

**Capital City Public Market  
Rapid Market Assessment  
29 July 2006**

Market Name: Capital City Public Market  
Date of Assessment: July 29, 2006  
Market Hours: Saturday, 9:30 am to 1:30 pm  
Location: 8<sup>th</sup> Street between Bannock & Main and on the Grove Plaza, Boise, ID  
Market Manager: Karen Ellis  
Market Staff: 1 Paid Market Manager, 3 Paid Market Assistants and 1 set-up staff  
Fees: Grower Members: \$20 or 5% of gross sales per week  
Art and Specialty Foods: \$25 or 5% of gross sales per week  
Vendors: Approximately 110 vendors:  
50% Produce  
50 % art & specialty food  
Estimated Market Sales: \$108,671  
RMA Team Members: Cinda Williams, Sustainable Ag, Univ. of Idaho Extension, Moscow  
Ariel Agenbroad, Graduate Student, Sust. Ag Program Asst., Moscow  
Mary Barstow, University of Idaho Student, Ag Ambassador, Moscow  
Jan Book, Noble Food Farms, Boise  
Brenda Bruno, Friend of the CCPM, Boise  
Molly Bullock, Friend of the Market, Boise  
Joanna Engle, Friend of the Market, Boise  
Joyce Garno, Friend of the Market, Caldwell  
Ann Klautsch, Friend of the Market, Boise  
Kevin Laughlin, UI Ada County Extension, Boise  
Robin Mason, Idaho State Dept. of Agriculture, Boise  
Sheila McGregor, Caldwell Farmer's Market, Caldwell  
Kyle Menasco, Friend of the Market, Boise  
Lacey Menasco, Idaho State Dept. of Agriculture, Boise  
Sarah Perez, University of Idaho Student, Ada Extension Intern, Boise  
Beth Ragorshek, Canyon Bounty Farm  
Lisa Snow, Friend of the Market, Meridian  
Tona Stilwill, Fair Mountain Farm, Fairfield  
Clarence Stilwell, Fair Mountain Farm, Fairfield  
Dan Walters, Friend of the Market, Boise  
Judy Welker, Caldwell, Farmers' Market, Caldwell  
Cheryl Williamson, Friend of the Market, Boise  
RMA Report Author: Cinda Williams

**Part 1: Consumer Information:**

**Estimated Total Audience: 10,697**

Shoppers in market at 9:30:	923	9%
9:30 am to 10:30 am:	2838	27%
10:30 am to 11:30 am:	3000	28%
11:30 am to 12:30 am:	2430	23%
12:30 am to 1:30 am:	1506	14%

**Question #1: What is your primary reason for coming to the market today?**

Agricultural Products:	40%
Music:	2%
Arts:	7%
Atmosphere:	46%
Prepared Foods:	4%
Children's Programs:	1%

**Comments:** In the first half of market, 44% of the respondents said they came for agricultural products and 41% said they came for the atmosphere. In contrast, during the second half of the market, 34% of those surveyed came for agricultural products and 53% came for the atmosphere.

The percentage of respondents coming to the market for music, art, prepared foods and children's program did not vary significantly between the first and latter halves of the market. This was a difficult question for some of the respondents because they wanted to select more than one answer. In fact several did select more than one answer for Q-1 before we discovered it (hence dot numbers on each of the four poster boards were not the identical values.) The children's program was at the far end of the market and it is possible that many of those attending for that specific reason did not come all the way down to where our questions were set up.

**Question #2: How did you learn about the market?**

Newspaper	5%
Radio:	1%
Poster:	0%
Website:	1%
Word- of -Mouth	43%
Saw it and Shopped:	9%
Other/ don't know:	2%
Old Timer:	39%

**Comments:** Over 80% of surveyed respondents knew about the market either because they are old timers or heard about it through word-of-mouth. The percentage of old timers who came to the market was higher in the first half of the market at 42%, than in the second half with 35%. Interestingly, the people who learned of the market through “word-of-mouth” and who “saw it and stopped” increased from 42-45% and 7 to 12% respectively, from the first to the second half of the market.

