

Oregon Small Farms Technical Report



Rapid Assessment of Five Oregon Farmers' Markets: Qualitative Results

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Oregon Small Farms
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Rapid Assessment of Five Oregon Farmers' Markets: *Qualitative* Results for 2001

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Oregon State University Extension Service
&
Oregon Farmers' Market Association
July 2001

During the summer of 2000, teams of market managers, market board members, and extension agents conducted five rapid market assessments (Ashland, Portland Wednesday, Lane County Tuesday, Hollywood district, and Milwaukie). A separate paper provided the quantitative research results that were generated. This paper provides the individual *qualitative assessments* of each market in the order that they were conducted.

Each team member was provided with a set of three worksheets focused on the *physical market setting, the market atmosphere, and the vendors and products* and was asked to record all of the strengths and weaknesses of the market. After a discussion session at the end of the market, the notes were combined to provide one report per market. As you will see the writing styles of the participants were maintained in the final write-up. These assessments should be viewed as a *snapshot of the market* on a particular day. The diverse comments that are presented reflect the diversity of the study teams. What one observer felt was a strength may have been viewed by another as a weakness. Our expectation is that readers will come away with new ideas about the many different ways that markets in Oregon function.

The primary goal of this participatory project was to develop a two-way learning process between those doing the studies and the markets being studied. We felt this goal was achieved and will continue to conduct these assessments not only in Oregon but also in Washington and Idaho.

Before turning to the assessments, here are some comments from participants:

My experience with the assessment project was wonderful, both as a team participant in Ashland and having a team visit our Wednesday market. The information and insights were wonderful. It was time well spent and enjoyable, even in the middle of a busy market season! What a good way to meet my peers. Sometimes I feel isolated (even though I am surrounded by vendors, customers and board members!). No one really understands like another market manager. It is great to work with such a sharing, caring, dedicated bunch of folks! Thank you Larry and Garry for your hard work. Your efforts have raised the professional level of farmers markets throughout Oregon.

Dianne Stefani-Ruff, Portland Farmers' Market

It was a great experience to visit Milwaukie and Portland - it's fun to see the variations on a Farmers' Market theme. We are going to attempt to do a market survey and crowd count next Saturday (8/26/00) a la Garry and Larry. I was so impressed with the technique and results of the Rapid Market Survey that we are going to do our best to duplicate it at our market.

Ginger Rapport, Beaverton Farmers' Market

Participation in Rapid Market Assessments offers a rare opportunity to carefully observe other markets in action. It's especially helpful to examine the strengths and weaknesses of other policies, practices and site designs before experimenting on my own markets. I've been involved in market research with Lev and Stephenson since they began, but I still get useful insights from working with the DOT survey questions at other markets.

Rebecca Landis, Corvallis and Albany Farmers' Markets

Last August the Hollywood Farmers' Market participated in the OSU Rapid Assessment Study. The dot research method is very valuable. First and foremost the process is fun and engaging for both the volunteers and our customers. Our survey results are currently posted in the market every week in front of our volunteer booth. Each week people stop and read the results, then share how we could use this information to build a stronger market in our neighborhood. The process is so simple, we are continuing to do the dot survey in the market this year.

Suzanne Briggs, Hollywood Farmers' Market Board Member

Rapid Assessment of the Ashland Farmers' Market

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Market Name: | Rogue Valley Growers' and Crafters Market (Ashland location on Tuesdays). There are also markets on Thursday in Medford and Saturday in Jacksonville |
| Date of Assessment: | June 26, 2000 |
| Market Hours: | 8:30 AM - 1:30 PM |
| Location: | Christian Fellowship parking lot |
| Began : | In Ashland in 1990. In Medford in 1987. |
| Fees: | Flat fee per space |
| Vendors: | 60 in total split among agricultural food, and crafts |
| Team Members: | Larry Lev, Agricultural and Resource Economics, OSU Garry Stephenson, Benton County Extension, OSU Christine Howell, Josephine County, OSU Rebecca Landis, Corvallis/Albany Farmers' Markets Ry Thompson, Hollywood Farmers' Market Dianne Stefani-Rolf, Portland Farmers' Market |

The Rogue Valley Growers and Crafters market consist of three markets (Ashland on Tuesdays, Medford on Thursday, and Jacksonville on Saturday) with a single manager and board). In 2000, the market moved away from downtown to a new location in a church parking lot.

