

Oregon Small Farms Technical Report



Research Brief: Why People Attend Farmers' Markets

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Research Brief: Why People Attend Farmers Markets

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Since 1998, we have asked people in eight farmers' markets why they are there. Because the markets differ, both the potential answers and the responses have varied.

Why is this data useful?

Understanding what draws consumers to their markets will help the markets to:

- Establish their rules;
- Direct their uses of market resources, including money and people;
- Target their advertising.

All of these are difficult, sometimes controversial decisions that markets must make. Does the market establish different waiting lists for farmers and crafters? Should the market pay to have musicians and / or children's' programs?

Results (Table on reverse)

Two results are most striking:

- Agricultural products represent the most important draw.
- Other factors, especially the social atmosphere at the market, also play significant roles in attracting customers.

Between 32% and 61% of the respondents choose *agricultural products* as the reason they were in or at the market. But *atmosphere* also plays an important role in attracting customers to farmers' markets. As the primary reason, atmosphere racked up big numbers at two markets: Moscow, ID with 29% and Grants Pass, OR with 25%. Elsewhere, atmosphere received 14% or fewer of the votes. In the four markets where respondents were allowed to select *equally atmosphere & products*, this combination received between 40% and 53% of the votes.

Other choices

Four of the studied markets include crafts and offered crafts as a choice. As the primary reason, crafts earned between 0 and 12% of the votes. At the Hood River, OR market the category *equally crafts & agricultural products* received 57% of the votes. Of all the markets included, Hood River had the highest percentage of tourists (47%) and the highest percentage of craft vendors (60%). *Prepared foods* appeared as a choice at two markets (Grants Pass and Moscow) and received nearly identical scores, 8% and 9% respectively.

Why are you at the Farmers' Market?

	Ag. Products	Equally Ag. Products & Atmosphere	Atmosphere	Crafts	Equally Ag. Product & Crafts	Prepared Food	Adjacent Shopping	Equally Ag. Products & Adjacent Shopping
Corvallis OR Weds	54%	45%	2%					
Corvallis OR Sat	54%	43%	3%					
Albany OR	40%	53%	7%					
Grants Pass OR	61%		25%	7%		8%		
Ashland OR	54%	40%	5%	0%				
Moscow ID	55%		29%	7%		9%		
Hood River OR	32%			12%	57%			
Hillsboro OR	49%		14%				17%	21%

These studies were completed between 1998 and 2003. *Blank cells in the table indicate those responses were not offered at the specified market.* Seven of the studies were conducted by the Oregon State University Small Farms Program. The Moscow, ID study was conducted by the University of Idaho and Rural Roots. Complete Oregon Rapid Market Assessment Reports are available at: <http://smallfarms.oregonstate.edu/relatedpubs.htm>