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University of Idaho  
Extension

# FARMERS' MARKET AT SANDPOINT

## RAPID MARKET ASSESSMENT

### JUNE 26, 2019

Market Name: **Farmers Market at Sandpoint**  
Year Founded: 1988  
Market Website: <http://sandpointfarmersmarket.com>  
Date of Assessment: June 26, 2019  
Market Hours: **Wednesdays 3:00 pm to 5:30 pm**  
Market Season: Second Wednesday in May through Second Wednesday in October  
Location: Farmin Park and Jeff Jones Town Square, corner of Third Avenue and Oak Street, downtown Sandpoint, Bonner County, Idaho  
Market Manger: Kelli Burt, [farmersmarketatsandpoint@gmail.com](mailto:farmersmarketatsandpoint@gmail.com)  
Market Staff: Emma Sanford, Outreach Coordinator (at time of RMA)  
Fees: \$10 for a full space (10'x10') or \$5 for a half space (5'x10'). All vendors pay a one-time membership fee of \$70. Discount for fall meeting attendance is \$10 and discount for spring meeting attendance is \$20.  
Vendors: 20 vendors on June 26:  
60% Agriculture  
30% Prepared Food  
10% Crafts  
Estimated Market Sales: \$5,917 to \$7,396  
RMA Team Members: Colette DePhelps, Area Extension Educator, Community Food Systems, University of Idaho (UI), Moscow  
Jen Jensen, Horticulture and Small Acreage Farms Educator, UI Bonner County Extension, Sandpoint  
Kate Painter, Agriculture Extension Educator, UI Boundary County Extension, Bonners Ferry  
Colby Bland, Community Food Systems Intern, UI Extension, Moscow  
Jacob Ussery, Community Food Systems Intern, UI Extension, Moscow  
Graham Kerwin, Edible Idaho, Coeur d'Alene  
Market Volunteers: Kim Sorenson, Farmers Market at Sandpoint volunteer  
Cara Aisha, Farmers Market at Sandpoint volunteer  
Toben Pincher, Farmers Market at Sandpoint volunteer  
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**Introduction:** On Wednesday, June 26, 2019, University of Idaho Northern District Extension performed a Rapid Market Assessment (RMA) of the Farmers’ Market at Sandpoint. The assessment had three components: 1) adult customer count, 2) four-question dot survey, and 3) constructive comments and observations by the RMA Team<sup>i</sup>. This report provides a summary of the RMA findings.

## PART 1: ADULT CUSTOMER COUNT

Market customer counts are estimates. They are derived by counting the number of adult shoppers in the market at opening plus hourly customer estimates. To obtain hourly estimates, RMA Team members are stationed at each market entrance for 10 minutes. For this two and one-half hour market, counts were taken 25-35 minutes after the hour for the first two hours the market was open and for a ten-minute period starting one-half hour before the end of market. Using clickers, team members counted the number of adults entering the market in that ten-minute period. The ten-minute counts were then multiplied by six (10 minutes x 6 = 60 minutes) to obtain an estimate of adult customers entering the market during each of the first two hours and by three (10 minutes x 3 = 30 minutes) to estimate the last half hour (Table 1). The number of children entering the market were counted using the same method (Table 2).

Table 1: Estimated Total Adult Customers: 692		
Time	Count	Percentage
3:00 pm – at opening	35	5%
3:00 pm to 4:00 pm	312	45%
4:00 pm to 5:00 pm	258	37%
5:00 pm to 5:30 pm	87	13%

As shown in Table 1, the peak hour for adult customers appears to be between 3 pm and 4 pm while the peak hour for children was between 4 pm and 5 pm (Table 2). The largest percentage of adults and children (63%) entered the market from Oak Street, with the remaining 37% entering from Main Street.

Table 2: Estimated Total Children: 173		
Time	Count	Percentage
3:00 pm – at opening	5	3%
3:00 pm to 4:00 pm	48	28%
4:00 pm to 5:00 pm	84	49%
5:00 pm to 5:30 pm	36	21%

## PART 2: FOUR-QUESTION DOT SURVEY

One adult per household was asked to participate in a four-question dot survey. Each survey question was written on a separate poster board. Customers were asked where they live, how much they anticipated spending in the market, how much they anticipated spending outside the market in the downtown area, and what would increase their market attendance. Children's dots, distinguished by color, were not counted.

