

**Downtown Petoskey Farmers Market
Rapid Market Assessment**

August 24, 2007

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

Downtown Petoskey Farmers Market
Rapid Market Assessment
Friday, August 24, 2007

Market Hours: June 22- September
Friday 8:30 am - 1:00 pm

Location: 400 block of Howard Street,
in the square next to JC Penney's

Websites: www.petoskey.com

Market Staff: Becky Goodman, David Bailey

Market Day Comments: Overcast, rain before market,
mid-70's and humid

Age of Market: Open since 2005

Fees: \$200/season, \$15/day

Vendors: 16

Market Sales Estimate: \$15,818

Market Attendance Estimate: 1,452

RMA Team: Jim Bingen, Ann Daugherty, Jan
Lawson, Wendy Wieland

Introduction:

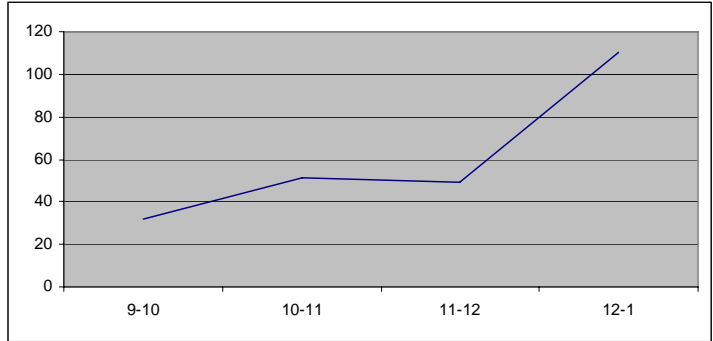
The mission of the Downtown Petoskey Farmers Market is to promote the images and economic development of Downtown Petoskey and economic development within the local agricultural community as well as to give those who grow, fish, forage, and harvest a place to be rewarded for their efforts. The market operates from late June through September on Friday mornings. The market offers entertainment and food demonstrations on selected weeks.

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I. Estimated Attendance: 1,452 Adults

1st Hour (9-10) count = 32
 2nd Hour (10-11) count = 51
 3rd Hour (11-12) count = 49
 4th Hour (12-1) count= 110
 Total count = 242

Estimated of total market customers = 1,452



Comments: Team members counted the number of adults entering the market for ten minutes of every hour. That total was multiplied by six to estimate total market attendance. The number of shopper was fairly steady through the morning, with a surge that doubled the number of shoppers during the noon hour.

Suggestion: With so much activity lat in the market day, it might be worth considering a shift in the market hour to open and close 30 to 60 minutes later.

Attendance by entrance and hour

<u>Time</u>	<u>West</u>		<u>East</u>		<u>Total:</u>	
9-10	18	14%	14	12%	32	13%
10-11	28	22%	23	20%	51	21%
11-12	34	26%	15	13%	49	20%
12-1	49	38%	61	54%	110	45%
Total	129	53%	113	47%	242	

Comments: Shoppers entered the market approximately half through each entrance through the day.

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II. Dot Survey Questions

Question 1: Compared to food I buy at the Supermarket I consider food from the Farmers Market to be:

	<u>8:30-10:30</u>		<u>10:30-1:00</u>		<u>Total:</u> <u>Percentage</u>	
Safer overall	92	77%	87	70%	179	73%
Less safe overall	8	7%	14	11%	22	9%
No more or less safe	0	0%	1	1%	1	0%
Safety depends on the vendor	20	17%	23	18%	43	18%
Total	120	49%	125	51%	245	

Comments: Nearly three quarters of the customers surveyed consider the food they buy at this market to be overall safer than food they buy at the supermarket. Nearly one fifth believe that the safety of the food depends on the vendor, and only nine percent believe food from the market to be less safe overall than supermarket food.

Observation/Suggestion: This demonstrates a very positive customer perception of foods at the market. The market can use this perception in its marketing and it must hard to be sure the perception is deserved.

