an efficient method for researchers and markets to easily capture the opinions and habits of market-goers on a single market day. Information collected on attendance, consumer habits and preferences helps market managers, boards and vendors assess how well they are achieving their mission and goals and may be useful in planning and future decision making. The process was developed by Oregon State University.

The key components of an RMA are attendance counts, performed during each hour of market operation, and dot surveys that ask questions previously determined by the market staff and researchers. Volunteers are key to the process.

For the Payette Valley Farmers Market Assessment, Ariel Agenbroad, University of Idaho Extension, counted all attendees during the three hour market. She also solicited information from market attendees through dot surveys made easily accessible at the University of Idaho Extension booth.

There were an estimated 56 market attendees and vendors counted on the evening of August 16, 2016. The busiest time was between 5:00 and 6:00 pm. The temperature was very high that evening, averaging 98°F during the three hours of operation.

Approximately 30 vendors and market-goers responded to the dot survey.

The four questions asked in our survey were:

- What is your primary reason for coming to the Payette Farmers Market?
- How often do you visit the Payette Farmers Market?
- How did you hear about the Payette Farmers Market?
- What would you like to see more of at the Payette Farmers Market?

Individuals who completed the dot survey received a complimentary Idaho Farmers Market shopping bag, provided by the Idaho State Department of Agriculture/Idaho Preferred. Not all customers opted to stop and participate in the dot surveys, but those who took the time were engaged in the process and very supportive of the market. Both adults and children were invited to participate.

The data collected through an RMA is not without limitations and potential biases. Attendance counts are estimated as accurately as possible. Biases may occur in the dot survey participation, since participation is voluntary. Most people attending market will not participate in the survey process without a direct, personal invitation to do so and generally require guidance on the process. University of Idaho (UI) Extension was recruited to assist the market manager in conducting the RMA. Ariel Agenbroad, Area Extension Educator in Food Systems and Small Farms, compiled the resultant data and prepared this report for the market.

Methods

Estimating Attendance

- For large markets, attendance counts are conducted at all entrances for 10 minutes at the beginning of each hour during market hours of operation, using handheld clicker counters. Due to the smaller nature of the Payette Farmers Market and the short time frame (3 hours) we simply counted everyone who entered the market location.

Consumer Dot Survey

- One set of four flip charts were placed adjacent to the front doors of the coffeehouse under the University of Idaho Extension booth canopy, which was also sampling iced herb water.
 - The flip charts were tabletop and easel style. They were provided by UI Extension.
 - Each flip chart had a single question and the possible answers written on it.
 - The time and location were noted on the upper right corner of each question sheet.
 - There were approximately one volunteer (Ariel Agenbroad) attending to the flip chart station at all times. She was responsible for soliciting respondents, handing out dots, answering questions about the survey, and collecting the sheets when finished.
- Survey Questions
 - Questions were developed by Laura Gross and Ariel Agenbroad.
 - The questions were chosen to generate the most useful information for future planning decisions.
- Markers
 - 250 ¾" round stickers were purchased.
 - The sheets were cut into strips, giving each survey participant enough dots to answer each of the four questions.
- Incentive
 - Survey participants were provided with an Idaho Farmers Market shopping bag.

Volunteers and Materials

- UI Extension conducted the RMA.
 - Materials included: easels, pens/pencils, markers, the dot stickers, totebags for giveaway and a cooler with iced herb water and cups.

Farmers Market Rapid Market Survey Results

Attendance

Location	Females	Males	Total
Payette Farmers Market	37	19	56

Comments:

The RMA was conducted on the next to last week of the market. Several “anchor” produce vendors were absent that night, due to the weather and other obligations. The heat was an important factor affecting attendance, starting out at 99°F at 4:00 pm the afternoon of the RMA and “cooling” to 97°F by 7:00 pm.

According to the market manager, the market had slowed down somewhat each week after a robust start. This could be attributed to several factors: heat, competition for vendors with other markets, back to school events, other community events, reduced participation by high volume produce vendors, etc.



Dot Survey Results

Total respondents surveyed: ~30 Female respondents: ~19 Male respondents: ~11

Question 1: What is bringing community members to the Payette Farmers Market?

