



CLARKSTON FARMERS MARKET RAPID MARKET ASSESSMENT REPORT SEPTEMBER 25, 2021



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University of Idaho
Extension

CLARKSTON FARMERS MARKET

RAPID MARKET ASSESSMENT

SEPTEMBER 25, 2021

Market Name: Clarkston Farmers Market
Year Founded: 2004
Market Social Media <https://www.facebook.com/clarkstonfarmersmarket/>
Date of Assessment: September 25, 2021
Market Hours: Saturdays from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm
Market Season: June through September
Location: Beachview Park @ Chestnut St., Clarkston, Washington
Market Manger: Danielle Evans, clarkstonfarmersmarket@gmail.com
Market Staff: Part-time manager
Fees: Season, Monthly, Weekly & Walk-on varies by vendor type
Vendors: Estimated 16 vendors on September 25
Product Mix: 8 Agricultural (3 produce, 1 honey, 1 eggs/poultry, 1 flowers, 1 herbs)
12 Craft/Art
0 Prepared Food
2 Service (SNAP-ed)/Entertainment (musician)
RMA Team Members: Colette DePhelps, Area Extension Educator, Community Food Systems, University of Idaho (UI), Moscow
Mackenzie Lawrence, Administrative Coordinator, Community Food Systems and Small Farms, UI Extension, Moscow
Kathie Tiff, Extension Educator, Community Development, Family and Consumer Sciences, UI Extension, Nez Perce County, Lewiston
Raven DePhelps, RMA Volunteer, Moscow
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Introduction: On Saturday, September 25, 2021, University of Idaho Northern District Extension performed a Rapid Market Assessment (RMA) of the Clarkston Farmers Market. The assessment had three components: 1) adult customer count, 2) four-question dot survey, and 3) constructive comments and observations by the RMA Team.ⁱ This report provides a summary of the RMA findings.

The Clarkston Farmers Market operates from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm every Saturday from June to September. Located in Beachview Park @ Chestnut Street, the market takes place in a grassy area that can be accessed by the adjacent parking lot or by walking up a grassy slope from Chestnut Street. The Market is organized as a nonprofit organization with the aim of creating a community gathering place where people from the Lewis-Clark Valley and surrounding areas can find farm fresh local produce, eggs, honey and a variety of handcrafted artisan products and homemade foods.

PART 1: ADULT CUSTOMER COUNT

Market customer counts are estimates. They are derived by counting the number of adult shoppers in the market at opening plus hourly customer estimates. To obtain hourly estimates, RMA Team members were stationed at each market entrance for 20 minutes. For this four-hour market, counts were taken 20-40 minutes after the hour. Using clickers, team members counted the number of adults entering the market in that ten-minute period. The twenty-minute counts were then multiplied by three (20 minutes x 3 = 60 minutes) to obtain an estimate of adult customers entering the market (Table 1). The number of children entering the market were counted using the same method (Table 2). Approximately 316 adults and 43 children attended the market on September 25, 2021.

Table 1: Estimated Total Adult Customers: 316		
Time	Count	Percentage
8:00 am – at opening	7	6%
8:00 am to 9:00 am	69	21%
9:00 am to 10:00 am	126	38%
10:00 am to 11:00 pm	90	27%
11:00 pm to 12:00 pm	24	7%

Throughout the three hours of the market, there was a steady flow of adult customers. Market attendance dropped off considerably during the last hour. As shown in Tables 1 and 2, the peak hour for adult customers and children appears to be between 9:00 am and 10:00 am. It is important to note that on the day of the RMA, the Nez Perce County Fair was also taking place

and may have impacted market attendance. September 25th was also the last day of the 2021 market season.

Table 2: Estimated Total Children: 43		
Time	Count	Percentage
9:00 am – at opening	1	7%
9:00 am to 10:00 am	12	27%
10:00 am to 11:00 am	27	60%
11:00 am to 12:00 pm	0	0%
12:00 pm to 1:00 pm	3	7%

Market customers entered the market from both the south parking lot and from Chestnut Street. The RMA team also observed a significant number of customers entering the market from the parking lot stepping over the parking curbs and walking between market vendor booths.

PART 2: FOUR-QUESTION DOT SURVEY

One adult per household was asked to participate in a four-question dot survey. Each survey question was written on a separate poster board. Customers were given four dots and asked to use one dot per question to indicate their answers. Children's dots, distinguished by color, were not counted.

Approximately 50% (159) of the adults who visited the market participated in the dot survey by answering one or more of the dot survey questions. Dot survey posters were changed mid-market, at 10:00 am, to test whether there were substantial differences in responses between the first and second half of the market. There were more survey respondents during the first half (93 adult respondents) than during the second half of the market (66 adult respondents), which is to be expected as market attendance was highest between 8:00 am to 12:00 pm.

Using the dot survey, market shoppers were asked four questions:

1. What is your primary source of information about events in the L-C Valley?
2. How often did you come to the Clarkston Farmers Market this season?
3. What is the best day/time for you to attend the Clarkston Farmers Market?
4. What one change would increase your attendance at this market?

