



# Oregon Small Farms Technical Report

## Hillsdale Farmers' Market Rapid Market Assessment

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Oregon Small Farms  
Technical Report  
Number 13

August 2002

Oregon State University  
Extension Service

**Hillsdale Farmers' Market  
Rapid Market Assessment  
August 11, 2002**

**Market Name:** Hillsdale Farmers' Market  
**Date of Assessment:** August 11, 2002  
**Market Hours:** Sunday 10 AM -- 2 PM  
**Location:** Capitol Highway near Sunset (Parking lot)  
**Market staff:** Manager plus volunteer staff  
**Began:** 2002  
**Fees:** Basic is \$30/week (with discounts can be reduced to as low as \$20/week)  
**Vendors:** 26 (agricultural and food)  
**Market sales:** \$18,000 (approximate sales for this day)  
**Market attendance:** 2100  
**Team Members:** Larry Lev, Agricultural and Resource Economics, OSU  
Garry Stephenson, Benton County Extension, OSU  
Linda Brewer, AREc, OSU  
Ginger Rapport, Beaverton Farmers' Market  
Val Blaha, Forest Grove Farmers' Market  
Janne Stark, Portland Farmers' Market  
Suzanne Briggs, Hollywood Farmers' Market  
Roberta Anderson, Hollywood Farmers' Market  
Teri Pierson, Community Food Matters  
Erica Strauss, Community Food Matters

**Part 1: Consumer Information**

**Estimated Total Attendance:** 2132 adults

***Comment:** attendance was steady for first three hours and declined for the fourth hour. For the market as a whole, 42% entered from Capitol Highway, 37% entered from the direction of Sunset and 20% entered through the two small entrances from the other section of the parking lot.*

Dot Poster Results:

**Question 1:** How much did you spend at the farmers' market today?

All shoppers (10:00 AM –2:00 PM) spent an average of **\$16.93**

Early shoppers (before 11:45) spent an average of **\$18.23**

Late shoppers (after 11:45) spent an average of **\$15.67**

***Comment:** Sales per shopping group were very respectable for a market with this number of vendors. The largest Saturday markets achieve higher sales per shopper. Many non-Saturday markets and smaller Saturday markets have lower sales per shopper.*

**Total value of sales in the market** were estimated using the following 2-step process:

- ❖ 2132 shoppers divided by 2.0 adults per shopping group= 1066 shopping groups (This is a conservative estimate of the number of shopping groups)
- ❖  $1066 * \$16.93 = \mathbf{\$18,000}$

Sales per vendor:  $\$18,000/26$  vendors = **\$692**

**Question 2:** Has shopping at this farmers' market caused you to shop at Hillsdale businesses and restaurants more often?

No change	49%
Yes, a little	34%
Yes, quite a bit	6%
Not sure	5%
Live outside the area	6%

**Comment:** 40 % indicated that the market has resulted in increasing how often they shop at local merchants.

**Question 3:** Where do you live?

2 miles or less	74%
2-5 miles	16%
5-10 miles	6%
More than 10 miles	4%

**Comment:** Most of those in the 2 miles or less category actually wished to indicate that they were less than 1 mile but we didn't have that as an option. Clearly this market primarily serves its neighborhood. If the market wishes to expand, it may need to target customers who are farther away and interested in a Sunday market option.

**Question 4:** What other area markets have you shopped this season (select all that apply)?

None	38%
Beaverton Saturday	30%
Portland Saturday	30%
Portland Wednesday	16%
Tigard Saturday	11%

Portland Thursday	7%
Beaverton Wednesday	7%
Lake Oswego Saturday	6%

**Other markets receiving less than 5%:**

- Hollywood
- Hillsboro Saturday
- Hillsboro Tuesday
- Vancouver
- Milwaukie
- Dundee
- Cedar Mills
- People's

***Overall the 62% who shopped at least one market had shopped at an average of 1.9 markets this season in addition to Hillsdale.***