Approximately 27% (188) of the adults who visited the market participated in the dot survey by answering two or more of the dot survey questions. Dot survey posters were changed mid-market, at 4:15 pm, in order to test whether there were substantial differences between the first and second half of the market. Participation in the survey was significantly higher during the first half of the market, with 134 (71%) adult respondents, compared with only 54 (29%) adult respondents in the second half of the market.

### Where Market Shoppers Are Coming From

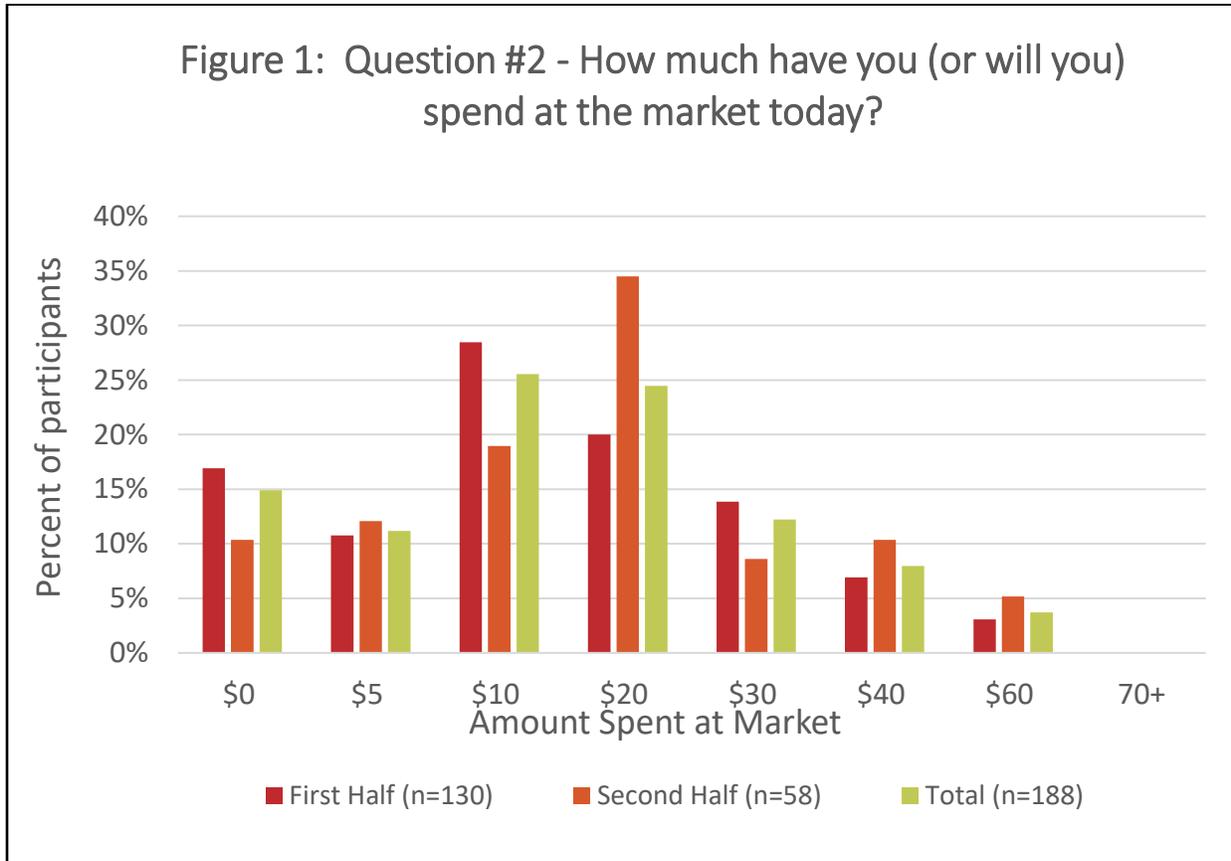
As shown in Table 3, about 42% of all customers who responded to the dot survey reside in Sandpoint and approximately 13% reside in Sagle or Algoma. Thirty-three percent were tourists or visitors residing outside of Bonner (ID) and Pend Oreille (WA) counties.

Table 3: Question #1 - Where do you live?	
Location	Percent of Respondents (n=188)
Sandpoint	42%
Sagle/Algoma	13%
Ponderay	1%
Hope/Clark Fork	5%
Other Bonner County	5%
Newport/Priest River	1%
Other Pend Oreille County	0%
Tourist / Other	33%

Comparing responses from shoppers during the first and second half of the market, approximately 59% of shoppers in the first half lived outside the City of Sandpoint, compared to 56% of the shoppers in the second half of the market. The percent of shoppers identifying as tourists or visitors from outside Bonner and Pend Oreille counties was the same, 33%, during the first and second half of the market.