Primary Source of Information About Events in the Lewiston-Clarkston Valley

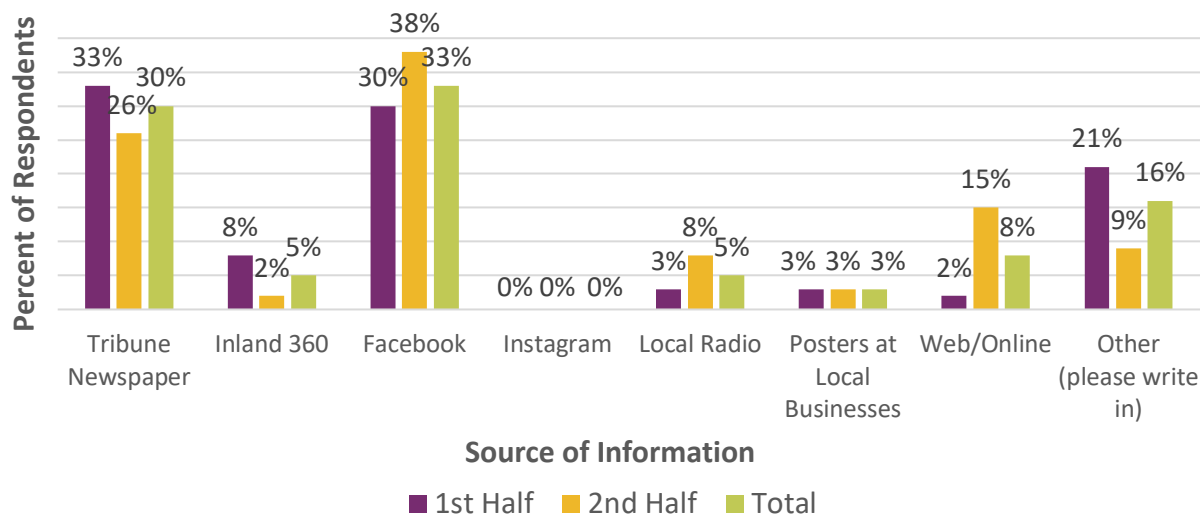
To better promote the market and prioritize allocation of advertising dollars and time, market management was interested in learning where shoppers find information about community events in the Lewiston-Clarkston (L-C) Valley. As shown in Table 3, about 33% of all customers who responded to the dot survey indicated Facebook was their primary source of information about community events. Another 30% indicated they find their community event information in the Tribune Newspaper. Of the 16% of shoppers who indicated they get their event information from “other” sources, over half indicated they receive their information by word of mouth or from friends or family. Only two people indicated they primarily use other news outlets, specifically the Daily Fly and KLEW News.

Table 3: Question #1 – What is your primary source of information about events in the L-C Valley?

Source	Percent of Respondents (n=157)
Tribune Newspaper	30%
Inland 360	5%
Facebook	33%
Instagram	0%
Local Radio	5%
Posters at Local Businesses	3%
Web/Online	8%
Other (please write in)	16%

Comparing responses from shoppers during the first and second half of the market, we see more the shoppers between 8:00 am to 10:00 am identified printed sources of information, specifically the Tribune Newspaper and the Inland 360, as their primary sources of information about L-C Valley events. In the second half of the market, a greater percentage of shoppers indicated Facebook and web/online as their primary sources of event information.

Figure 1: Comparison of Primary Source of Information between the First Half and Second Half of Market n=157

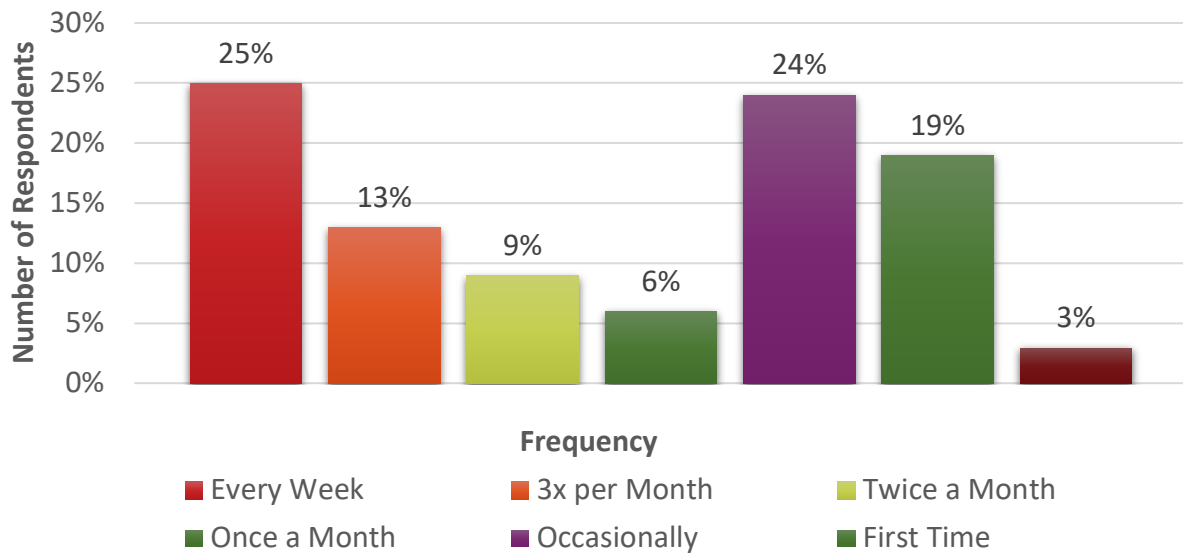


Dot survey responses indicate advertising through the local newspaper and Facebook may be effective ways to continue reaching current shoppers while other avenues of market promotion, such as developing a Clarkston Farmers Market website and/or expanding activity on the market's Instagram account, might be ways to reach new market clientele.