Physical Site

During our Rapid Assessment, church construction activities and stacks of building materials presented major challenges for the market and resulted in a very confused parking situation. However, vendors and shoppers seemed to accept it.

What team members appreciated about the site:

- ❖ Although not particularly attractive from Oak St., once inside the market the site is fairly comfortable. The creek and trees are particularly nice.
- ❖ Physical site is great improvement over previous location, according to vendors and shoppers; no objections from current surrounding businesses (there were conflicts at previous site). With continued promotion and word-of-mouth, new location should be successful.
- ❖ The church and its restrooms are a good resource. Church staff strongly supports the market.
- ❖ Flow looks good with 3 main aisles, 8 to 10 vendors long and doubled back-to-back, wide access for pedestrian flow. (*Still, a more circular flow would*

also offer advantages). Because of the market is so spread out, crowds were never uncomfortable.

- ❖ Organization is nice. The mix of vendors within the market works well, rather than having separate areas for food, products, plants, crafts, etc.
- ❖ Manager is good at mingling, being accessible, sharing cell phone, talking to potential vendors, and keeping a small market table for mailing list, newsletters, recipes, information on markets in Oregon, WIC, etc.
- ❖ Overall access to the site is good via two-lane street.

Comments, suggestions or questions about the physical site:

- ❖ Parking/traffic flow is a mess because of construction. Could use second person directing cars.
- ❖ Drivers/pedestrians /bikes make things a bit dangerous on the outside aisle.
- ❖ Hillside entrance is too steep for safety and has loose gravel. It should be eliminated or developed (similar to the existing stairway) because people are using it.
- ❖ If handicapped customers are not parked within church parking lot, access for them would be a challenge due to variation in grade between street and parking lot. Designate two replacement Handicap Parking spaces to replace what has been lost to construction.
- ❖ Market Port-a-Potty is not accessible for handicapped shoppers (though church may be).
- ❖ Learned from city planner that signage off site is illegal (the rules in Ashland are very strict). This is unfortunate given the isolated location of current site.
- ❖ Market set-up was reasonably smooth, although a few vendors in every market scare the rest with their driving.
- ❖ Distance from town is a constraint to attracting customers (especially tourists) or fostering synergy with other businesses. But, as mentioned above, it eases the tensions experienced at the previous site.

Market Atmosphere

What the team members appreciated about the market atmosphere:

- ❖ Great feel to the market: laid back, fun, relaxed.
- ❖ A neighborhood feel with a good level of happenstance meeting and conversation mid-market.
- ❖ Great market, with potential to be even better. Working with tourist facilities should pay off in the long run. Continue to distribute flyers, posters, etc.
- ❖ Music is a great addition; nice to have busters/street performers, but got tired of "lounge singer" near food booths.
- ❖ Educational activities: it was great to see some booths with more in-depth displays and signs (especially those with pictures).
- ❖ Most customers are female, as is typical for weekday market. Good demographics for mid-week, though a little light on school- age kids. Many Ashlanders of middle class who seek great food, hippie/local types, families, few tourists. Some browsers, but most going to favorite vendors. Some spending without concern for cost of products.

- ❖ Local customers are grateful for selection of locally-grown organic and are long-time supporters of the market.
- ❖ In general, those participating in the Dot Survey were friendly, often voicing their support for the market.
- ❖ Primavera Restaurant booth was wonderful (although they didn't actually cook anything at the market).
- ❖ Church support is a nice plus.
- ❖ Most relaxed feel to it of any market I've visited.

Comments, suggestions and questions concerning market atmosphere:

- ❖ Market itself didn't offer much in the way of education on agricultural topics.
- ❖ For some, this is a "shop-&-go" market. It would be nice to see more "hanging out" in the shade by the creek, listening to music, eating food, etc.
- ❖ Earlier (cooler) part of the day had more bustle; market became more subdued as it got warmer.