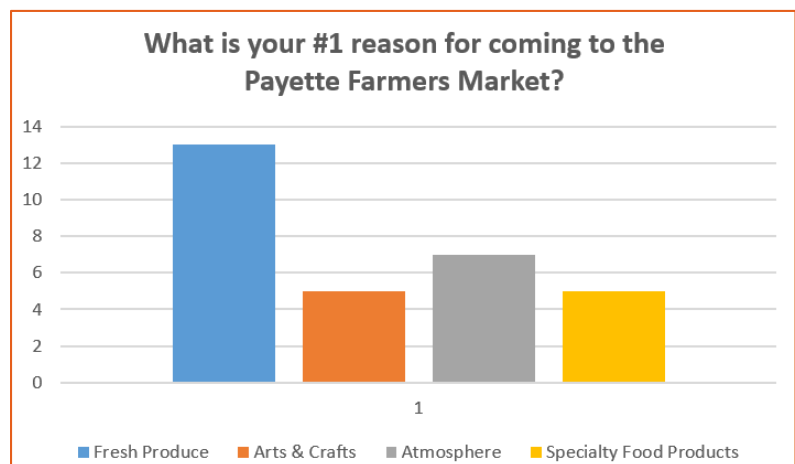
Fresh Produce	Arts & Crafts	Atmosphere	Specialty Food Products	Total
13	5	7	5	30
43%	17%	23%	17%	100%

Comments:

This question was designed to determine customers' primary motivations for visiting the Payette Farmers Market. This can help market managers, partners and sponsors understand where to focus or balance their mix of vendors.

We asked shoppers to select only their first choice.

Shoppers are coming to the Payette Farmers Market first and foremost for the fresh produce. The second most popular choice was the atmosphere of the market, followed by specialty food products and arts and crafts.



This supports the markets vision and mission, and also indicates that the market is filling an entertainment or social need for some members in the community. There is also good support for the specialty food and art vendors.

As much as possible, however, every effort should be made to preserve the agricultural focus of the market and incentivize continued, consistent participation from the high volume produce vendors.

Question 2: How often are community members attending the Payette Farmers Market?

Every Week	2-3 Times per Month	Once a Month	This is My First Visit	Total
9	3	0	6	18
50%	17%	0%	33%	100%

Comments:

Farmers Markets are most successful when they become a regularly attended public event with loyal customers and community support.

This question sought to understand how often community member are attending the Payette Farmers Market.

Fifty percent of those surveyed claimed that they visited the Payette Farmers Market every week. Because vendors were invited to participate in the survey, this number may have been higher than if vendors had not participated in the survey. However, those individuals that were regular weekly vendors were also regular weekly shoppers. Vendors actively bought from each other when there was a lull in the customer traffic.



About 17% of those surveyed said they visited the market 2-3 times per month. And 33% were visiting for the first time, despite the heat and the smaller number of vendors present during the RMA.



Commitment on the part of vendors and customers can be challenging for a new market. Vendors are more likely to establish relationships and develop loyalty among customers when they are regularly present at the market week in and week out. And customers, who prioritize fresh produce above everything else at a market, will be less likely to come to the market if there is not a consistent abundance and diversity of these products every week.

Question 3: How are community members finding out about the Payette Farmers Market?

Drove By	Word of Mouth	Facebook	Other*	Total
9	3	4	4	20
45%	15%	20%	20%	100%

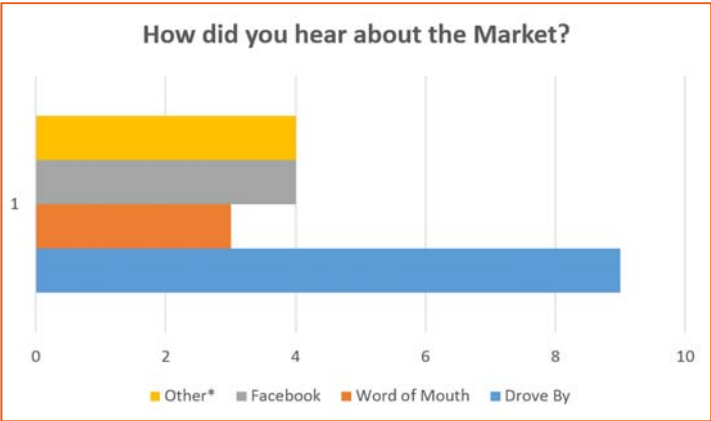
Comments:

Efforts to inform the public about the Payette Farmers Market were multifaceted and included traditional and social media, the support of sponsoring and collaborating partners and lots of networking with community members and organizations.

