

**Boyne City Farmers Market
Rapid Market Assessment
Saturday July 26, 2008**



**Boyne City Farmer's Market
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July 26, 2008

**Patricia Alameda
Leslie Atwood
Kelli Joyce**

**Monika Kothari
Susan Smalley
Danielle Welke**



**Michigan Farmers Market Association
&
Michigan State University
East Lansing, Michigan**



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Market Hours: Season: May through October
Wednesday 8 am – 12 pm
Saturday 8 am – 12 pm

Location: Old City Park (corner of Park & River Sts.)

Website: boynecityfarmersmarket.com

Market Staff: Jennifer Lewis, Market Master

Market Day Comments: Pleasant day, sunny and windy, mid-70s

Age of Market: Open since 1982

Fees: \$30-\$140 season; \$10-\$40 daily

Vendors: 30+

Market Sales Estimate: \$18,974

Market Attendance Estimate: 1524

RMA team: Patricia Alameda, MSU; Leslie Atwood, MSU; Kelli Joyce, market manager; Monika Kothari, MSU; Susan Smalley, MSU; Danielle Welke, MIFMA

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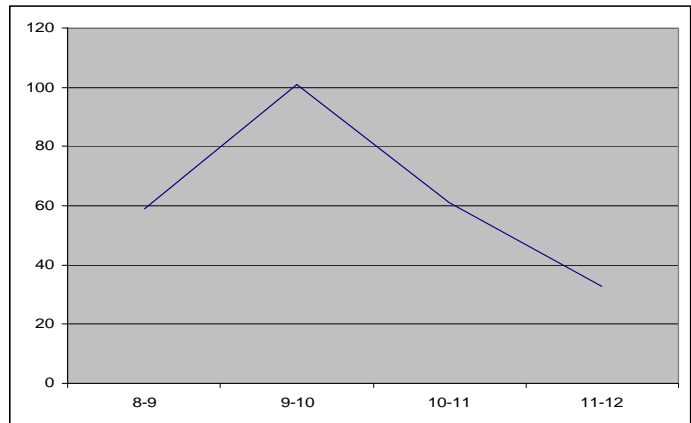
Introduction:

The Boyne City Farmer’s Market is located in downtown Boyne City. The market offers Michigan-grown produce, meats, prepared foods, and floriculture, as well as crafts. One initiative of the market is to stimulate the downtown area and its businesses.

I. Total Attendance: 1,524 Adults

1 st hour (8-9) count =	59
2 nd hour (9-10) count =	101
3 rd hour (10-11) count =	61
4 th hour (11-12) count =	33
Total count =	254

Estimated total market customers = 1,524



Comments: The total count estimates the number of adults entering the market during ten minutes of every hour at the three sites listed below. This count was multiplied by six to estimate total attendance of adults at the market. Market attendance climbed consistently until peaking between 9 and 10 am and steadily declined thereafter. The day started with good traffic from 8 to 9 am and customer traffic was still reasonable during the last hour of the market.

Attendance by entrance and hour

<u>Time</u>	<u>Bridge</u>		<u>Park St</u>		<u>River St</u>		<u>Total</u>	
8:25 – 8:35	7	12%	21	26%	31	27%	59	23%
9:25 – 9:35	28	45%	28	35%	45	39%	101	40%
10:25 – 10:35	19	33%	23	28%	19	16%	61	24%
11:25 – 11:35	3	5%	9	11%	21	18%	33	13%
Total	57	22%	81	32%	116	46%	254	

Comments: For the majority of the morning, the River Street entrance had the heaviest traffic, suggesting that this is the main entrance. This entrance is also the most easily accessible to handicapped or elderly people, and there is no street crossing from the parking area to the market. Both the Park Street and River Street entrances had parking lots from which customers could easily walk into the market; however, the bridge

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entrance was located further from the market than the others, requiring customers to walk a greater distance, and therefore having fewer arrivals.

II. Dot Survey Questions

Question 1: I/We shop at this market...

	<u>8:00 – 10:00 am</u>		<u>10:00 – 12:00 pm</u>		<u>Total/Percentage</u>	
Regularly, for as much of our food as we can buy here	116	59%	67	41%	183	50%
Fairly often, for some specific items that we can get only here	50	25%	52	32%	102	28%
Occasionally, to find unique and interesting things	32	16%	36	28%	78	21%
Total	198		165		363	

Comments: Half (50%) of the respondents said they buy as much of their food as possible from the market, suggesting that customers have a great sense of loyalty to the market, and the belief that they can purchase the healthiest and most affordable food there. However, the numbers of regular shoppers fell from early morning to late morning, replaced by more occasional shoppers. This may be because the percentage of short-term visitors to the area increased later in the day, while regular shoppers come earlier on to claim the best produce before it is all sold. Also, loyal and frequent customers may have been more likely to respond to the survey than occasional shoppers.