Vendors and Products

What the team members appreciated about the vendors and products:

- ❖ Most vendors were helpful, friendly, interactive and positive about the market. Good customer service with only a couple of "sitting-and-reading" vendors.
- ❖ More actual producers at market than is seen further north in Oregon, which is nice (although it wouldn't work where vendors have to cover several Saturday markets).
- ❖ Enjoyed seeing the mix of vendors (plants, crafts, produce, flowers) within each aisle.
- ❖ Food is centered in one area, due to electrical access, but this creates a restaurant zone where people can find food, drink, etc., which I like.
- ❖ Many vendors had great signs, highlighting their name and growing techniques, and used photographs. Some are better at using booth space than others—they are the ones who maximize their use of space by using vertical displays.
- ❖ Prices, overall, seem to be lower than in Portland markets, but may be higher than mid-Willamette Valley.
- ❖ Seems that most customers frequent a favorite vendor, others peruse selection in market before buying.
- ❖ Product quality is very high; everything looks fresh, clean, aesthetically great. Especially impressive how well things held up, given the hot conditions. Prices reasonable.
- ❖ Organic products are the norm in Ashland; most vendors are certified.
- ❖ Restaurant demonstration adds positive energy.
- ❖ Some samples, not a lot.
- ❖ Nursery vendors are still the stars of the market at this date (late June), maybe because of climate differences. Plants looked great.
- ❖ Surprising success despite narrow product lines in some booths.
- ❖ Some excellent practitioners of "less is more" display strategy.

- ❖ Overall the farm size of the vendors seemed to be smaller than in other parts of Oregon.

Comment, suggestions and questions related to products and vendor:

- ❖ Lack of temporary restaurants serving substantive food.
- ❖ Not enough product in the market (although this is still early in the season). For example, no June-bearing berries in the market – mostly ever-bearing.
- ❖ What happens to surplus product? (At Hollywood, vendors donate to our local food bank's dining hall).
- ❖ Many crafts (jewelry, painted rocks, etc.) don't seem to meet the guidelines. Others may qualify based on wood "gathering." Does that mean Forest Service permits?
- ❖ Some think there are too many crafts; others think there should be more. Overall, crafts did not appear to sell well. Very few tourists in the market, though that may change later in the season.
- ❖ Does this market need crafts to prosper? There's another arts market – could all the craft vendors get in that market?
- ❖ If the crafts stay, what if they were segregated?
- ❖ Growers are backbone of success, so wide selection of agricultural products is critical.
- ❖ Most displays were on tabletops, rather than vertically arranged.
- ❖ Some vendors have widely-varied product lines: agricultural products and unrelated crafts.
- ❖ The product lines of a couple of the ready-to-eat food booths were not very clear.
- ❖ Food not always covered.
- ❖ Quality of baked goods varied. Are baked goods & ready-to-eat foods juried?

Rapid Assessment of Portland Farmers' Market

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Market Name: | Portland Farmers' Market |
| Date of Assessment: | Wednesday July 12, 2000 |
| Market Hours: | 10 AM - 2 PM |
| Location: | SW Salmon and Park -- in the Park Blocks |
| Organized by: | A community group started the market. Run by a manager under the supervision of a board |
| Began: | The Wednesday market began in 1997. The Portland Saturday market began in 1992 |
| Fees | 8% of sales with a minimum of \$20 and a maximum of \$60 |
| Vendors | Agricultural vendors and restricted food vendors |
| Team Members: | Larry Lev, Agricultural and Resource Economics, OSU Garry Stephenson, Benton County Extension, OSU Barbara Slaughter, Portland Farmers' Market Suzanne Briggs, Hollywood Farmers' Market Noa O'Hare, Lane County Farmers' Market Ginger Rapport, Beaverton Farmers' Market Janet Bierbower, Rogue Valley Growers and Crafters Market |

Physical Site

What the team members appreciated about the site:

- ❖ Everyone was very impressed by the attractiveness and the activity in the market – “A great non-urban feel in an urban environment.” “...a very intimate market.”
- ❖ The trees, fountain, and grassy picnic area earned particular mention.
- ❖ The circular setup is conducive to a good flow of customers in a very crowded market. "This market shows how important it is to get the design right!"
- ❖ The five entrances provide good access to the market.
- ❖ The small market size is good for people with limited shopping time, but the peak lunch crowd is crazy!

Comments, suggestions and questions concerning the site:

Few market managers face the challenge of managing such a small, densely populated space. During the peak period (noon to 1) the market feels somewhat claustrophobic. As a result, team members felt that certain practices (detailed below) that work in more spacious markets become concerns here. The constraints faced by PFM provide an excellent learning opportunity for other market managers.