Shopping Frequency

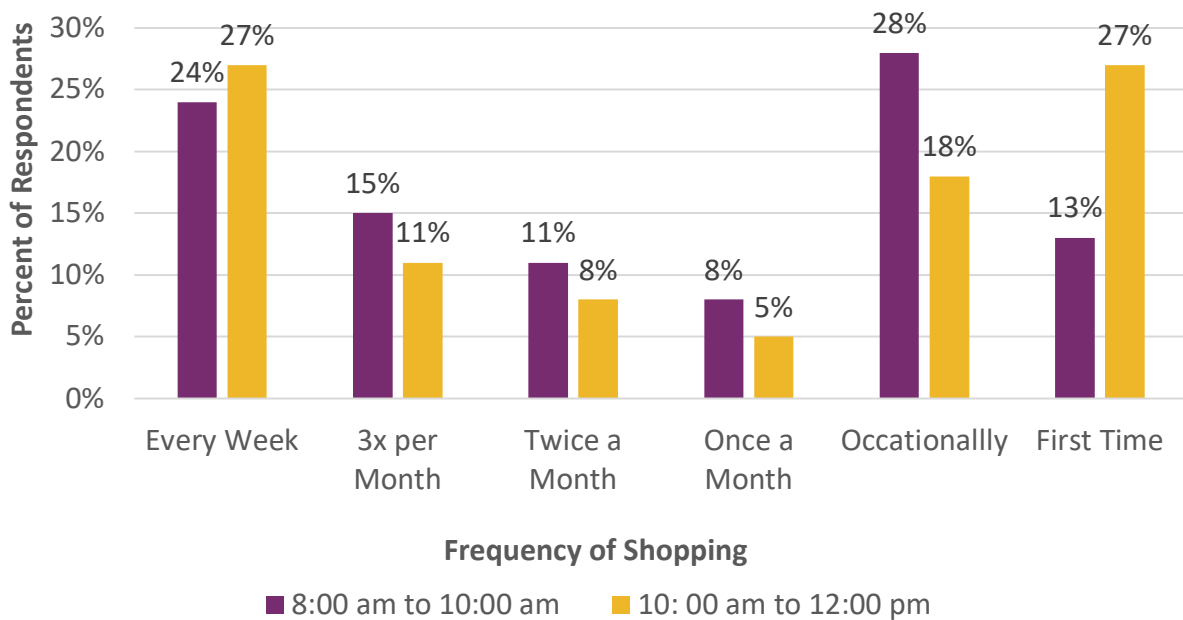
The second dot survey question asked shoppers how often they come to the Clarkston Farmers Market. Approximately 38% of the shoppers at market on September 25th were frequent market shoppers with 25% of indicating they come to the market weekly and another 13% coming three times per month. (Figure 2). Twenty-five percent of shoppers indicated they shopped at the market once or twice a month. Another 24% indicated they shop the market occasionally and 19% indicated it was their first time at market. Only 3% indicated they were visitors from out of the area.

Figure 2: Question #2 How often did you come to the Clarkston Farmers Market this season? n=159



Frequency of shopping at the market varied slightly between the first half and second half of the market (Figure 3) with more occasional early shoppers and more first time later shoppers.

Figure 3: Comparison of Shopping Frequency between First Half and Second Half of Market n=159

