

# Downtown Ypsilanti Farmers Market Rapid Market Assessment



*Tuesday, October 13, 2009*



## Assessment Team

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**Market Hours:** All Tuesdays May through October, 2 pm – 6 pm in the Key Bank parking lot on the corner of Michigan Ave and Hamilton. The Winter market is held on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the November and December, 3 – 7 pm, at the Corner Brewery, 720 Norris St.

**Location:** Michigan Ave. & Hamilton, Downtown Ypsilanti

**Website:** <http://www.growinghope.net>

**Market Day** Windy, cool but sunny

**Comments:** Beautiful fall day

Getting chilly, cold, blue skies, windy between 2 - 4 pm but calmed down for the late afternoon

**Age of Market:** Established in 2006

**Fees:** \$8/day, \$160/season

**Vendors:** 17

**Market Sales**

**Estimate:** \$5,670

**Market**

**Attendance**

**Estimate:** 600

**Market Staff:** Sarah Smith (Market Manager)

**Introduction:** The Downtown Ypsilanti Farmers' Market opened in June 2006 based on a Community Needs Assessment conducted by the Ypsilanti Health Coalition, which determined that residents of downtown Ypsilanti had little or no access to fresh foods. The downtown Ypsilanti farmers' market has a mission focused on providing healthy food access to the community. Growing Hope, with managing partners, are providing incentives to EBT/Bridge Cards users. The market welcomes vendors of any kind, including hot food vendors, biodynamic and organic growers, baked good vendors, and local musicians every week. The market also accepts Project FRESH coupons and Prescription for Health.

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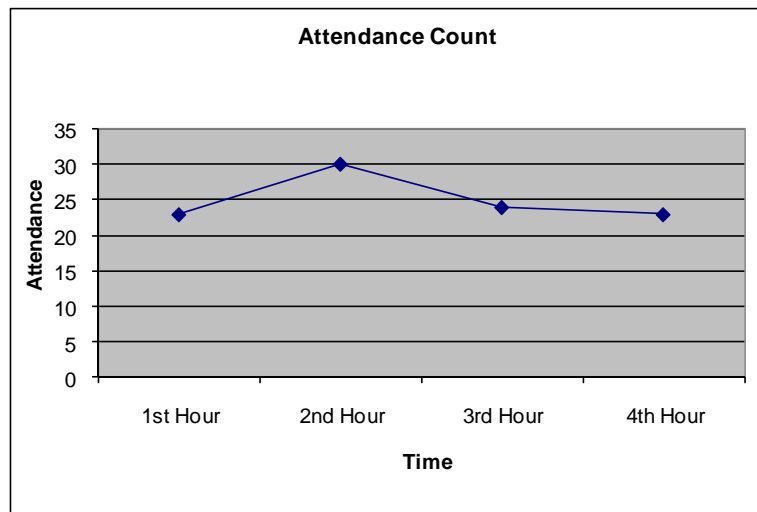
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### I. Customer Counts

#### Estimated Attendance:

1st Hour (2:25 – 2:35) count = 23  
2nd Hour (3:25 – 3:35) count = 30  
3rd Hour (4:25 – 4:35) count = 24  
4th Hour (5:25 – 5:35) count = 23  
Total = 100  
Estimated of total market  
customers = 600



**Comments:** Team members counted the number of adults entering the market for ten minutes of each hour. The total number of adult customers counted was multiplied by six to estimate total market attendance. Attendance for this day's market rose in the second hour but remained pretty steady all day.

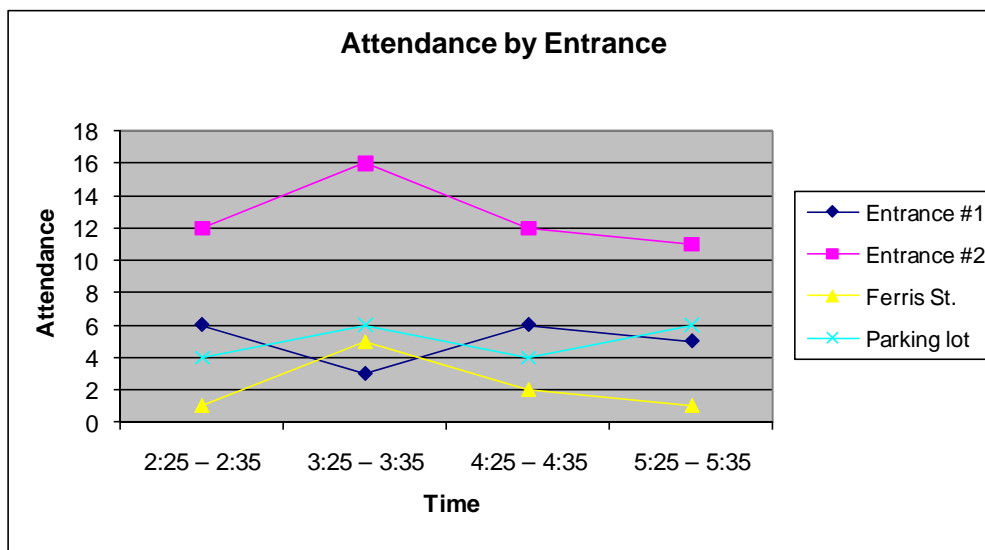
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### Attendance by Entrance and Hour