The number of shoppers who learned about the market through newspaper, radio, posters and website were very low. However, the survey results should not be interpreted to mean that those types of advertising are not important in terms of market visibility and attendance. Results simply indicate that they are not the primary ways people initially hear about the market.

**Question #3: How often have you shopped at the market this year?**

Nearly every week:	14%
2 times per month:	16%
Once a month:	8%
A few times:	27%
First time:	35%

**Comments:** The percentage of shoppers who indicated they came to the market nearly every week or two times per month was higher in the first half of market at 34%, than in the second half at 25% (percentages are the total of both responses). More “first time” shoppers came to the market in the second half at 41%, than in the first half with 30%. The number of respondents who attended once per month or a few times did not vary much between the first and second halves of market.

**Question #4: About how much have/will you spend at the market today?**

<u>Dollar Amounts</u>	<u>Shopper Percentage</u>
\$0	8%
\$5	12%
\$10	18%
\$15	10%
\$20	21%
\$30	14%
\$40	6%
\$50	6%
\$60+	5%

**Average amount spent per shopping group = \$20.32**

Average amount spent per shopping group from 9:30 am to 11:30 am = \$21.58  
Average amount spent per shopping group from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm = \$18.48

**Total market sales** can be estimated as follows:

10,697 shoppers divided by 2.0 adults per shopping group = 5342  
5348 shopping groups times \$20.32 (the average amount spent) = **\$108, 671**

**Comments:** Spending is estimated by shopping group (adults who spend from one “wallet”) and not per individual. About 8 % of shoppers indicate they spent nothing in the market. Early arrivers spent more than shoppers who arrived later in the market (\$21.58 versus \$18.48). Approximately 63% of the estimated market sales occurred in the first half of the market.

**Part 2: RMA Team Member Comments, Suggestions and Observations**

The purpose of this section of the report is NOT to provide an overall “grade” to this market or rank it against any other market; rather the team of volunteers used their “fresh eyes” to provide feedback about the individual elements that they observed. They noted what they liked, what they thought could be changed or improved and questions they had. The RMA process is about sharing – both the market being observed and the observers should gain new insights and ideas.

**Physical Site**

Access, parking, flow of people, liability issues, organization

**Most important messages about the physical site to convey to Market Manager:**

- Keep up the marketing, try to get an article in the Statesman
- The market space is good. It gets crowded but it is manageable
- Can’t think of how you can possibly improve on this site, it’s most ideal! Wish we had something comparable at our Ketchum Market.
- This is an exemplary market.
- Crosswalk monitoring – huge danger
- Prohibit dogs
- Change meeting time at bike shop
- Availability of restrooms?
- Put signage at the info booth
- Posted restroom information
- Wonder how safe the pool in front of the Brick Oven Bistro is for kids)
- Need identification in canopy, including the market booth
- Great up keep with friendly personnel
- The market info tent/booth could be far more useful and effective if better identified.

**Most significant observations team members will take back with them:**

- All the people in good spirits
- Perfect location, parking availability, safe crosswalks = a successful market.
- Visitors from San Francisco and New York
- This is a community affair—looks like a hangout for lots of people—kids enjoy the fountain at the Grove
- Slower pace of people—they seemed to enjoy time to visit, share and just be.
- We need to enforce this (the identification of vendors) at our (Caldwell) market.
- All vendors are well prepared and self-contained
- For a very crowded market with every square inch of space utilized, the flow is remarkable smooth and seems to work.