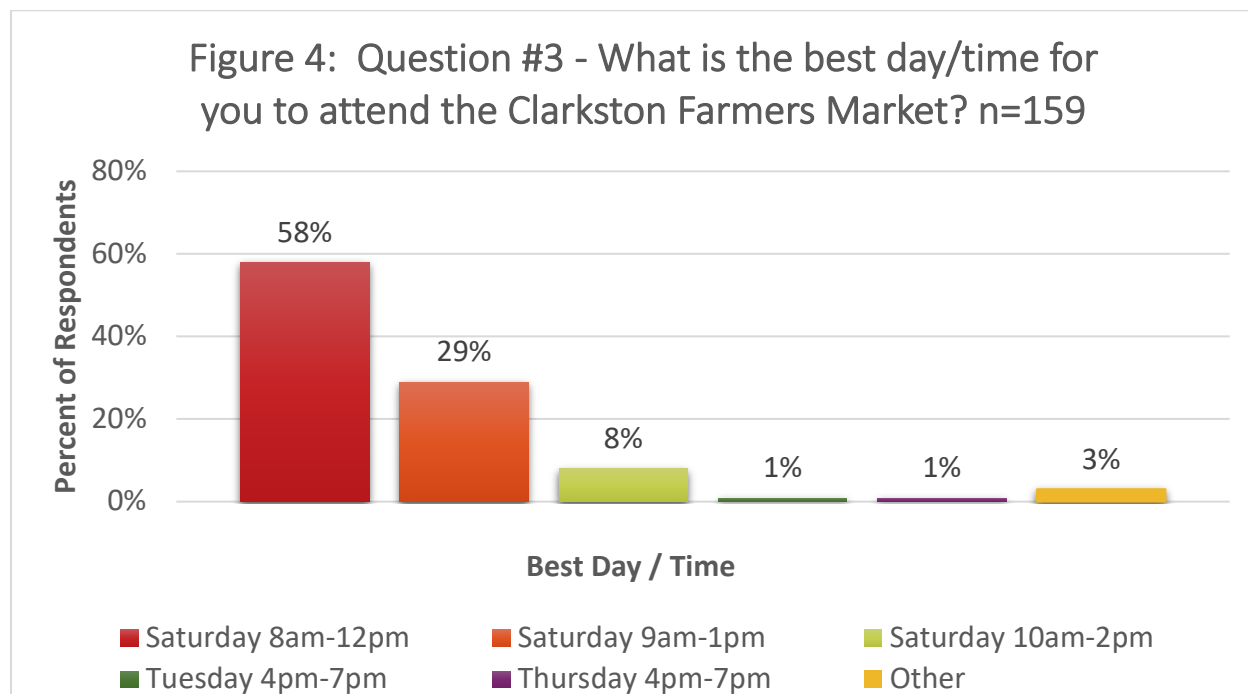


To increase the number of regular shoppers, the market and/or market vendors might consider encouraging shoppers to sign-up to receive email reminders about the market and what will be available each week. An email sign-up sheet could be placed at the market information and SNAP-ed table. A newsletter sign-up button could also be added to the market's Facebook page as an action button linked to a Google form.

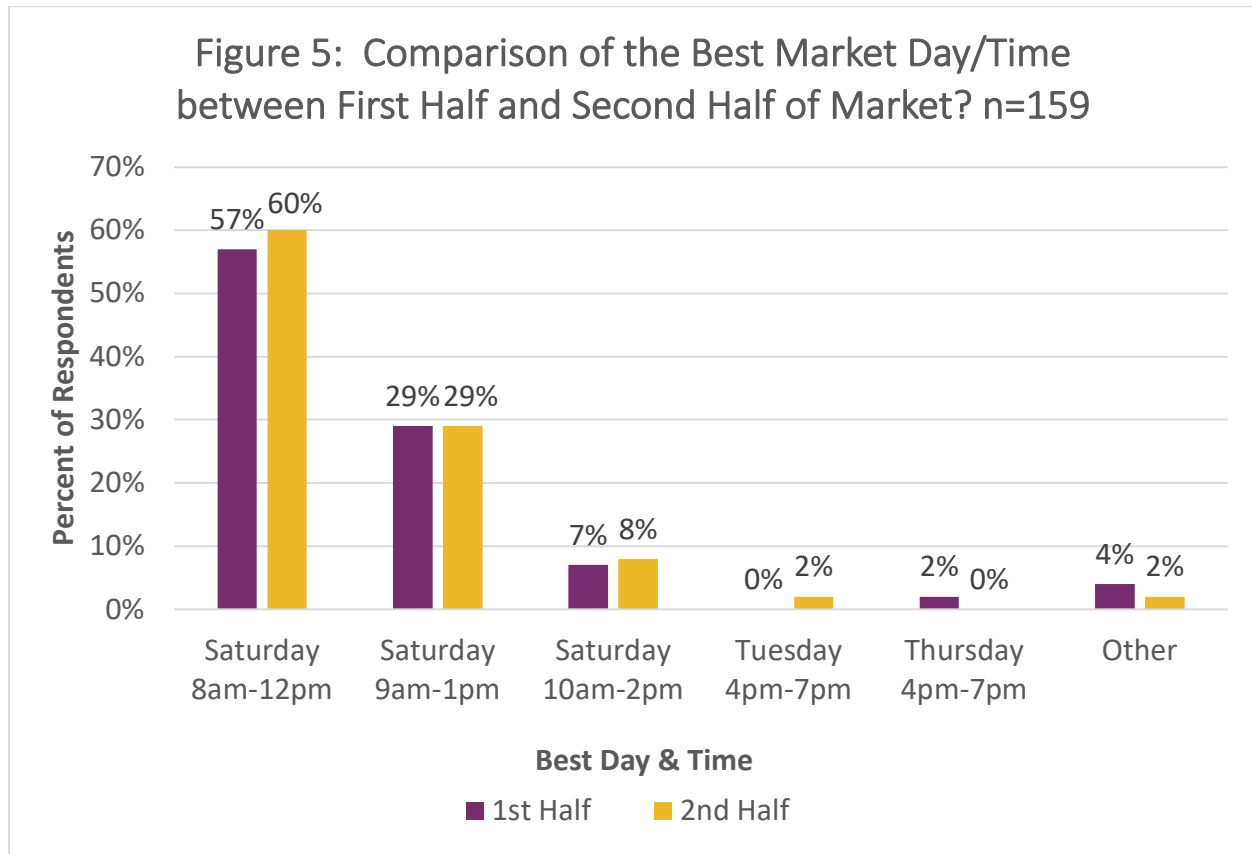
Best Market Day & Time

The Clarkston Farmers Market management was interested in learning what is the best day and time for customers to attend the market. Survey respondents were encouraged to choose their preferred day and time from a pre-determined list of responses or provide their own written comments (Figure 4).