- ❖ It's unfortunate that, as people approach the PFM, they see only the backs of booths. One has to be inside the market to realize how beautiful it is.
- ❖ There is concern that some small vendors consume too much space for the amount of product they have. Could you offer half spaces or permit limited

reselling? (Note: this is more of a problem here than in a market with plenty of space.)

- ❖ Space could be better utilized by allowing closed entrances to be opened, thereby providing even better access.
- ❖ Do all the vendors understand the space boundaries? Space is so tight that the manager should police vendors who spill over into the aisles. For example, the Canby asparagus sandwich sign crowds the aisles.
- ❖ Splaying pop-up canopies should not be allowed in this market. They waste space in such a tight market.
- ❖ Vendors with large crowds need to have a plan for handling them. Otherwise, they have a negative impact on the whole market.
- ❖ Can the raised area be used? There is a lot of space up there!
- ❖ The grassy area outside the market could be put to better use.
- ❖ Need to take better advantage of corners, which are key marketing spots. This may mean asking vendors to switch spots for the good of the market.
- ❖ Large market carts could help vendors load in and out quicker and easier (Eugene has them available for vendor use.)
- ❖ Tents that are not tied down pose potential liability issues.
- ❖ A “no pets” policy may be wise in a market as crowded as this one. (Don't even the dogs on leashes cause problems?)
- ❖ Need signs at smaller entrances to market.

Market Atmosphere

What the team members appreciated about the market atmosphere:

- ❖ Nice ambiance; pleasant, not overdone.
- ❖ Low-key, comfortable, no high-pressure selling.
- ❖ An agricultural products-only policy seems entirely appropriate here. All customers are focused on produce and plants. No one was looking for “earrings for Aunt Sue.” I think this is important in boosting sales. Every face a vendor looks into is that of a potential customer.
- ❖ It appears that customers come to shop, rather than “just look” or socialize.
- ❖ Lots of smiles among shoppers; people looked like they were having a great time.
- ❖ Diverse types of shoppers (elderly, middle-age, young). There is a very pleasant, relaxed crowd in the morning. Later, there are well-dressed customers who look like they have a fair amount of money to spend without complaining about prices.
- ❖ Good information booth.
- ❖ Good to have music. It must be upbeat, yet soft enough that it doesn't interfere with business (see comments on placement below).
- ❖ Chef's demonstration was well received by shoppers.

Comments, suggestions and questions about the market atmosphere:

- ❖ Educational activities could be expanded. There was, for example, very little information about local agriculture.

- ❖ Good to have music, but placement is a bit difficult. Could it be just outside the market so that they don't interfere with shopping, but still encourages people to stick around?
- ❖ The seating for the chef's demonstration greatly increased congestion. Could it possibly be moved to just outside the market?
- ❖ The market manager and other staff should be more prominently identified with nametags.
- ❖ Could use the Portland Farmers' Market logo more throughout the market.

Vendors and products

What team members appreciated about the vendors and products:

- ❖ Serious, professional producers are the backbone of markets. The big city obviously brings out more sophisticated vendors.
- ❖ Good variety and high-quality products (seafood, meat, breads, flowers, plants, berries, vegetables, honey, salsa). Good arrangement of vendors.
- ❖ Beautiful displays: artistic, neat, clean, and "shopper-friendly."
- ❖ Good signage, for the most part.
- ❖ Vendors generally friendly.

Comments, suggestions and questions concerning vendors and products:

- ❖ The bad habits of vendors (layout, passive selling, bad signage) are universal. Some vendors need signs for farm and products, or to reposition the ones they have.
- ❖ Non-refrigerated eggs. Does this meet food safety regulations?
- ❖ Improper sampling (cookies and jam not covered). Vendors who are sampling don't appear to have hand-washing stations. Are they sharing with neighbors?
- ❖ Some shade-cloth and banners cause visibility problems.
- ❖ May want to consider changing booth assignments based on sun-tolerance of products.
- ❖ Some vendors need much less space than is allocated. This is a special concern here since space is at a premium.
- ❖ Market nametags for vendors would add a more personal element, and mandatory aprons would provide a sense of unity to the market.
- ❖ Encourage more vendors to bag or otherwise package things like beans and peas for a 'quick buy.' At least one vendor was thriving with the "pick six" approach for berries (selling half flats of mix and match pints of different types of berries).