*What team members appreciated about the physical aspects of the Market:*

- The marketing of the market must be working (due to the high volume of people).
- That the market is downtown...lots of pride in the Boise Community
- Very nice flow for people to move freely, even when crowded. People seem courteous of one another & not at all pushy or rude. How refreshing!
- Nice having all the tents on one side to east the traffic flow. Works well having non-stall folks on the other side since they take up less room.
- People very respectful of cross walk light on Bannock/8<sup>th</sup> – no jaywalking.
- Traffic flow was adequate towards fountain but not coming back towards Main.
- Ability to use sidewalks behind vendors is a plus for traffic flow.
- Very efficient set up and break down.
- Friendliness of visitors
- Selection of products
- Vendor displays
- Public input: increase the size
- Good traffic flow, but tight in the center
- 5 tents set up to protect children in the Arts for Kids area. Well run smooth transitions.
- I love the small city feel
- I think most of the stands are displayed really well
- I love the variety
- It didn't seem like there was ever a big crowd of stagnant people to get through, traffic had a nice steady pace
- I like that it's organized by art, produce, etc. Easy to find what you want.
- I appreciated the organization of the market—arts, crafts, entertainment all in one area, produce in the same area, prepared foods, etc.
- The fact that you can shop locally with a great variety of items
- How well everyone set up and dismantled their stalls. The market staff was incredibly friendly, useful and efficient at controlling and directing an immense flow of people and vehicles. Nice work!

*Suggested changes or improvements regarding the physical site:*

- Open earlier than 9:30 am – closer to 8:00 am
- Market on more days or longer hours
- Provide more kid's booths
- Install Port-a-Potties
- Consider adding port-a-potties for public restrooms
- I know separating the stalls doesn't work since the produce vendors benefit from being tied to one another for shade benefits. To improve the long lines during the "feeding frenzy" we have at our market, we employ 2-3 friends to help us

bag/check out/restock. They trade their time for our food. Works beautifully for us (and they're done after a 1½ hours to buy at other vendors which brings more business to our market). It's fun for them but imperative to us. We pay/trade very well (\$20/hour) so as to really keep them. They treat it as a real job this way.

- Control the smell from street grates between Idaho and Main
- Access to tight at entrance to Grove area
- Crosswalks at Idaho and Main...public walking in front of traffic/blocking traffic
- Public input—prohibit dogs, tangling in leashes
- Restroom access?
- Difficult to do, but any way of pointing out the sidewalks are “fast lanes”?
- Place garbage cans at Bannock as folk exit they are looking to throw away containers
- Restroom availability
- Better location of signs in front of some streets—some signs blocked the center flow of pedestrians
- Separate dot station in Grove area would capture spirit of this area of the market...mostly commerce(?) arts and kids
- Umbrellas in walkway—if placed there open so people don't trip over the base
- People stopping in road to talk—a bell would be horrible, a crossing guard maybe? Flashing light at either end?
- Maybe vendors giving out samples on toothpicks need garbage cans
- It would be nice to close off the two streets that interrupt traffic, causes a big buildup of people during busy hours.
- Maybe more seating? When I came last year I wanted to buy lots of produce and sit and eat it in the friendly atmosphere. Maybe not as big of a deal when it's hot.
- Where are all these dogs “doing their business”?
- I was on Main and 8<sup>th</sup> and I noticed that the pedestrians walk even when the cross traffic light is green, holding up traffic. Sometimes they have to run to get out of the way. I'm not sure how to fix, but it seems unsafe and very rude to traffic. Maybe a sign that asks pedestrians to respect traffic.
- A group of ladies in the arts and crafts area asked me if there was produce and food and if so, where? So perhaps post signs or maps of the layout where people will know where stuff is.
- Signage on the canopy.
- More accessible restrooms for public, vendors
- Portable toilets are going to be needed, as well as signs. Right now the only public restroom is labeled “No Public Restroom,” and tourists/newcomers to downtown are not going to understand this! Market info booth could have a banner advertising its presence.

### **Vendors and Products**

Product mix, product quality, signage, display, customer service, etc.

#### **Most important messages about the vendors and products to convey to Manager:**

- Encourage vendors to advertise their farms, studios, kitchens or locations
- An artisan vendor expressed the belief that tourists spend more money than locals as locals are more likely to talk themselves out of a purchase saying they can come back later.
- Perhaps think of stall signage and banners and nametags.
- People “love it”
- Excellent selections, meet multiple needs/wants
- Happy friendly vendors
- Maybe more producers—more variety/more plants
- Sampling stations need waste baskets—people tried to find garbage (this interrupts flow).
- Again, identification signage
- Great products and knowledgeable of other vendors to refer if needed.
- Could you create a vendor or market map (a big one for display and smaller ones for picking up)...could at least show the flow of the market...so that people in the veggie area would know about the Kid’s activities and vice versa...could involve the bordering businesses (sponsor the printing costs by “selling” the right to be listed). Might be good for coffee shops, Charley’s Pet Boutique, etc... Some of the regular vendors who are always in the same spot could be placed on the map...