Time	Entrance #1		Entrance #2		Ferris St.		Parking Lot		Overall Total	
2:25 – 2:35	6	30%	12	24%	1	11%	4	20%	23	23%
3:25 – 3:35	3	15%	16	30%	5	55%	6	30%	30	30%
4:25 – 4:35	6	30%	12	24%	2	22%	4	20%	24	24%
5:25 – 5:35	5	25%	11	22%	1	11%	6	30%	23	23%
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>



**Comments:** Entrance #2 was the most used accounting for 51% of shoppers entering the market there. Entrance #1 and from the parking lot were also frequently used each accounting for 20% of shoppers entering the market there. Few shoppers entered from Ferris Street. It appeared that these shoppers traveled to and from the market by bus.

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### II. Dot Surveys

**Question 1: How many ADULTS are in your shopping party this afternoon?**

1	61	66%
2	31	33%
3	1	1%
4	0	0%
5	0	0%
6+	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Mean:** 1.4

**Median:** 1

**Mode:** 1

**Comments:** The mean or average number of adults per shopping party was 1.4. The median was 1 and the mode or most common response was one person.

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### Question 2: How much did you/will you spend at the farmers market TODAY?

\$0	8	9%
\$5	19	20%
\$10	25	27%
\$15	13	14%
\$20	13	14%
\$25	8	9%
\$30	5	5%
\$35	1	1%
\$40	0	0%
\$45	1	1%
\$50	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Mean:** \$13.23

**Median:** \$10

**Mode:** \$10

**Comments:** The mean or average expenditure that shoppers reported was \$13.23. The median was \$10, meaning that half the shoppers spent less than \$10 and half spent more than \$10. More shoppers spent \$10 than any other single amount.

A conservative estimate of total market sales for the day is developed by dividing the estimated total number of adults customers (600) by the mean number of people customers were shopping for (1.4) and multiplying by the mean customer expenditure (\$13.23). This method very conservatively estimates total market sales for the day at (\$5,670). *The market manager, Sarah Smith, collects information from all her vendors daily. The sum for that day at the market was \$3,743.50.*

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### Question 3: What was your primary form of payment at the market today?

Cash	69	76%
Credit/Debit	2	2%
Bridge Card	8	9%
Project FRESH	5	5%
Prescription for Health	1	1%
Other	6	7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Comments:** Overwhelmingly, people use cash as their primary form of payment. Around 10% of participants used their Bridge Cards. Five percent of participants used Project FRESH coupons. *Food assistance programs accounted for 19% of total sales for the market during the entire market season.*

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**Question 4: Which of our outreach efforts caught your attention and made you decide to come to the market?**

Door hangers in the neighborhood	0	0%
Growing Hope e- mail list	5	5%
EBT Bonus Bucks	9	10%
Project Fresh Distribution	6	6%
Prescription for health	3	3%
Word of Mouth	17	18%
Regular Shopper	28	30%
Other	26	28%
<b>Total</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Comments:** Thirty percent of the people at the market were regular shoppers. Twenty-eight percent of people choose something other than door hangers, e-mails, EBT bonus bucks, Project FRESH distribution, and Prescription for Health. Eighteen percent of people choose word of mouth as the outreach that caught their attention and brought them to the farmers market.

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### Question 5: How important is it to you that food/produce sold at the market being locally grown?

I prefer ONLY food grown within about 100 miles of here is sold	37	39%
I prefer that good grown locally within 100 miles be sold supplemented with clearly labeled MI produce	3	3%
I prefer that only food grown in Michigan be sold	29	31%
It is okay to sell food grown outside of Michigan if it is clearly labeled	12	13%
I don't have a preference	14	15%
<b>Total</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Comments:** Thirty nine percent of people preferred that ONLY food grown within about 100 miles of the market be sold. Thirty one percent of people preferred that only food grown in Michigan be sold at the market.

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### III. Constructive Comments/Observations

#### **Physical Characteristics. What is working well?**

##### Market Access

- Lots of parking, next to busy road
- Good location, easy parking
- Nice size parking lot available
- Partner with bank access to large lot works well

##### Flow of People and Traffic

- Not too crowded
- Good
- Slow but understandable given the weather
- Wide aisles, excellent easy access from all points

##### Liability Issues

- Public or private lot?