**A Rapid Assessment of the Lane County Farmers' Market
(Eugene's Tuesday Market)**

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|----------------------------|--|
| Market Name: | Lane County Farmers' Market |
| Date of Assessment: | Tuesday July 18, 2001 |
| Market Hours: | 9:30 AM - 3:00 PM |
| Location (Street): | E. 8th and Oak Streets (both sides of 8th) |
| Organized by: | Growers organization. Run by a manager under the supervision of a board. |
| Began: | The Tuesday market began in 1995. The Saturday market has been operating since 1980. |
| Fees | In 2000, fees were \$3 + 8% of sales (different in 2001) |
| Vendors: | Mixed market with agricultural vendors, food vendors and crafters. |
| Team Members: | Larry Lev, Agricultural and Resource Economics, OSU Garry Stephenson, Benton County Extension, OSU Alexandra Stone, Horticulture, OSU Rebecca Landis, Corvallis/Albany Farmers' Markets Megan Miller-Morgan, Lincoln County Farmers' Market |

Physical Site

What the team members appreciated about the physical site:

- ❖ Vendors can adapt to small spaces.
- ❖ Market banners are nice and prominently located around the market (though start date is wrong now).
- ❖ Flow: even when off, the fountain gives a nice "round" feeling to the market. People tend to walk around the circle (fountain), then fan out.
- ❖ No major liability issues. While the fountain construction area looks bad (unavoidable), the safety issues have been addressed.

Comments, suggestions and questions about the physical site:

- ❖ Why is the grass off limits? It forces the market to use two sides of a busy street.
- ❖ Eighth Street is still an obstacle for market patrons. The less preferred section of the market on the other side of 8th Street is a serious concern. There is a sense it is the undesirable section for vendors. Why can't the crafters go there? Are there political reasons why the crafters have to fill in spots in the main market?

- ❖ Although placing the consignment booth on the "slow" side of 8th Street is a good idea, it doesn't seem to be pulling large numbers of customers over to that side of the market.
- ❖ Is it possible to place market signs further out than they currently are?
- ❖ Access: if you do not know Eugene, finding your way back to the market via the one-way streets can be difficult.
- ❖ If you aren't headed downtown you might not know the market exists.
- ❖ Chalking out vendor spaces is a pain for manager.
- ❖ One customer mentioned that she would like to see 8th & Oak blocked off for the Saturday Market/Farmers' Market to give the farmers more room.
- ❖ The middle area on the east (main) side does not work well for vendors. What about setting the music there?
- ❖ Fewer older vendors because of loading issue (although the market does make available large loading carts).

Market Atmosphere

What the team members appreciated about the market atmosphere:

- ❖ Overall, this is a nice downtown market with an urban feel. Great place to take a break from work. It has the feel of a city center where the market is the main attraction. The market is an urban surprise. Even though I was looking for it, the colorful tents were my first visual impression and let me know *something* was happening here.
- ❖ Surprisingly relaxed customers given that they are escapees from work.
- ❖ Peak traffic flow at coffee breaks and lunch (exactly what you'd expect).
- ❖ Customers are well prepared, bringing their own bags.
- ❖ Wide range of customer types; the majority are already downtown, coming from work.
- ❖ The trees create a nice, green defining area.
- ❖ The tents contrast nicely with the urban setting.
- ❖ Music: customers actually joined in with singer when they heard a familiar song. Although the music doesn't appear to be the main attraction, people are aware of it as background.
- ❖ Survey observation: those who are eager to respond seem to be loyal market customers.

Questions and suggestions concerning the market atmosphere:

- ❖ Fewer interactions than expected among customers. This does not have the "meeting place" feel that many other markets have. (Implications?)
- ❖ Can more be done to draw people who live in the area around the market, if there are many?

Vendors and Products

What team members appreciated about vendors and products:

- ❖ Most vendors are highly skilled in all phases of the game.
- ❖ Tightness of the market seems to enhance creativity (excellent displays in small places).