#### **Most significant observations team members will take back with them:**

- You can’t have too much signage
- Too many vendors with no signage. Signs should be required with the location of farm operation
- Some signs were also confusing...do some ag vendors have produce from another farm or orchard?
- Vendors were very nice
- Parents appreciate dropping off kids for art so they can go to the market
- Very, very friendly people.
- Product mix and quality are very good. Displays and signage could be improved a bit, customer service was beyond great.

*What team members appreciated about the vendors and products:*

- I really liked being greeted by the vendors.
- The vendors who were seated seemed less approachable.
- Seemed like there were a lot of produce vendors today! Yummy!
- Overheard customers saying that they liked the veggie samples.
- The emphasis on agricultural vendors.



- Most of the vendors are very nice folk.
- Wonderful array of vendors. High quality of produce, products, crafts
- Lots of free samples from vendors which I think adds to people lingering more at market and buying what they try. This truly works for higher sales (we found this to be so true at our market stall). It encourages more questions, interactions and gratitude—all positive things!
- Corner displays set at an angle are inviting and draw people in.
- Extra umbrellas to wait under made waiting in line more pleasant.
- Vendors have done a good job matching the color and presentation of a display to their products.
- Vendors were very willing to share info about their products – even to browsers.
- Variety
- Well displayed
- Most have lines of people
- Jugglers on Idaho Street drew crowds
- The number of vendors
- Good selection of products
- Excellent variety, something for everyone but nothing too weird to throw people off.
- I appreciate that preference is given to ag vendors, and that they are encouraged.
- It's a good idea that vendors have contact info or business cards to give to consumers.

*Suggested changes or improvements regarding the products or vendors:*

- Would encourage vendors to add their locations to their signage, if nothing else it's a great conversation starter.
- Does the Capital Market have a Market Info sign?
- Nutritional supplement vendor in artisan area seemed out of place and unrelated to the "Market" atmosphere.
- Perhaps asking or requiring vendors to have banners stating business names since you can tell your friend, "next week don't miss parfaits at Water Wheel Gardens," for example. Friend can find it better than saying "at the corner of...". Also looks more professional like you're here to stay.
- Name tags give customers more one-one-one feeling. It's great to know who grows the food which keeps you alive. We're all connected on this earth and people come to markets to feel this important connection. I made these comments last year but I'm repeating them since I'm even more convinced they're true.
- Consider providing a place for customers to put toothpicks when free samples are offered.
- Vendors should consider standing to greet customers rather than sitting in the background
- Vendor workshops could be a way to educate vendors on better selling
- A rotating public education booth

- Recycle containers
- More shopping bags for people to buy and use for their purchases
- Space between stalls can be tight—hard to get to the middle block.
- Maybe more food booths, meals rather than produce?
- Picnic area? Not many places in the shade for elderly...
- Vendors who distribute samples (that include disposables—toothpicks, cups, etc.) need to have a small trash can where they are giving out the samples
- Need signage and info on canopies or in area.
- Didn't see great signage at all vendors. Perhaps a "Better Sales through Better Signage" campaign or workshop?

### **Atmosphere**

Feel of the market, type of shoppers, conversations, educational activities, color, etc.

<p><b>Most important messages about the market atmosphere to convey to the market manager:</b></p>
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diversity of produce is good. Art and increased ag vendors is nice</li> <li>• Keep the musicians, chefs, and jugglers, it adds to a wonderful ambiance and a relaxed feeling which encourages people to stay.</li> <li>• Keep the activities for kids...makes the entire family want to come to the market.</li> <li>• Clean</li> <li>• Too tight in Grove area for comfortable access</li> <li>• Magnet for downtown</li> <li>• Convivial and friendly</li> <li>• Site and location is beautiful—I would start at 9 and end at 12:30—too hot late in the day</li> <li>• Friendly community gathering place</li> <li>• There is a lot for all walks of life. Very uniform.</li> <li>• The market buzzes with excitement and interest.</li> </ul> |
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<p><b>Most significant observations volunteers will take back with them:</b></p>
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good mix of local community and new or out of town people</li> <li>• More first timers than I anticipated</li> <li>• Huge amount of dogs (what can you do?). Possible public awareness campaign?</li> <li>• Just great in general.</li> <li>• Get to market the earlier the better. Beat the heat and the crowds!</li> </ul> |
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*What volunteers appreciated about the atmosphere at the Market:*