Sixty-percent (93) of survey respondents indicated the current market schedule, Saturday from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm, works best for them to attend the market. Another 29% (46) indicated Saturday's from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm would be their preference. Just 2% (3) of market shoppers indicated they would prefer a weekday late-afternoon to early evening market. Four people wrote in they would prefer a Friday afternoon/evening market and one person indicated a Sunday market as their preference.



When comparing responses between the first and second half of the market, there was little variation in survey respondent's preferences (Figure 5).



Changes to Increase Market Attendance

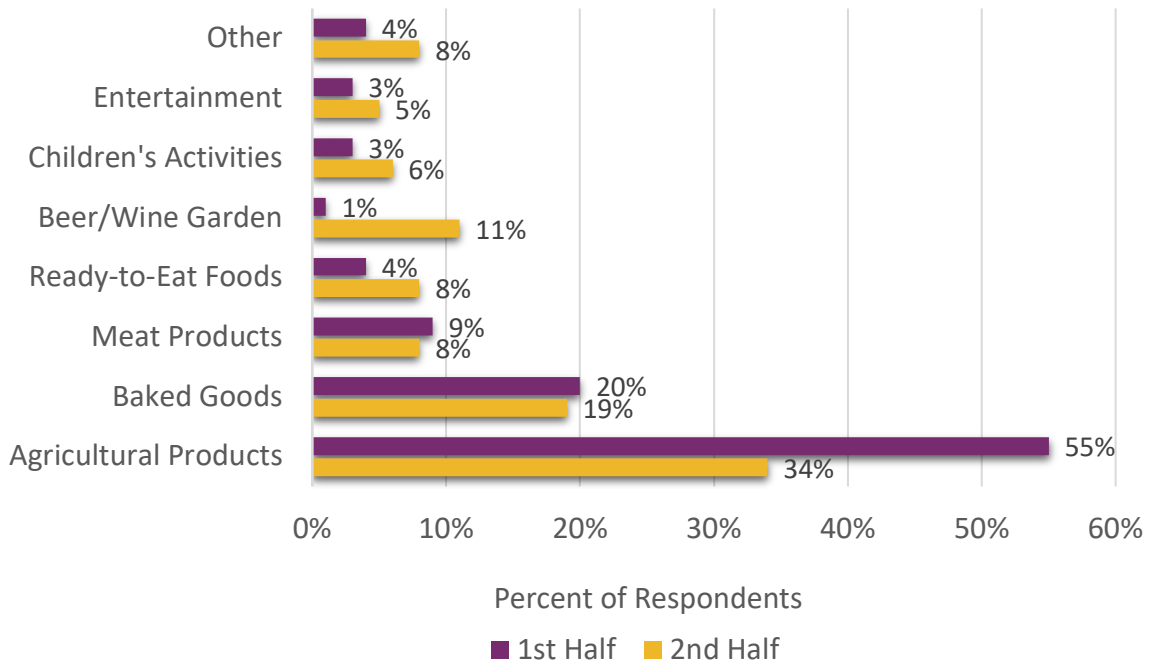
The fourth dot survey question asked shoppers what one change would increase their attendance of the Clarkston Farmers Market. Overall, market shoppers indicated they would like to see more agricultural products (46%) and more baked goods (20%) (Table 4).

Approximately 8% of shoppers would like to see more meat products and between 4-6% of shoppers indicated interest in more ready-to-eat foods, a beer/wine garden, children's activities or entertainment. Shoppers who chose "other" indicated interest in a coffee stand (4 people), candles (1 person), and a handwash station/picnic table (1 person). Four people suggested leaving the market as is.

Table 4: Question #4 – What one change would increase your attendance at this market?	
Change	Percent of Respondents (n=153)
More Agricultural Products	46%
More Baked Goods	20%
More Meat Products	8%
More Ready-to-Eat Foods	6%
Beer/Wine Garden	5%
Children's Activities	5%
Entertainment	4%
Other (please write in)	6%