- ❖ A good variety of signs. Some vendors are better than others at price-labeling. Thus, one observes quite a bit of inconsistency as far as appearance. (Personally, I like the mix.)
- ❖ Product quality and product range within each booth are both good - some due to limited reselling of products from other farms, but that seems fine.
- ❖ Plant sales are a little better than I expected.
- ❖ Service is good and friendly (with only the occasional inattentive vendor).
- ❖ Because of the nature of the clientele on Tuesday, fruit is selling in pints, not flats.
- ❖ Jams and jellies look truly homemade and have a handwritten label. Does this producer process the jelly in a licensed facility? How is this checked?

Comment, suggestions and questions concerning vendors and products:

- ❖ Why no coffee?
- ❖ Incense next to food interferes with smelling the food (such as basil). When the wind blows the incense spreads throughout the market.
- ❖ Sales in food booths are less than I'd expect.
- ❖ What are the guidelines for craft vendors for the Tues. Farmers' Market? Can they be limited to agriculture-related products?
- ❖ The mix of crafts and produce sends a mixed message to me about what the market is supposed to be – a farmers' market or a combination. Maybe customers should be surveyed and vendors asked about consumer response to the mix.

Rapid Assessment of the Hollywood Farmers' Market

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Market Name: | Hollywood Farmers' Market |
| Date of Assessment: | August 12, 2000 |
| Market Hours: | 8 AM to 1 PM |
| Location: | NE Hancock between 44th and 45th in Portland. Partially in a Value Village parking lot and partially in the street. |
| Organized by: | A neighborhood group. Run by a manager under the supervision of the board. |
| Begun: | 1997 |
| Fees: | Flat fee per space |
| Vendors: | About 40 agricultural vendors and food vendors. |
| Team Members: | Larry Lev, Agricultural and Resource Economics, OSU Garry Stephenson, Benton County Extension, OSU Gwendolyn Ellen, Farm stand operator Dana Johnson, Hillsboro Farmers' Market Alice Price, Hollywood Farmers' Market Erica Frenay, Hollywood Farmers' Market |

Physical Site

What team members appreciated about the physical site:

- ❖ Access and flow seemed fine. I was surprised by how many people drove, but with the Value Village parking lot, there didn't seem to be any parking problems.
- ❖ Market appears very well organized, has a nice circular flow.
- ❖ This is definitely an urban farmer's market!
- ❖ The market has a storage spot (little red barn) to keep equipment and supplies -- great idea.
- ❖ Bathroom here is a Port-a-Potty.
- ❖ Relatively few local business are vendors in the market
- ❖ Permanent sign is an excellent way of promoting the market throughout the week.
- ❖ Boundaries of the market are well marked
- ❖ Center aisle is excellent.
- ❖ Wagons for customers to carry purchases are great.
- ❖ Lane in back is well marked and great for customers to pick-up veggies – great access.
- ❖ Happy to see Handicap Parking.

Comments, questions and suggestions related to the physical site:

- ❖ I would cone the curbs on the islands with plants and have them filled with colorful perennials. If you plan to stay at this site, donate the planting materials.
- ❖ Seems main entrance with wagon corral was only “dead” spot in market. I would make sure the first two booths on both sides of the street are ones that draw lots of people and really represent your market. It would be so nice to have the market in a park - somewhere with grass underfoot and trees overhead.
- ❖ Without more space, the market will be limited in growth.
- ❖ To develop your organization, make clear, consistent regulations and back the manager on enforcing them. Also, solicit more farmer/vendor input when developing your regulations.
- ❖ Organize a dinner or potluck at the end of the season to get feedback from farmers/vendors on regulations. You could also survey vendors with a few, simple questions during a market.
- ❖ Including some smaller wagons along with larger ones would cause less of a hazard within the market and give folks more choice.
- ❖ Perhaps more food vendors.
- ❖ Need more tables and chairs.
- ❖ Need signs at the back of market saying both “Welcome” and “Thanks for Shopping” since many people enter here. Should have wagons on this side too.

Market Atmosphere

What team members appreciated about the market atmosphere:

- ❖ Wide variety of customers – young and elderly, different income levels, disabled, etc. – not much ethnic diversity (though this improved later in the market).
- ❖ Many interesting conversations overheard: use of white sage smudges to purify rooms; seasonality of berries; best places to find organic produce; lots of talk about preserving peaches, berries, & tomatoes.
- ❖ I really like the educational display with farm locations and articles about agriculture. It illustrates the important connection between this market and the larger picture of food and farmland in the community - better than at most markets. (Unfortunately, I didn’t see that many people looking at it).
- ❖ Display also lists board members.
- ❖ I loved the baskets and bags people brought with them to carry their purchases.
- ❖ Hollywood does a good job with signs in advertising the Market, including the permanent one under the Value Village sign, and explains what this market is all about. (Take-home message: it would be very good for my market if we had a permanent sign.)
- ❖ Volunteers obvious in their distinctive aprons! It is inspiring to see the degree of volunteer involvement. Volunteer board is great out in the “center stage” of information area.