Question 2: My biggest food safety priority when I shop at this market is:

	<u>8:30-10:30</u>		<u>10:30-1:00</u>		<u>Total:</u> <u>Percentage</u>	
Clean, safe food samples	8	6%	2	2%	10	4%
Getting information about keeping food safe	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Washing food I buy before we eat it	24	19%	51	42%	75	30%
Food staying within safe temperature at the market	8	6%	2	2%	10	4%
Food staying within safe temperature after I buy it	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Vendors properly licensed & inspected	33	26%	6	5%	39	16%
Learning how & where food was produced	12	10%	46	38%	58	23%
Knowing person who produced the food	41	33%	15	12%	56	23%
Total	126	51%	122	49%	248	

Comments: Responses here suggest that market customers take on considerable personal responsibility. They are cognizant of the importance of washing food before eating (30%). They are also strongly interested in gaining

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information about how and where the food was produced (23%) and knowing the person who produced the food (23%).

Suggestion: Since it appears that market customers would likely appreciate lots of information about food and those who grow it, the market management might consider ways of making information about the farmer-vendors, their farms and local food available to the market's customers.

Question 3: How much have you / will you spend at the Farmers' Market?

	<u>8:30-10:30</u>		<u>10:30-1:00</u>		<u>Total</u>	
					<u>Percentage</u>	
\$0	35	29%	32	28%	67	28%
\$10	26	22%	32	25%	58	25%
\$20	27	23%	19	19%	46	19%
\$30	11	9%	15	11%	26	11%
\$40	8	7%	3	5%	11	5%
\$50	4	3%	7	5%	11	5%
\$60	5	4%	0	2%	5	2%
\$70	1	1%	3	2%	4	2%
\$80	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
\$90	1	1%	1	1%	2	1%
100	0	0%	2	1%	2	1%
More	1	1%	3	2%	4	2%
Total	119		117		236	
Mean			\$19.61			
Median			\$10			
Mode			\$0			

Comments: The unusually large proportion (28%) of shoppers who did not plan to purchase anything may reflect many tourists strolling through the downtown market without means to store food. This also influences calculations of the median, mean, and mode, lowering them. Including the customers who were "just looking" generates a mean (average) customer expenditure of \$19.61. Excluding them from the calculation would generate a mean customer expenditure of \$27.40.

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Question 4: How many people are you shopping for today including yourself?

	<u>8:30-10:30</u>		<u>10:30-1:00</u>		<u>Total:</u>	
					<u>Percentage</u>	
1	71	48%	11	27%	82	44%
2	58	39%	22	54%	80	43%
3	7	5%	5	12%	12	6%
4	5	3%	3	7%	8	4%
5	2	1%	0	0%	2	1%
6+	4	3%	0	0%	4	2%
Total	147		41		188	
Mean			1.8			
Median			5			
Mode			1			

Comments: On average market customers were shopping for 1.8 persons, with nearly 90% of shoppers purchasing for one or two people.

Question 5: How much have you spent / do you plan to spend at Petoskey Downtown merchants on today's farmers market trip?

	8:30-10:30		11:00- on		Total/ Percentage	
\$0	35	30%	32	27%	67	28%
\$10	26	22%	32	27%	58	24%
\$20	24	21%	19	16%	43	18%
\$30	11	9%	15	13%	26	11%
\$40	8	7%	3	3%	11	5%
\$50	4	3%	7	6%	11	5%
\$60	5	4%	0	0%	9	4%
\$70	1	1%	3	3%	4	2%
\$80	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
\$90	1	1%	1	1%	2	1%
100	0	0%	2	2%	2	1%
More	1	1%	3	3%	4	2%
Total	116		117		237	
Mean			\$18.61			
Median			\$10			
Mode			\$0			

Comments:

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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 (1,452) by the mean number of people customers were shopping for (1.8) and multiplying by the mean customer expenditure (\$19.61). This method very conservatively estimates total market sales for the day at \$15,818.

III. Constructive Comments/Observations

Physical Site

What Team members appreciated about the physical site

Access:

- ❖ Good
- ❖ Nice- 2 main entrances
- ❖ Two sides open Michigan Street & Mitchell Street foot traffic to Howard from parking lot
- ❖ Parking lot & street parking available in downtown area

Flow of people and traffic:

- ❖ Good access, seemingly ample parking
- ❖ Good, no congestion
- ❖ Constant steady flow
- ❖ Market is visible to downtown vendors & traffic

Liability Issues:

- ❖ Barriers (green, plastic, interlocking) keep traffic out

Organization of market:

- ❖ Lots of space to spread out
- ❖ Tents and tables lined up behind trucks

Access to electricity:

- ❖ Available on request

Other:

- ❖ Market manager visible, identified by shirt
- ❖ Market staff is visible and present

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Improvements and Questions

Access:

- ❖ Petoskey Title Co. parking lot usage?
- ❖ Parking not obvious from Mitchell Street
- ❖ Signs- at both entrances and in center of market and farmers market mural on brick wall facing Michigan Street? Need permanent sign!