Question 2: Are You A...

	<u>8:00 – 10:00 am</u>		<u>10:00 – 12:00 pm</u>		<u>Total/Percentage</u>	
Seasonal Resident	84	42%	57	34%	141	38%
Year-Round Resident	86	43%	73	43%	159	43%
Short-term Visitor	30	15%	38	23%	68	19%
Total	200		168		368	

Comments: A large majority (81%) of the respondents were either seasonal (38%) or

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year-round (43%) residents; however, the market also drew short-term visitors (19%). There may be a sampling bias in the question, because a number of short-term visitors did not feel that they were qualified to answer questions about the market, and local residents may have been more interested in improving the market itself than those from outside the area. Nevertheless, the market clearly appeals to those who reside locally and those who are visitors from other areas. If the market conducts additional surveys, using “full time” and “part time” resident as choices, rather than “year-round” and “seasonal” resident, may be a better way to ask this question.

Question 3: How many adults are in your shopping party today?

	<u>8:00 – 10:00 am</u>		<u>10:00 – 12:00 pm</u>		<u>Total/Percentage</u>	
1	61	31%	54	32%	115	32%
2	94	48%	69	41%	163	45%
3	22	11%	22	13%	44	12%
4	12	6%	15	9%	27	7%
5	4	2%	4	2%	8	2%
6 +	3	2%	3	2%	6	2%
Total	196		167		363	

Mean = 2.0; Median = 2; Mode = 2

Comments: The vast majority of shopping parties included a single person or two people, and the average shopping group had two adults, suggesting that visiting the farmers market is often an activity for couples or families with small children. Perhaps having more activities for children would encourage even more families to come to the market. There were few groups of greater than three adults.

Question 4: How much did/does your shopping party plan to spend TODAY at the Market?

	8:00 – 10:00 am		10:00 – 12:00 pm		Total	
\$0	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
\$5	8	4%	9	6%	17	5%
\$10	18	9%	31	19%	49	14%
\$15	28	14%	22	14%	50	14%
\$20	34	17%	41	24%	75	21%
\$25	29	15%	22	14%	51	14%
\$30	15	8%	10	6%	25	7%

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\$35	9	5%	4	2%	13	4%
\$40	20	10%	6	4%	26	7%
\$45	6	3%	6	4%	12	3%
\$50	12	6%	4	2%	16	5%
over \$50	15	8%	6	4%	21	6%
Total	194		161		355	
Mean: \$24.90						
Median: \$20						
Mode: \$20						

Comments: Shoppers spent almost \$25 on average, reflecting that many people try to buy much of their food here. Very few spent less than \$10, and all respondents bought or planned to buy something. However, some results may be skewed because shoppers were often uncertain of how much they had spent or how much they planned to spend. Others completed the survey halfway through their shopping trip, and, uncertain of how much they planned to spend later in the day, only marked the amount they had spent thus far. Those who may have been looking and not buying may also have declined to participate.

Question 5: How often do you shop at downtown businesses or restaurants when you come to this market?

	8:00 – 10:00 am		10:00 – 12:00 pm		Total	
Always	46	23%	26	16%	72	20%
Often	72	36%	61	37%	133	36%
Occasionally	70	35%	63	38%	133	36%
Never	11	6%	16	10%	27	7%
Total	199		166		365	

Comments: The majority (56%) of respondents shop at local businesses at least often or always, suggesting that the market draws many customers into this area, and these customers, having made the trip, also decide to shop downtown. Very few respondents (only 7%) said that they never patronize downtown businesses when they come to the market.

Market management may wish to do additional customer surveys to estimate how much money market shoppers spend at local businesses and restaurants OUTSIDE the market.

With this strong connection between shopping at the market and other downtown shopping, there may be potential for increased tie-ins. Consider farmers market specials on Wednesdays and Saturdays in restaurants and stores. Stores might put farmers market posters on their windows (This Boyne City business supports the Boyne City Farmers Market; add season, days, times, website) and the market might, in turn, develop a

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brochure highlighting local businesses that support the market and make it available to market shoppers. Posting an inquiry on the Michigan Farmers Market listserv and/or Farmers Market Coalition listserv would likely generate other cross-promotion ideas.