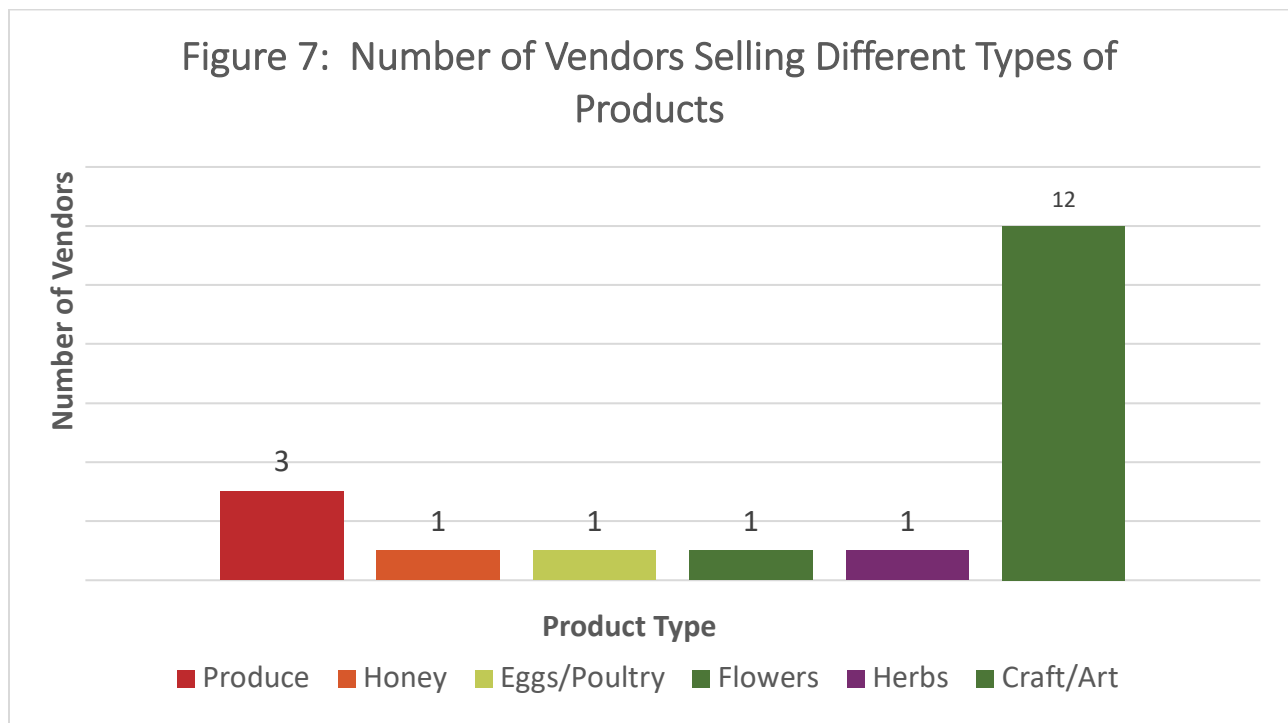
When comparing survey responses between the first half and second half of the market (Figure 6), 55% of shoppers attending market between 8:00 am to 10:00 am would like to see more agricultural products followed by baked goods (20%), and meat production (9%). While shoppers in the latter half of the market would also like to see more agricultural products (34%), baked goods (19%) and meat products (8%) at market, they were also interested in ready-to-eat foods (8%) and beer/wine (11%).

Figure 6: Comparison of Priority Market Changes between First Half and Second Half of Market n=153



Clarkston Farmers Market Vendors

Multiple Clarkston Farmers Market vendors sell more than one type of product at their market booth. On the day of the RMA, more vendor booths were selling crafts than agricultural products (Figure 7). No vendors were selling ready-to-eat foods or drinks. In addition to produce vendors, the day of the market there was a SNAP-Ed program offering children's activities at the market information table and musical entertainment at the south end of the market.



Vendor Responses to Dot Survey Questions

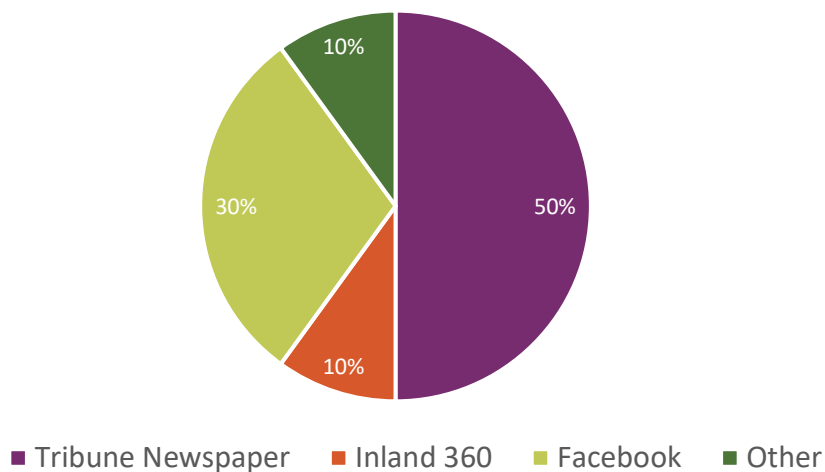
Clarkston Farmers Market vendors were invited to participate in the September 25, 2021 dot survey. Vendors dots were a different color than customers, allowing their responses to be distinguished from those of market customers. Vendors were not included in the market customer count and vendor responses to all four dot survey questions were not included in the market customer data provided above.

Ten vendors participated in the RMA dot survey. Nine vendor respondents indicated they attend the market every week and one vendor indicated the attend twice a month.

Vendors' Primary Source of Information About Events in the Lewiston-Clarkston Valley

Like market customers, vendors at the Clarkston Farmers Market indicated their primary sources of information about events in the L-C Valley were the Tribune Newspaper (50%), Facebook (30%), and the Inland 360 (10%). One vendor answered “other” but did not specify the information source. No vendors identified Instagram, local radio, posters or web/online searches as their primary sources of community event information.

**Figure 8: Vendors' Primary Sources of Information
about L-C Valley Events**



Best Days/Time for Vendors to Attend the Clarkston Farmers Market

Most market vendors (70 %) who responded to the dot survey indicated Saturday was their best day to attend market. Three of vendors indicated the hours of 8:00 am to 12:00 pm worked best for them, while four preferred 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. Three vendor respondents indicated a preference for afternoon/evening markets, though preferred days varied between Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday.