- Diversity of vendors
- People are mostly friendly
- Tourists do come to the market more than I anticipated. For example, the Basque Festival and Boxing Event seemed to be reflected in the numbers of market visitors
- It's vital, vibrant and alive! We love coming here!
- Vendors are friendly and most accommodating (they hold things for you readily!)
- Great chance to feel like you're part of the community—people were introducing their friends to the people they ran into.
- Kids loved the person in the fish costume—parents took pictures.
- Dancers and children's theater drew a large crowd.
- Good variety of entertainers—spaced properly to avoid competing with the music.
- Energy
- Family and friends together
- Friends reacquainting with friends
- Huge mix of customers all ages and economic levels
- Spaces to sit and rest—merchants were not nuts about using tables(?)
- Most people were festive, polite, laid back
- Awesome! Feels so friendly and safe and open. Much different than Pike's Place Market (for example).
- Demonstrations like belly dancers and dancing kids.
- Love all the kids and families |
- Variety of vendors, entertainment, etc.
- The mix of vendors, the entertainment, the music, the DOGS! I know a lot of people are down on the dogs, but not the dog owning customers! Really, people come down because they can go to market and socialize/show off/walk their dogs at the same time. And dogs represent a certain demographic and market target for some vendors! A vendor selling dog biscuits won't sell as many if the dog is not there

*Suggested changes or improvements regarding the atmosphere:*

- Public or portable restrooms
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- Suggest barring dogs
- None...it's so great already
- Way to enforce dismount zone for skateboarders.
- A large segment of people were not buyers, just enjoyed the event atmosphere. How do you capitalize?
- All good—don't think you can improve more on the atmosphere
- More trees (big) and places to sit and rest.
- Would be nice if there were more benches.

Commented [j1]: i

- Trash cans for public where I was sitting across from your stand—newspaper left on the bench, water bottle, I did not see a trash can anywhere nearby.
- Maybe more music?
- Maybe more demonstrations could be encouraged?
- Art demos like pottery wheel, caricatures, hula dancers? Bead making/stringing. Plant your own bean/watermelon/sunflower seeds?
- Perhaps some music playing along 8<sup>th</sup> Street.
- Vendors like atmosphere...friendly, fun to visit and see folks.
- One vendor, the French Bakery, is “pee-o’d” at the Health Department and feel they are singled out by “Bud.”
- Dogs in the morning cleared out in the afternoon.
- The space issue/crowding can’t be addressed without changing locations, and I love how the market fully takes over downtown, but it would be great if on every other block there was an empty stall space with a canopy, a bench or something to act as a kind of “slow vehicle (person) turn-out” place to congregate out of the traffic flow. I understand that this would mean 1 less vendor in the space, though...

#### **General Public Comments**

Additions to dot answers, conversation points, comments on survey, market, etc.

#### **Most important ‘general messages ( some overheard from the public) to convey to the Market Manager:**

- How can you capture the “walk-thru” dollars? Lots of folks seem to just be strolling through.
- Think about a “no dog” rule perhaps for everyone’s (dog & human’s well being). Many complaints to me by customers.
- Everyone loved the variety the market has to offer.
- Open the market earlier
- Prohibit dogs
- Reschedule meeting time at the Bike Shop
- All of my conversations were positive ones!
- Did not hear anything negative
- Port-a-potties needed
- “This is great for Boise” it gives the locals a place to share what they have made or grown.
- “Where are the public restrooms?”