Flow of people and traffic:

- ❖ Indent south end barricades to allow pull-ups loading

Liability Issues:

- ❖ Paint curbs to make them stand out better
- ❖ Side walks, curbs could be missed b/c of attraction of market
- ❖ Clean up spill rather than walking on paper towels

Organization of Market:

- ❖ South end vendors too spread out, isolated (tree guy)
- ❖ Longer block or use of parking lot would allow expansion

Access to electricity, phone line:

- ❖ Can be arranged with local businesses

Other:

- ❖ Why not use the triangular spaces at Howard and Mitchell? They are nice, well vegetated spaces
- ❖ Table for "market HQ" (centrally located)

Atmosphere

What team members appreciate about the market atmosphere

Market feel:

- ❖ Vendor personality and friendliness
- ❖ This market exemplifies what small town markets are, i.e. variety, locals, quality, etc.
- ❖ Nice, open, small, casual
- ❖ Good feel- steady traffic- no "spurts"
- ❖ Good balance of processed foods and fresh fruits/ veggies

Shopper Demographics:

- ❖ Age: 1-80; median about 50-55; average about 35
- ❖ About 80% women
- ❖ Resorters, business, and local

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- ❖ 30-70
- ❖ Mostly 40+
- ❖ Many couples
- ❖ Appears to be upper middle class- white (99%); middle to older age; some families

Interactions, Conversations:

- ❖ Meeting space between vendor displays, for customers chats
- ❖ Not too busy 50 vendor/ customers have chance to talk
- ❖ Lost of opportunity
- ❖ Lots of vacationers!
- ❖ Several first-time visitors to the market

Educational or Entertainment Activities:

- ❖ Music guitar
- ❖ Player with amp nice
- ❖ Good music at west end
- ❖ Pop song, single/ guitar
- ❖ Guitarist singing blues

Other:

- ❖ Size= ½ short block, cozy
- ❖ Loved the chef using local produce for samples (nearly restaurant)

Improvements and Questions

Market feel:

- ❖ Color, flags, action
- ❖ Another sign or two would be helpful (I missed the market by a block or two)

Shopper Demographics:

- ❖ Wider ethnicity (difficult with local population)
- ❖ Potential for attracting younger adults?

Interactions Conversations:

- ❖ Tables in center for stopping
- ❖ Drinks for sale

Educational/Entertainment Activities:

- ❖ Food education info table with changing literature
- ❖ Can't hear music at west end; move to mid market?

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Other:

- ❖ Tents, tables and color
- ❖ Parking can be on issue

Vendors and Products

What team members appreciate about vendors and products

Product Mix:

- ❖ Meat, vegetables, nursery, fruit, bakery, processed, fish
- ❖ Value added salsas, dressings, fruits, pies

Product Quality:

- ❖ High
- ❖ Maple syrup and snacks
- ❖ High and garden quality
- ❖ Excellent

Signage:

- ❖ Yes some good
- ❖ Friskes, Blackbird Gardens, Krauses'- good examples
- ❖ Very good

Display:

- ❖ Nice outstanding artistic displays- Pond Hill Farms and Blackbird Garden
- ❖ Very nice!

Customer Service:

- ❖ Most vendors very friendly, conversational
- ❖ Yes; interested in talking with customers
- ❖ Excellent

Food Safety:

- ❖ Appearance of high quality, food safety
- ❖ High standards met
- ❖ Trash receptacles available
- ❖ Good on-site refrigeration for meats

Other:

- ❖ One customer asked: Why not a survey question regarding pesticide usage?

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Improvements and Questions

Product Mix:

- ❖ Breads?
- ❖ Cheese, eggs, whole-grain baked goods
- ❖ Several customers mentioned absence of “fish lady”

Signage:

- ❖ Not all have signs
- ❖ Many vendors lacking I.D. signage, (market rules?)
- ❖ Post prices

Display:

- ❖ More product list boards and signs

Customer Service:

- ❖ More flags, more tents, more action

Food Safety:

- ❖ List of vendors at market to guide new customers
- ❖ Baked goods lacking proper labeling
- ❖ Encourage vendors to wash hands; try to keep hands clean