



# South Lansing Farmers Market

## Rapid Market Assessment

*Saturday*  
*September 5, 2009*



### Assessment Team

**Dru Montri**  
**Dan Keane**

*Michigan Farmers Market Association*  
*Keane's Wee Bee Farms*



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*Saturday, September 5, 2009*

**Market Hours:** Every Saturday, June 6, 2009 - September 26, 2009  
10 am – 2 pm

**Location:** Benjamin Davis Park, 5614 Pleasant Grove Rd, Lansing 48911

**Website:** <http://www.southlansing.org/FarmersMarket>

**Market Staff:** Catie Parker (Market Manager)

**Market Day Comments:** Clear sunny sky, pleasant temperature, 65-75 degrees, Labor Day Weekend, beautiful day, calm but breezy between 1 – 2 pm

**Age of Market:** Established in summer of 2009

**Fees:** The market did not charge a vendor fee in this initial year due to grant support.

**Vendors:** 11

### Market Sales

**Estimate:** \$1,482

### Market Attendance

**Estimate:** 228

**Introduction:** The South Lansing Community Farmers Market was established in the summer of 2009 by the South Lansing Community Development Association with the hopes of bringing farm fresh produce to the traditionally under served community of South Lansing.

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## Rapid Market Assessment

Saturday, September 5, 2009

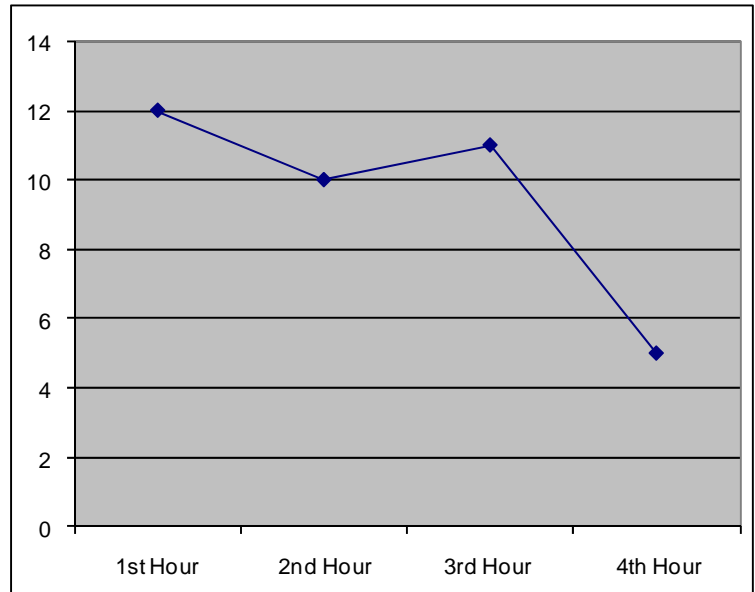
### I. Customer Counts

**Estimated Attendance: 228**

|                                    |    |
|------------------------------------|----|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Hour (10:25-10:35) | 12 |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Hour (11:25-11:35) | 10 |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> Hour (12:25-12:35) | 11 |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> Hour (1:25-1:35)   | 5  |

Total: 38

Estimated Total # of shoppers: 228



**Comments:** Team members counted the numbers 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 started strong and remained steady throughout the day before decreasing severely in the last hour of the market. Market management might want to consider changing market hours, potentially from 10 – 1 pm, if this drop in attendance is observed regularly. Another alternative would be to focus on special events or promotions from noon to 2 pm to boost attendance.

# South Lansing Farmers Market

## Rapid Market Assessment

Saturday, September 5, 2009

### II. Dot Surveys

#### Question 1: How many ADULTS are in your shopping party today?

|              |           |             |
|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| 1            | 37        | 43%         |
| 2            | 36        | 42%         |
| 3            | 3         | 3%          |
| 4            | 6         | 7%          |
| 5            | 4         | 5%          |
| 6+           | 0         | 0%          |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>86</b> | <b>100%</b> |

**Mean:** 1.9

**Median:** 2

**Mode:** 1

**Comments:** The mean or average number of adults per shopping party was 1.9. The median was 2 and the mode, or most common response was one person.