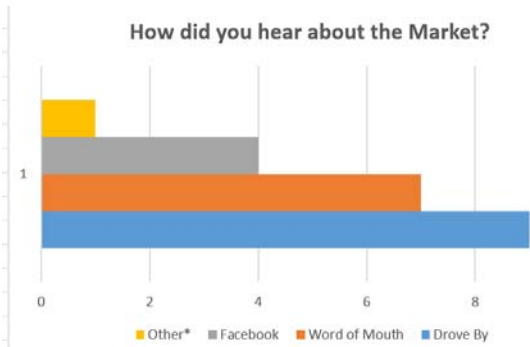
This question was designed to find out where most shoppers were getting their information about the market, and also how best to communicate market news to them.

Fort-five percent of community members attending the market on August 16 had simply driven by and noticed the market. Twenty percent had learned about the market from Facebook, 15% by word of mouth, and 20% selected the “other” category, citing the following:

- “I work here (Agape Coffeehouse)”
- “Liz and Laura (from Agape Coffeehouse)”
- “Flyer”
- “My mom”



Technically three out of these four responses could be considered “word of mouth,” which would increase the percentage of answers in that category to 29%, while “other” (flyer) would represent 5%.



For many possible reasons, many interested community members are not learning about the market through regular communication channels.

Many are trusting friends and family who share information about the market, and community members are using Facebook.

Continuing to advertise the market through signage during the off days, flyers in even more locations, and keeping up with a consistent social media presence would all be good strategies to spread the word about the market and communicate with community members.

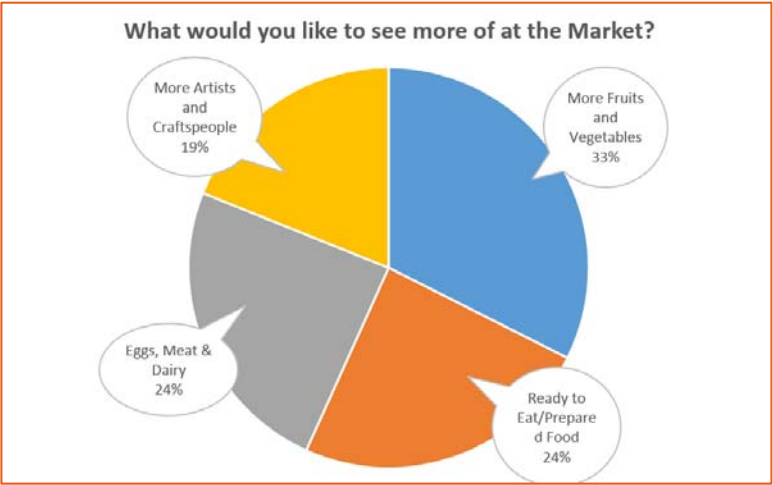
Question 4: In what ways, if any, could the Payette Farmers Market serve its customers better?

More Fruits and Vegetables	Ready to Eat/Prepared Food	Eggs, Meat & Dairy	More Artists and Craftspeople	Total
12	9	9	7	37
32%	24%	24%	19%	100%

Comments:

Despite the heat and the absence of several vendors on the evening of the RMA, customers were genuinely enthusiastic about the market, committed to supporting it, and hopeful for its future and sustainability.

To establish a market that is valued and supported by the community, however, the market must serve that community’s needs. So it is important to learn if any changes would increase participation or meet more of the customers’ expectations.



Thirty-two percent wanted to see more fresh fruits and vegetables at the market. This is consistent with the high value placed on these products by market shoppers in the previous questions. Customers were equally interested (24%) in seeing more ready to eat or prepared foods (popular at many weekday markets and with busy shoppers) and more protein in the form of local meat, fresh eggs and/or dairy products.

Nineteen percent were interested in seeing more arts and crafts. While these products are appealing to shoppers and can fill in the seasonal lulls in produce, a market often struggles to find a balance between produce, prepared foods and artisans and still retain the “food first” character of a Farmers Market.

A great deal of fresh produce is produced in Payette County, but most of the larger growers already have established markets for their products. On the other hand, they have the quantity and quality of produce that can really “anchor” a farmers market. A challenge moving forward would be figuring out how to make selling at the Payette Farmers Market lucrative and worthwhile to those growers, in order to meet the needs of the community, build the clientele base and keep customers returning week after week.



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