Changes to Increase Vendor Market Attendance

When asked one change would increase their attendance of the Clarkston Farmers Market. Vendors' responses varied widely (Table 5). The one vendor who provided a written response when choosing the other category suggested a coffee "garden." Vendor responses to this question are problematic as it is unclear whether they interpreted the question to ask about their own priorities or what they believed would attract more customers to the market.

Table 5: What one change would increase Vendors' attendance at this market?

Change	Percent of Respondents (n=10)
More Agricultural Products	1
More Baked Goods	2
More Meat Products	0
More Ready-to-Eat Foods	0
Beer/Wine Garden	2
Children's Activities	2
Entertainment	0
Other	3



PART 3: CONSTRUCTIVE COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS SUMMARY

The purpose of this section of the report is to provide the market with feedback about individual aspects of the market observed by the University of Idaho Extension RMA Team. Comments and observations were not solicited from or by the market's youth volunteers. These remarks are not intended to be comprehensive, nor do they provide an overall "grade" to the market. Rather, the feedback provides information as to what RMA team members appreciated and what they thought might be changed or improved.

Vendors and Products

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

Most important message to Market Manager from this sheet:

- It would be good to have at least 1 more vegetable vendor as an anchor vendor
- Elderly are primary market customers, make sure this is a safe (and convenient) place for seniors to shop.
-

Most significant observation I will take back with me:

- Market is heavy on craft vendors but does have eggs & honey & some vendors doing a craft and vegetable combo booth
- Market layout needs to match the mobility of market customers
- More food and drink options would attract customers and keep them at market longer

What I appreciated about the Market:

- Interesting mix of vendors – local honey from established generational family of beekeepers, local author with books and marketing materials, fruit and vegetable vendors, lots of hand crafts – crochet, sewing, candles, soap, signs
- Many conversations happening – good "market hum" of voices. Conversations & greetings reflected repeat customers
- Observed produce vendor providing extra assistance to elderly customer
- First hour, produce greatest draw with mostly older customers
- Craft vendors have engaging displays
- Candle vendor provided fall décor feel and engaged customers with "V" booth layout
- Several vendors came out from behind the booth to engage and answer customer questions
- Appreciate vendors who clearly post prices
- Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) accepted, also signs for accepting EBT and WIC at booths
- Good variety of vendors for size of market
- Happy atmosphere

- Friendly vendors – engaging with customers
- Some great vendor displays and signage
- Market has the EBT program!

Changes or improvements that may be needed:

- There is a gentleman with a card table right at edge of grass and parking lot. Not clear if he is part of organized market or not – may be liability issue if he's not
- Perhaps have the SNAP-ed table located mid-market so it is more visible to customers (and youth)
- Vendors with tables at the back of their booths might benefit by moving tables forward to increase product visibility
- Side walls on tents with most sun exposure might be helpful for vendors on east side of market
- Need more prepared foods, value-added foods, and baked goods
- Consider coffee/drink vendor or cart
- Market EBT booth and children's activities should have their own tent and be located within the market footprint for ease of access and visibility – especially for elderly people. Perhaps an "end cap" to the primary entrance with handicap access.
- East side of market had many vacancies – consider more equal spacing of booths
- Most vendors did not use backs of vehicles during market. However, they block parking and visibility from street. Have them unload and move vehicles out of parking lot. Carefully review necessary exceptions to this policy.
- Some vendors could improve signage – pricing, business name, etc.
- Depth and height in displays would improve some booths
- More food and/or drink vendors and options
- Market information, credit card processing and market bucks, WIC and senior nutrition programs, and kids' activities need to be more centrally located in the market footprint and more visible
- Raspberry vendor was very disconnected from market footprint – seemed like they weren't actually part of the market

Physical Site

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

Most important message to Market Manager from this sheet:

- Need to design and mark safe modified entrance for elderly and those with disabilities
- Suggest creating alternative market layout options and evaluating based on accessibility, shade, safety, and other feedback from RMA team
- Where the vendors are located in the park is not safe and easily accessible for elderly and/or other-abled customers. Market footprint is very spread out and in-cohesive. No clear flow of customers.

Most significant observation I will take back with me:

- Beautiful site for a market with plenty of paved parking
- Beautiful location with assets that can work for the market!

What I appreciated about the Market:

- Market is laid out well with vendors facing in 2 rows with large swatch of grass in middle
- Very nice, paved parking lot with high school lot as overflow parking if needed
- Site is a community park so beautifully maintained by City of Clarkston – large expanse of green grass and trees
- Manager commented that market has a consistent base of customers, but numbers of customers & vendors are lower due to pandemic
- Open lane allows strolling through the market
- Vendors have bright canopies which is helpful for sun and shading customers – especially in full sun
- Restrooms and playground on site (could be elevated in advertising)
- Ample parking – in lot, on street, and across street
- Visually beautiful – green grass, trees, open space
- Good parking
- Beautiful spot! Trees provide some shade, lots of open space and room for market to grow and/or change its layout
- Close to playground for kids and families
- Physical site is very conducive to adding “festival” type elements to market

Changes or improvements that may be needed:

- Access from parking lot onto grassy site of market is difficult. Especially noticeable during first hour of market when customer base was older adults/couples
- Prioritize use of park tables for customers – to rest, engage in children’s activities, etc.
- Map out designated vendor parking area

- More children's activities on open grass areas – i.e. on north side of market for better visibility when walking through market
- Provide tent or umbrellas for musicians
- Consider providing tables/chairs for customers to sit and listen to music/eat (if prepared foods are offered)
- Clearly mark handicap parking spaces
- Put sandwich board signs for the market in town on main streets with directional arrows to market
- Post directional signs to restrooms
- No clear entrances – it is not clear how to access the market footprint. More signage is needed in and around market location.
- Market needs to carefully evaluate ADA accessibility
 - Customers have to step over concrete barriers and down on grass to enter market; older customers can't easily or safely access market
 - Observed many risky/unstable customer entrances into market
 - Corner areas by trashcans are only areas to enter market without curbs; narrow entrances don't allow easy access for individuals with walkers, other mobility devices
 - Need more and clearly marked designated handicap parking in good location for entering market
- No clear flow of market
- Consider positioning popular anchor vendors like Don's Produce more centrally in the market footprint to encourage shopping throughout
- More signage for the market in and around park and at major intersections throughout town/area



Atmosphere

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

Most important message to Market Manager from this sheet:

- Would like to see some “unifying” marketing or signage at booths

Most significant observation I will take back with me:

- Colorful, friendly market
- The physical site provides many options for a safe, enjoyable and efficient market layout
- Laid back market vibe that offers a casual shopping experience

What I appreciated about the Market:

- The weather was pleasant with sunshine and blue skies
- There is music played for most of market by Michael and partner, well-liked local musicians
- SNAP-ed program is established part of market. The curriculum engages youth in the market looking for and identifying specific fruits and vegetables. Also provides opportunity for youth to talk to growers about growing food.
- Market is vibrant with colorful displays in general. Shoppers are middle-aged and older – there are those who shop with specific 1 or 2 vendors and leave but majority are social shoppers strolling and visiting.
- Note: Nez Perce County Fair same weekend, may impact number of children at market
- Friendly. People enjoy the market. Vendors are friendly and engaging.
- Many customers recognize one another and stop to chat
- Early shopping (1st hour) serious produce shoppers
- Some children/families arrived after 9am – still predominantly older customers throughout the four hours of market

Changes or improvements that may be needed:

- Signage: if the Clarkston market has a logo or a font they use, it would be nice to design a version that could be “velcroed” to the canopies or a large standing or A-frame sign in middle of market space to highlight a vendor or specialty community event or announcements
- Maybe a children’s table with books to read or pictures of vegetables/fruits to color
- Assets of the park are under-utilized (play area, bathrooms, picnic tables)
- Suggest moving market to a east-west lane between play area and parking lot to increase use of park assets and increase visibility from street to create a more family conducive atmosphere

- Vendor distribution was uneven – craft vendors seemed ignored by many customers and put on “other side” of market
- Observed sales happening outside market hours – manager should consider making “market open” and “market closed” announcements



General Public Comments

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

Most important message to Market Manager from this sheet:

- Market customers enjoy the market and there are many regular customers who socialize with one another and their favorite vendors

Most significant observation I will take back with me:

- The market felt relaxed but not designed to maximize vendor sales

What I appreciated about the Market:

- “More variety is always nice – there used to be a lot more vegetable vendors. One vendor had the best green beans ever a couple of years ago.” – customer comment
- “I’ve been here 17 years and I’m the only true vegetable vendor. She (manager) chased the others off.” (well-known disgruntled vendor who said he has shared his opinion with manager, observer did not hear any other opinion remotely similar to this one)
- “I just love this market.” – customer comment
- “The market manager is doing a great job.” – vendor
- Several customers expressed appreciation for the market
- Older customers talking about coming regularly to get their veggies
- Really strong core shopping group, especially early in market, that are loyal to the market and are regular shoppers

Changes or improvements that may be needed:

- “I would come more often if they had the products I want.” – monthly customer looking for ag products
- Customer and vendor mentioned changes to policies about plastic bags for stores – perhaps it would be beneficial to clarify if and how that might (or might not) affect market and vendors
- When the RMA team arrived at 6:45 am, there was:
 - No manager or market representative available to answer questions or help vendors identify where their assigned space was
 - One newer vendor was asking about space assignments and where to start setting up but was unable to get any answers until after market manager arrived around/after 7:15 am
 - Lack of manager/market representation during vendor set-up meant that some vendors were unable to abide by market policy and have their booth set up by 7:30 am – consider providing additional resources like a market map with vendor locations, clearly market spaces, and reviewing this set-up policy
 - Vendor spaces were not clearly marked – very difficult to know where/how to set up if you are not a very regular vendor



ⁱ The Rapid Market Assessment methodology was developed by Larry Lev, et. al, at Oregon State University. For more information on Rapid Market Assessments, see Oregon Small Farms Technical Report No. 6: Lev, Larry, Linda Brewer and Garry Stephenson. Tools for Rapid Market Assessments. Special Report 1088-E, Oregon Small Farms Technical Report No. 6. Oregon State University, May 2008. Retrieved from <https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/sr1088>