# South Lansing Farmers Market

## Rapid Market Assessment

Saturday, September 5, 2009

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

|              |           |             |
|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| \$0          | 4         | 5%          |
| \$5          | 22        | 27%         |
| \$10         | 22        | 27%         |
| \$15         | 18        | 22%         |
| \$20         | 6         | 7%          |
| \$25         | 5         | 6%          |
| \$30         | 1         | 1%          |
| \$35         | 0         | 0%          |
| \$40         | 2         | 2%          |
| \$45         | 1         | 1%          |
| \$50+        | 0         | 0%          |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>81</b> | <b>100%</b> |

**Mean:** \$12.35

**Median:** \$10

**Mode:** \$5 and \$10

**Comments:** The mean or average expenditure of shoppers was \$12.35. The median was \$10, meaning that half of the shoppers spent less than \$10 and half spent more than \$10. The most popular amounts spent at the market were bimodal with \$5 and \$10 being the most popular.

#### 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 (228) by the mean number of people customers were shopping for (1.9) and multiplying by the mean customer expenditure (\$12.35).

This method very conservatively estimates total market sales for the day at \$1,482.

*Catie indicated that she e-mails vendors once a month for an estimate of market day sales. The number she receives are close to this estimate.*

# South Lansing Farmers Market

## Rapid Market Assessment

*Saturday, September 5, 2009*

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

|               |           |             |
|---------------|-----------|-------------|
| Cash          | 71        | 87%         |
| Credit        | 3         | 4%          |
| Bridge Card   | 4         | 5%          |
| Project FRESH | 3         | 4%          |
| Other         | 1         | 1%          |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>82</b> | <b>100%</b> |

**Comments:** Overwhelmingly people use cash as their primary form of payment. Less than 10% of participants use Bridge Cards or Project FRESH coupons.

# South Lansing Farmers Market

## Rapid Market Assessment

Saturday, September 5, 2009

### Question 4: Which of our outreach efforts caught your attention & made you decide to come to the market today?

|                                    |           |             |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Saw banner                         | 33        | 40%         |
| Yard Signs                         | 8         | 10%         |
| Weekly e-mail                      | 4         | 5%          |
| South Lansing newsletter           | 5         | 6%          |
| Neighborhood Organization outreach | 6         | 7%          |
| Word of mouth                      | 15        | 18%         |
| Regular Shopper                    | 5         | 6%          |
| Other                              | 6         | 7%          |
| <b>Total</b>                       | <b>82</b> | <b>100%</b> |

**Comments:** The outreach efforts that caught 40% of people's attention and made them decide to come to the market was seeing a banner for the farmers market. Visibility is very important for new markets. Additionally, word of mouth is important for bringing new shoppers to the market.

# South Lansing Farmers Market

## Rapid Market Assessment

Saturday, September 5, 2009

### Question 5: How often do you shop at this farmers market?

|                                 |    |      |
|---------------------------------|----|------|
| Most weeks                      | 25 | 30%  |
| Several times during the season | 18 | 22%  |
| 1st time and I'll return        | 31 | 37%  |
| Just visiting today only        | 9  | 11%  |
| Total                           | 83 | 100% |

**Comments:** Many (37%) of the people that were at the market were there for the first time and said that they would return. This makes sense for a first year market. Thirty percent of people that shop at the farmers market are regular shoppers and come most weeks.

# South Lansing Farmers Market

## Rapid Market Assessment

Saturday, September 5, 2009

### III. Constructive Comments/Observations

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

##### Market Access

- Adequate parking
- Banner catches people's attention on Pleasant Grove Rd.
- The market is easy to access
- Nice new path and also was very handicap accessible which is a nice feature

##### Flow of People and Traffic

- Steady flow in the morning 10 - 11:45 am
- I like the separation of parking and the market

##### Liability Issues

- There was a cord by bathroom

##### Organization of the Market

- Linear, one sided, market along path works for this market

##### Access to Electricity and Telephone Line

- This market has both
- Look like access to electricity was available only at one end of the market

##### Additional comments

- Consider equality of key market issues, stall space, etc.

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

##### Flow of People and Traffic

- Are there ever any special events in the market
- Would you want to try a morning market (9:30 -12:30 or 9 -1)?
- The market should become aware of how people shop. It looked like they usually walked the whole market. This will be important as you expand.