- ❖ OSU Master Gardeners and Master Food Preservers here.
- ❖ Center aisle with table and chairs is great.
- ❖ Good placement of stage and food. Shopper I interviewed loved the market for its community atmosphere. Good job!
- ❖ Like the dog-friendly atmosphere.

Suggestions related to market atmosphere:

- ❖ Could use more kid booths and activities: make bouquets, draw, veggie stamps, etc.

Vendors and Products

What team member appreciated about the vendors and products:

- ❖ Nice balance of organic and non-organic veggies and fruits, value-added items (especially the pasta and goat cheese), baked goods (cookies! pies!), cut flowers, plants, herbs, etc. Good that this is a "pure" farmers' market with no crafts.
- ❖ Market's overall signage is outstanding.
- ❖ Everyone is super-friendly; smile index is flying!
- ❖ "I want to spend every dollar I have with me, even though I don't need anything."

Comments, suggestions and questions related to vendors and products:

- ❖ It would be nice if individual growers had better signs (with name and location, at least).
- ❖ Not all vendors had prices or appropriate signs. Need a sign at your information booth: "Hollywood Information Booth and Welcome Center." Put your bags and wares out in the open, with prices – people love to buy them.
- ❖ Master Gardeners need to do more (props, plants, pastas) - something besides just a table with information.
- ❖ Local produce not distinguished as such. It's important to differentiate between farmers who grow their own produce and farmers who broker, and show where the brokered produce comes from. This helps to build customer relationships with local growers, awareness of what is grown locally, when it will be available, and what varieties are the best-tasting.
- ❖ Organic farmers don't have their certification posted. Certified organic growers must sell only certified organic produce and display their certification document. If they have non-certified produce to sell it needs to be displayed separately.
- ❖ Meat and fish would be great additions to the market.
- ❖ Preferable to have one or two more food vendors so there is more choice at lunchtime. Currently have only one major food vendor, besides baked goods.

Rapid Assessment of the Milwaukie Farmers' Market

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|----------------------------|--|
| Market Name: | Milwaukie Farmers' Market |
| Date of Assessment: | Sunday, August 13 2000 |
| Market Hours: | 10 AM - 2:30 PM |
| Location: | Shaded Parking lot on SE Main between Harrison and Jackson streets |
| Organized by: | City government. Run by a manager but without a board. |
| Began: | 1999 |
| Fees: | Flat fee per space |
| Vendors: | About 36 vendors (mix of agricultural, food, and crafts) |
| Team Members: | Larry Lev, Agricultural and Resource Economics, OSU Garry Stephenson, Benton County Extension, OSU Ry Thompson, Hollywood Farmers' Market Ginger Rapport, Beaverton Farmers' Market Larry Lack, Hollywood Farmers' Market Lee Ann Ward, Hollywood Farmers' Market |

Customer comments:

"It just amazes me how many of our neighbors are always here."

"I look forward to the market every week."

Rapid Assessment team-member comments:

"Everyone I spoke to while doing Dot Surveys was a return customer and loved the market tremendously. They are firm supporters and wanted to share anything and everything that would be helpful for the market."

"Organization? What organization? It seems to work well and has grown tremendously with Brendan's simple approach to managing. Now there are many vendors, up from seven last year in the beginning."

Physical Site

What team members appreciated about the physical site:

- ❖ Great site; nice to be in the center of downtown, across from City Hall, in a very prominent location.
- ❖ Flow goes well, the wide aisles help.
- ❖ The trees (and lower vegetation) are your greatest assets. They should get yearly attention: compost, pruning, cutting. Replace dead or dying ones with other than oak for greater diversity and pest resistance.
- ❖ Access: the three entry/exits are great for vendors unloading; very accessible for customers; sufficient parking; bus mall is close and convenient.