**Most significant general observations or things heard that volunteers will take with them:**

- Tourists felt they shouldn't or didn't need to have a voice for the survey, needed encouragement to do the dots
- An eclectic mix of high quality vendors, with stores and restaurants bordering makes for a hugely successful market. Availability of parking nearby also helps greatly. Closing of street is essential too, of course. Super job you all do! Customers love your market. They were effusive telling me so and helpful with constructive criticism since they care that you stay here and continue to improve.
- Amazed at how much consumption goes on—eating and drinking while strolling
- Out-of-towners enjoyed the market
- People really enjoy the market.
- Some people are always going to need education, signage, hand-holding and directions.

*General positive comments from volunteers, market attendees or vendors:*

- People enjoyed showing off the market to their out of town guests
- Concerning the survey: one woman said it was the easiest, fastest survey she'd ever participated in, said we'd done a great job of it
- One guy said that the young jugglers were the best thing at the market today.
- People seem relaxed, happy and strolling slowly. They make an event of the market. They looked like they were buying from the bordering restaurants; too, lots had drinks/snacks in hand. No one seemed driven...how delightful!
- Nice to have soft music from musicians scattered thru blocks. Added to the relaxed and eclectic feel of the market. Noticed many folks stopped to listen and appreciate the music.
- I liked the fact that the lettuce was home grown and pre-washed.
- Liked the free samples
- Often commented about how nice the displays looked. Tiered displays, baskets, coordinated tablecloths.
- "I just love it down here!"
- Family/Friends affair
- I only counted people, can't judge people's responses/comments, etc.
- Very well organized, though. Dots are a great idea, very fun, easy and quick!
- All vendors were very welcoming/courteous.
- People were at the market because they felt ownership and pride in it. There were a lot of first timers and tourists who were there and who were very excited about it.

*General comments and suggestions for changes from volunteers, attendees or vendors:*

- Please do not allow dogs
- Prices are getting so high that there's no advantage to coming to the market
- Prices keep increasing
- Prices too uniform among vendors (implied price fixing?). Mentioned seeing someone from the market with a clipboard visiting vendors, the implication was that prices were fixed
- Perhaps a "no dog" rule. I interviewed one buyer (who loves dogs) and she thought it would be best if dogs are left at home. She said it's just too busy here for them and thought it's distressing for the dog too. I agree and I'm a dog lover, too! Often I saw they impeded the flow of traffic unfortunately.
- Bikers seemed to be a bit of a problem but I realize you can't ask them to stop bringing their bikes. Maybe ask them to just push them for better control instead of riding. I heard from one customer and I also agree.
- A lady said market needs to be bigger (too packed—extend it perhaps). She said maybe leave a bit of room between stalls to form a line around busy stalls. She said that one busy stand had only 1 vendor and the 10 minute wait there is too much. She said Peaceful Belly and Cafe de Paris are super efficient – get you in and out quickly and she appreciates that. She ended all this with "This is a great market. I wouldn't miss it ever. We are so very lucky to have it." She knows good markets, she said (came over from Pennsylvania where markets are top notch.)
- Wondered if it would ever extend to the 8<sup>th</sup> Street Marketplace.
- Ban dogs
- Close off Main & Idaho to expand the market.
- Open earlier...the roaming public is ready to shop
- More art spaces early—parents were turned away at 10:00 am
- Tote bags, recycled bags?
- If market moved, wider walking space
- Maybe down on the greenbelt where no streets are needed to cross
- Too many dogs and strollers, not sure what to do
- Overheard: "I've been to a farmer's market that opened so late...open at 8:00 am." "Where is the ATM?" "It would be nice to see some new vendors." "Where are the bike racks?"
- At crossroads, (not at fountain area), perhaps have water buckets where dogs could drink from. A lot of people bring their pets and their pets seem to be really warm. Not sure if this is feasible, though, just a thought...\*\*Just saw water bowls outside Charley's! Great!
- The market should be open earlier
- Appreciation for the fresh Organic producers
- My children likes pickling the food and it is educational for them
- Food traffic is too heavy, spread it out so it can be more leisurely
- Potties, where are they?
- Keep in mind the number of newcomers on a given day and focus some efforts on educating them or making the experience better for them through the use of maps, signage and much more visibility in terms of the information booth.