**Question 5:** What area markets did you shop last season (select all that apply)?

None	21%
Beaverton Saturday	48%
Portland Saturday	45%
Portland Wednesday	21%
Tigard Saturday	21%
Portland Thursday	8%
Hollywood Saturday	8%
Lake Oswego Saturday	7%
Beaverton Wednesday	7%

**Others receiving fewer than 5% were:**

- Hillsboro Saturday
- Hillsboro Tuesday
- Vancouver
- Milwaukie
- Dundee
- Cedar Mills
- People's

***Overall the 79% who shopped at least one market shopped at an average of 2.17 markets last season.***

**Comments:** *The “this season” question was asked in the first half of market and the “last season” question was asked in the second half. Hillsdale has attracted shoppers who did not shop ANY markets last year (21%). In addition, Hillsdale has taken away shoppers from surrounding*

*markets (the NONE increased to 38% for this year). Patronage (in percentage terms) at all of these other markets is down among Hillsdale shoppers. We didn't ask about shopping frequency at other markets but from the comments that shoppers made frequency appeared to be down even among those who continue to shop at neighboring markets.*

*Since the Hillsdale market is quite a bit smaller than many neighboring markets, the impact may not be very noticeable when looked at from the perspective of these other markets. Also the season is not yet finished so some respondents may shop at neighboring markets from this point forward.*

## **Part 2: Team Member Comments/Suggestions/Questions**

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 outsiders used their “fresh eyes” to provide feedback about the individual market elements that they observed. They noted what they liked, what they thought could be changed or improved and questions that they had. The RMA process is about sharing – both the market being observed and the markets that sent the observers should gain new insights and ideas.

### **Physical Site**

#### **What team members appreciated about the market site:**

- Excellent use of a small space (congratulations on doing such a great job!).
- Fairly good accessibility. Having multiple entry points is a plus as it allows many to park quite close to the market and contributes to the smooth flow of customers.
- The slope has its disadvantages but gives a San Francisco feel to the market.
- It's easy to shop in the lower market for those who have trouble getting around.
- The wagons were great (but is there the potential for a problem if one rolls down the slope with a kid in it?)
- The mural to cover up the garbage dump was great – can a sign be put up to credit the painter?
- Yellow ropes behind vendors are good – defines the space and prevents theft
- Darling planter entrance (but could it have real flowers?) Also the artificial flowers are falling off the arches
- Good to have prepared foods near each other (for customers).
- Great to have seating area & music out of flow.

- Volunteer tent in prominent spot. Plenty of volunteers were visible at most times.
- No bottlenecks in going through the market; easy to do a “first loop” to see who’s here.
- Market has great visibility from the street.

Improvements and questions:

- The frail elderly and others with disabilities obviously face challenges in dealing with the incline. In the long run, flat site would be preferable.
- Because of the restricted space, need to watch trip hazards (such as boxes) and vendor booths carefully. Vendor boundaries are not clearly defined.
- Need a strong visual anchor in upper part of market that currently has less traffic
- Not enough signage on Capitol Hwy. Current signs are set to low and need to be bigger.
- Use a sandwich board on the street
- Could a large person get through inside aisle? How about a wheel chair or walker?
- Does/should the markets offer personal shoppers for those w/disabilities?
- Is there a bike rack?
- Not much shade for shoppers. Maybe move tables w/umbrellas or canopies?
- If wind is an issue, vendors need to weigh down tents.
- Overall, the market appearance is a bit bland (it is a parking lot after all). More landscaping (or plant vendors) would help.
- Is there handicapped access/parking?
- The market banner could be hung better (bunched up and partially obscured by vendor umbrella)
- I’d put a cap on the number of vendors you squeeze into a small space much the way Hollywood has done.

**Vendors/Products**

What team appreciated about the vendors and products:

- Great product mix and product quality for this size market -- a lot of organic (although some team member suggested having even more)
- Good service, friendly vendors who are willing to talk & explain products or ideas for preparation. Vendors seemed to take pride in their products.
- Market has an easy-going friendly feeling.
- Good to see families selling in the market.
- Farm photos (Flamingo Ridge and goat cheese people) are good
- Love the fresh eggs.
- Many booths have tablecloths – adds color.