Estimated Market Day Sales

A conservative estimate of total market sales for the day is developed by dividing the estimated total number of adult customers (1,524) by the mean number of adults per shopping party (2) and multiplying by the mean customer expenditure (\$24.90). This method suggests that total market sales for the day were roughly \$18,974. This estimate could be verified if market management and vendors track vendor sales on each market day. This can be done without identifying sales of any particular vendor and can provide very useful information about changes over time in the market's business and its economic impacts for vendors and the community.

III. Constructive Comments/Observations

Market Atmosphere

What team members feel is working well

Market "feel"

- Customers seem very friendly and willing to interact
- Upbeat, lots of families, busy
- Very established feel, community-oriented

Shopper Demographics

- Good mix of young, middle-aged, and elderly shoppers
- Lots of families, kids
- Variety of income levels

Interactions, conversations

- Many customers have personal relationships with vendors
- Customers greet each other
- Market manager is very personable
- Vendors are friendly with each other rather than competitive

Educational or Entertainment Activities

- Play area in the park for kids
- Market Manager information table
- Vendors distribute recipes

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Other

- Welcome board points out directions to where different products can be found

What could be improved upon

Shopper Demographics

- Attract younger crowds with more crafts that cater to their demographic
- Lack of racial diversity—this is not surprising given the market location and high proportion of locals who shop there, but there may be opportunities to attract more short-term visitors to the market by providing info to area hotels and campgrounds

Interactions, Conversations

- Vendors seem to cater to frequent customers more than new customers or visitors

Educational or Entertainment Activities

- Few activities, especially for children
- Consider musical entertainment (live or recorded)
- Consider including craft activities for kids

Other

- Too many plastic bags—while tote bags are expensive, consider selling reusable bulk discount bags

Physical Characteristics

What team members feel is working well

Market Access

- Parking space surrounds the market, and there is plenty available
- Several entrance ways

Flow of People and Traffic

- Big enough for comfortable circulation

Liability Issues

- None

Organization of Market

- Sign at the corner directs people towards specific foods—very helpful
- Stands are easily accessible to passerby

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- Produce stands are located separately from crafts stands

Access to Electricity and Phone Line

- None

Other

- Nearby public restroom

What could be improved upon

Market Access

- Better parking accessibility for handicapped/elderly

Flow of People and Traffic

- Two-way traffic makes pathway very crowded
- Crowds gather and block the sidewalk path
- Kids and dogs run along path
- Narrow sidewalk is difficult for wheelchairs

Liability Issues

- No crosswalk on Park St
- Limited handicap accessibility
- Difficult to see around parked vehicles to cross street

Organization of Market

- Produce vendors on crafts side do not sell as well as those on the produce side
- There is a lot of space available to spread out or include more vendors

Access to Electricity and Telephone Line

- None observed

Other

- Trash bins were visible or readily available

Vendors and Products

What team members feel is working well

Product Mix

- There is a good variety of food products
- There seems to be limited overlap of products between vendors

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- Lots of vegetable options

Product Quality

- A continuum, but largely very fresh produce

Signage

- Many vendors displayed signs bearing their name and location
- Vendors that accept Project FRESH coupons clearly labeled this

Display

- A few beautiful and elaborate displays
- Most produce was clearly visible

Customer Service

- Almost all vendors were very friendly/polite
- Some took time to educate customers about food
- Several distribute recipes and samples

Food Safety

- Appears adequate
- Samples seemed to be safely handled
- Vendors washed products for customers
- Several vendors gather produce the day before or the day of the market

Other

- Many vendors accept Project FRESH coupons
- Vendors seem to enjoy this market

What could be improved upon

Product Mix

- Several customers mentioned that tomatoes were absent
- There is room for more dairy and animal products
- Could use more fruits and greens
- More diversity in crafts to fit the customers

Product Quality

- Crafts do not match upper middleclass/vacationing customer demographic—the workmanship on craft items appeared very good. The design of many items may not attract more affluent shoppers who may be likely to purchase craft items as travel mementos or for vacation homes. One team member looked for craft items

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that would be appropriate in a contemporary interior and found only one vendor with appropriate items.

Signage

- Encourage vendors to clearly label their booths with their name and location
- Prices of products should be clearly marked
- Some signage could be more professional in appearance
- Not enough “local” and “organic” signage, etc.
- Some signs could be larger and more readable
- Consider a more vibrant “Farmers Market” sign (rather than brown)

Display

- Same vendors have inadequate display/spread of products
- Encourage vendors to exhibit products in an appealing way based on shape, color, etc. of products

Customer Service

- Some vendors give greater attention to repeat customers than new customers

Food Safety

- Some cherry vendors eat cherries and spit the pits in their hand – then gather cherries for customers (unsanitary)
- Could have more hand-washing facilities