##### Organization of the Market

- Good flow
- Grassy knoll next to market for lounging
- Good layout

##### Access to Electricity and Telephone Line

- None but doesn't seem necessary
- Wireless EBT

#### **Physical Characteristics. What could be improved?**

##### Market Access

- Bike parking

##### Organization of Market

- Some empty spaces, feels a little too spread out
- Looks funny to have a mix of tents and no tents
- I would tighten up the layout
- Would be nice to see slightly larger with L shape or a couple of aisles as opposed to one long line of vendors
- If more vendors wanted to participate, how does expansion work?

##### Access to Electricity and Telephone Line

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- The cost factor for wireless would always seem to warrant pursuing this

### Additional Comments

- More literature, etc, about Growing Hope
- Signage around the area could go a long way to improve incidental traffic

### Market Atmosphere. What is working well?

#### Market "Feel"

- Leisurely, neighborhood like, kid-friendly, cozy, inclusive
- Relaxed, laid back, friendly, homey
- Fair amount of vendor variety given it's October

#### Shopper Demographics

- Very diverse, in age, race, ethnicity and apparent income
- Not many young kids
- Nice mix of men, women, younger, older, white, black
- Ability to provide fresh local produce to senior complex across the street
- Good mix

#### Interactions, Conversations

- Everyone seems to know each other
- Some shoppers are chatty, others are all business getting their shopping done
- Vendors appear to interact with customers well
- Customers appear to be happy with the market
- Lots of vendor interaction

#### Educational or Entertainment Activities

- Looks like there is a community tent for events
- Not many kids here (in school)
- None evident
- Need more

#### Other

- Growing Hope as sponsor

### Market Atmosphere. What could be improved upon?

#### Market "Feel"

- Nothing, feel = great
- Addition of music and tables to eat/drink and mingle
- Vendors could engage the public more, tactfully aggressive
- Quiet

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### Shopper Demographics

- Attract more college kids
- Outreach to 20-30 demographic
- Students particularly seem to be absent

### Interactions, Conversations

- Some vendors not paying attention to customers

### Educational or Entertainment Activities

- EBT, Project FRESH focused educational stuff?
- Shopping local/cooking fresh info
- Add music
- Information table could be more pronounced possible at the entrance
- More market info
- No event on 10/13/09

## **Vendors and Products. What is working well?**

### Product Mix

- Good - produce, cheese, bread, hot food, good mix of price points
- Not too many plants
- 17 vendors
- Plenty of vegetables, good mix for October
- Good product mix
- Emphasis on produce

### Product Quality

- Looked good
- Quality was good
- Good produce overall

### Signage

- Market signage was good
- Loved the GH signage for vendors

### Display

- Creative to basic, lots of displays with product in quarts only

### Customer Service

- Friendly
- Average

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### Food Safety

- Seems fine, hot food was hot, cold food was cold
- No food on ground
- Baked goods were wrapped
- Food safety appears to be okay
- Not available, one vendor with ready to eat self contained cart

### Other, Including Vendor Comments

- Market manger was great!

### Vendors and Products. What could be improved?

#### Product Mix

- Fewer crafts
- Added Meat and eggs
- Need a meat vendor
- More diversity - i.e. flowers, cheese, meats, poultry, milk, etc.
- Possibly more hot food
- Some crafts seemed sub-par

#### Signage

- Not all vendors have super detailed signage, more prices, etc would be helpful
- Could be improved
- Clear and consistent vendor name and price signage needed
- Signage only fair for pricing type of growing procedure (organic, natural, etc)
- Some marginal items
- Large banner torn, better to leave down or repair, gives poor impression

#### Display

- Vendors need overall to identify themselves better and their offerings
- Pricing also lacking

### Other, Including Vendor Comments

- Teardown starting a little early
- No dogs allowed ☹

### Food Assistance Programs. What is working well?

#### Project FRESH

- Well noted at participating vendor booths
- No idea about project FRESH, always a little confusing
- Appears to be working well

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### SNAP Program (EBT, Bridge Cards)

- Good sandwich board in center of market
- Organization process seems great, co-op: wireless EBT good
- Appears to be working extremely well, great job by Growing Hope volunteers

### Alternative Redemption Systems

- Token system in place for EBT
- Like the tokens
- Well organized
- Prescription for Health was received, wonderful

### Signage

- Signage for EBT/Project FESH good
- Road signs lead to market from around the block
- Good signage throughout market

### **Food Assistance Programs. What could be improved?**

#### Project FRESH

- More signage at stalls

#### SNAP Program (EBT, Bridge Cards)

- More signage at stalls

#### Signage

- Never enough signage
- Vendors should display Project FRESH and EBT signs more prominently
- I did not see any signage along Michigan Ave