- Prices higher than at some other markets? (Just an observation – not criticism!)
- Many vendors offering samples and good at interacting with customers.
- Customers appreciate how the market has expanded.

### Improvement and questions

- Many vendors have inadequate signage (not even name and location of farm in some cases). Also their signs should include some discussion of growing practices.
- The distinction between certified organic and registered organic not clearly made (this is not fair to those who are certified).
- Encourage vendors to create a visual feast through display & more eye contact w/passing by customers.
- Would like to see a strong vendor at the upper end that would be visible from the street and pull people into the market.
- Could there be signs that direct people to parking?
- Not many vendors with signs for WIC/SNP
- Wilting product – no misting going on. This would improve product quality.
- Feeling that some of their vendors were sending their ‘B’ team to the market (vendors at some booths did not have sufficient information about products etc.)
- Market needs to have coffee.
- Some vendors didn’t list prices.
- Some vendors have their produce displayed in crates on the asphalt – giving height and depth to stands would really help.
- Is there a way to discourage plastic bags use?
- Make information booth more eye-catching. Sell larger market bags
- Another bread-only vendor (not pastries) might be good.
- Keep a few “weekly” spaces available for vendors with products that don’t allow them to come every week. That way you will always have something new for your regular customers.

### **Market Atmosphere**

#### What team members appreciated about the market atmosphere:

- Small is good – farmers markets are about their community and produce, not all the extras. I think you’ve nailed it right on the head for this community!
- Although it its first year, the market has “veteran” feel to it. Inspires a feeling of loyalty and commitment. Very relaxing for peoples stress level
- Valuable cooking demonstration topic -- excellent in highlighting locally available produce, cheeses
- Strong effort to gather customer’s input.
- People clearly appreciate this is “not like Safeway”
- Good to have a market option on Sunday.
- Good conversations throughout the market.

- Slower pace than Beaverton (foot traffic). – Pleasant not to feel jammed in by the crowd, an easy market to browse & shop. But serious shoppers could move faster.
- Dogs in markets were viewed as a plus by some (and a serious problem by others – see below). Having dogs encourages dog owners & markets goers to start conversation by asking/petting the dog. Should have water bowl for dogs. (Suggestion from 2 patrons).
- Inviting and sophisticated volunteer booth. Volunteers good at helping vendors (bathroom breaks, etc.)
- Good placement of suggestion board; good suggestions generated
- Scavenger hunt was a great children's' activity
- Great to see so many people arriving on foot
- Educational activities – master preservers good – how about other non-profits?
- I saw a lot of people going to stores across the street – it is wonderful that the market brings business to stores & restaurants within walking distance of the market. It's win-win!

Improvements and questions:

- Because there was no mike on chef demo, few knew that it happened.
- Having an “MC” work with the chef helps too – “MC” can field questions, prompt the chef as needed
- Music tucked far back –too bad we can't see the performers except from a few spots. Sound was better than line of sight. Hard to get to their tip bowl.
- Rows of chairs for watching & seating more people
- No trash cans near tables.
- Nice to see folks feeling so “at home: and also proud of “their” market.
- At times all chairs were in use; offer more chairs
- Tables not in the shade.
- Fewer children, Latinos, African Americans than at some markets
- Too bad the restaurant patio doesn't get many patrons! It's such a nice space. I wonder if they'd want to do more enticement – a sign or coupons.
- Encouraging WIC & senior nutrition will also encourage diversity.
- I think that allowing dogs in a market that is so crowded is a mistake. Not because they will misbehave but because they are one more thing for people to trip over. Customers have so many things to catch their attention that they do not always watch where they are going. Dogs & leashes are easy obstacles to fall over. It will be hard to change your mind later after people have gotten used to bringing their pets

Potential Discussion Questions:

- ❖ How should this market (or any market) approach the dog issue?
- ❖ How can the market successfully maintain its volunteer support?
- ❖ As the market looks to the future, is the current site viable or do they need to be considering alternatives.
- ❖ What role should the manager play in deciding which vendor goes where?
- ❖ What role can/should the market play in upgrading vendor?