##### Liability Issues

- The market could update posts between parking and market area for better guard between parking and market area.

##### Organization of the Market

- Could vendors park on grass behind their tent?

# South Lansing Farmers Market

## Rapid Market Assessment

*Saturday, September 5, 2009*

### Access to Electricity and Telephone Line

- In the future, the market might consider adding underground wire and more electricity throughout the market. Vendors who need it will pay

### Additional comments

- "Equity" - Does each vendor have equal opportunity to customer traffic flow and sales?

### Market Atmosphere. What is working well?

#### Market "Feel"

- The market had a nice feel, the park setting was nice
- The market had a nice, comfortable feel
- People stayed and seemed to be enjoying the experience

#### Shopper demographics

- Good diversity, with the shoppers and vendors at the market
- Mostly adults with some younger families shopping at the market
- There was ethnic diversity among farmers/vendors and customers.
- Apparent mix of economic diversity

#### Interactions, Conversations

- One woman commented that she's lived here since '71 and that this market is great for the community.
- It is a social place.
- Appeared to be frequent good conversations between the vendors and customers

#### Educational or Entertainment Activities

- Printed literature was available at the market

#### Other

- This market has great potential to grow and be significant community resource

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

#### Market "feel"

- The market could have more for kids. As the market grows you could have more music and other activities.
- You could move more picnic tables closer to food or use some benches so people can stay.

# South Lansing Farmers Market

## Rapid Market Assessment

*Saturday, September 5, 2009*

### Educational or Entertainment Activities

- Foster community table with more groups to educate - such as master gardeners, Extension (nutrition info), ARGA, Health Community and others
- The market could add special events to draw more folks in

### Other

- The market should consider setting up a market board or advisory committee that would include 2-3 farmers to assist with management objectives
- Maybe something to attract more children

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

#### Product mix

- The market had a good diversity of fresh fruits and vegetables
- There were eight vendors at the market
- For a small new market, it had a very nice mix of products/food, fruit and vegetables

#### Product Quality

- The product quality was overall very good
- Products are fresh and in very good condition today

#### Signage

- Very nice sandwich board, but few people without a farm/business name

#### Display

- Tent set up in linear system seems to work well
- Don't be afraid to consider alternative setups

#### Customer Service

- It was a very friendly group of vendors, they were willing to talk with shoppers
- Very friendly vendors, nice experience with all people I talked with

#### Food Safety

- Food safety and licensing is obviously important priority

#### Other, Including Vendor Comments

- Great relationships between vendors
- Food vendors using local market products. i.e. herbs
- Vendors are pleased

# South Lansing Farmers Market

## Rapid Market Assessment

*Saturday, September 5, 2009*

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

#### Product Mix

- The market should continue to seek farmers/vendors with other products with focus on seasonal commitment
- Could add honey, maple syrup, cut flowers, cheese and meats

#### Product Quality

- Product quality needs to be part of your mission

#### Signage

- Have each farmer/vendor clearly display their name
- Farms/vendors should include farm name/banner

#### Food Safety

- Keep up the good work on this
- Amish baked goods need to be prepared in a licensed kitchen with proper labeling

#### Other, Including Vendor Comments

- Wondered if vendors could be placed closer to each other (spread out quite a bit on far end)
- Can vendors park behind their space for easy set up?
- People/vendors leave early
- Herbs were out at noon, Laotian family out at 1:30

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

#### Project FRESH

- Bright yellow signage on vendor boards
- Observed seniors using Project FRESH at the market
- Most farmers with fresh fruit, veggies displayed a FRESH poster

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

- Great banner at market tent
- Congrats for making the effort to accept SNAP/debit and credit in your start up year

#### Alternative Redemption Systems

- People (shoppers and vendors) seem comfortable with token system
- Tokens are being used, looks like this is working well

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## Rapid Market Assessment

Saturday, September 5, 2009

### Signage

- Good signage at info booth

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

#### Project FRESH

- Brand FRESH/EBT with everything SNAP Program (EBT, Bridge Cards)
- Could place signage on vendor boards

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

- As mentioned, Dru can help with farmer poster to identify those that accept EBT. *Catie indicated that she implemented signage that day.*

### Signage

- More signage throughout the market is good
- Consider more attention to the information booth so it doesn't just look like another vendor tent