- ❖ Easy access; lots of parking. I'm envious. I love the market signs on the posts.

Comments, suggestions or questions concerning the physical site:

- ❖ I had to hunt for trashcans. They get better use when placed in the center of the aisle.
- ❖ Recycling bins would be a definite plus.
- ❖ Handicap Parking? Many older folks with walkers have a hard time getting around. Where do they park?
- ❖ If you expect to remain at this market site, plant (and tend) trees and other cooling/attractive vegetation.
- ❖ The manager needs to make himself more visible and/or have an information booth/table. Maybe he should wear something bright (apron/hat?) so he stands out in the crowd.
- ❖ Potential liability: area at the end of aisle has very uneven ground and poses the risk of an accident.
- ❖ Port-a-Potty is not wheelchair accessible!
- ❖ Ran out of soap at sink early in the market.
- ❖ Where are vendors supposed to park? Several are parked on the road along the side of the market. These vehicles take prime customer parking.
- ❖ Consider providing water for dogs and dog biscuits. These can be combined (as at Hollywood) to recruit volunteers to help manage the market.
- ❖ You could advertise that the market is wheelchair-accessible.
- ❖ Some customers make multiple trips to their cars; try red wagons or other methods to help them carry loads.

Market Atmosphere

What team members appreciated about the market atmosphere:

- ❖ Lovely location; nice ambiance and a pleasant relaxed atmosphere.
- ❖ Part of ambiance and atmosphere has to do with the market being on a Sunday. Lots of conversing, people must be bumping into friends and neighbors.
- ❖ Good "community feel" to the market.
- ❖ Market has a great feel of being full, good crowd of customers and a reasonable number of vendors (especially given how new the market is).
- ❖ The live music is a big plus.
- ❖ Shoppers include families, many elderly couples, lots of kids, some dogs (one team thought that having even more dogs would be better), and a fair share of small-town folk. Overall, an older crowd than found at most metro-area markets.
- ❖ Master Gardeners good to have here, even though few customers took advantage of their expertise.
- ❖ Mayor was in the market campaigning for political race in fall

Suggestions for improving the market atmosphere:

- ❖ This crowd would be open to learning about agricultural issues – if you have time and people to provide information.
- ❖ More places to sit and eat, etc. would be good.

Vendors and Products

What team members appreciated about the vendors and products:

- ❖ You have good, basic produce but should keep recruiting and expanding.
- ❖ I like to see food, plants, produce and flowers all mixed together. It forces people to go down each aisle rather than avoiding the “plant aisle” because they think they don’t want plants.
- ❖ Nusom Farms has a very informative sign explaining philosophy/practices on farm, but print is too small. Their “We sell what we grow” slogan is a good one!
- ❖ “For a bare-bones’ markets, it is very nice!”
- ❖ Beautiful plant displays.

Comments, suggestions or questions concerning vendors and products:

- ❖ Many vendors have no identifying signage. This presents challenges for customers looking for specific vendors/products.
- ❖ For example, at the stand for the beautiful Adirondack furniture by Salmon Creek I asked the vendor if he had a sign. He had it all rolled up. He unrolled it to prove to me that he had one, but rolled it up again!
- ❖ The pasta people had no sign. If you weren’t in their booth it was hard to tell what they sell.
- ❖ Requests from numerous consumers for products not found in the market:
- ❖ Organically-grown produce (and, overall, more produce)
- ❖ Bakery (try Grand Central)
- ❖ Vendor mix: perhaps even greater mixing of vendors would be valuable (further interspersing of produce, fruit, plants, crafts, and food vendors). Could make a difference for vendors and customers alike. Perhaps next season would be good time to try when vendors are starting fresh and not established in sites.
- ❖ I was asked by several people how to get a booth at the market. Maybe you could set up a table near the entertainment to offer market information. Flyers could explain how to become a vendor if no one is available to talk to at that moment.
- ❖ Plant vendors in center aisle seem to be inching further into aisle than their neighbors. While it’s not important yet, clear boundary lines will be more important as you grow.
- ❖ Consider offering free rent to vendors who are struggling, especially those selling coffee, food or other items you are trying to encourage. Or, offer a community group the opportunity to raise funds by having a coffee booth.
- ❖ Need more healthful, ready-to-eat foods (veggie, Asian, Mexican, etc.).