## Customer Spending at Market

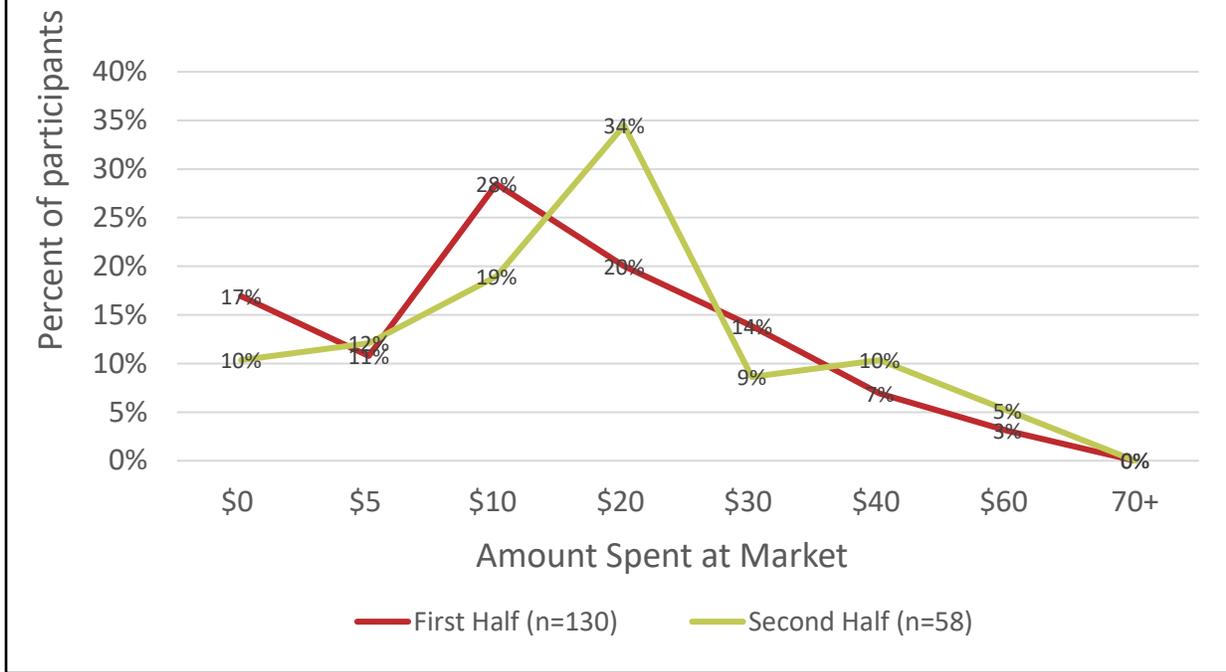
Spending is estimated by “shopping group” – adults who spend from one “wallet.” A shopping group is generally one or two adults. A “basket” refers to the total market purchases made by a shopping group. Adults from the same shopping group were asked to answer the survey using one dot per question to avoid over counting. Market customers were asked how much they had or would spend at the market that day. Response categories were provided.



Based on survey responses, approximately 47% of total market sales were in baskets ranging in value from \$0 to \$20.00 while 53% of total market sales were in baskets ranging from \$30.00 to \$60.00 in value (Figure 1).

In the first half of the market, 17% of respondents indicated they would spend less than \$5, while in the second half of the market, just 10% selected this category (Figure 2). Overall, participants in the second half of the market indicated a higher intended (or actual) level of spending, with 34% responding that they would spend between \$20 and \$30.

Figure 2: Comparison of spending between first and second half of the market.



Overall, the average amount spent per shopping group was \$17.10 (Table 4). However, spending patterns differed between the first half and the second half of the market. Customers shopping during the second half of the market spent approximately \$3.00 more per basket than customers shopping during the first half of the market, a per basket increase of approximately 19%<sup>1</sup>.

Table 4: Average Amount Spent in the Market by Shopping Group

Time Period	Average \$ Spent
All of Market (3:00 pm to 5:30 pm)	\$17.10
First half of Market (3:00 pm to 4:15 pm)	\$16.15
Second half of Market (4:15 pm to 5:30 pm)	\$19.22

Given the trend of higher spending during the second half of the market, market management might consider whether extending market hours would attract additional shoppers who are willing to spend more money at the market.

<sup>1</sup> The average amount spent per shopping group is calculated by dividing the total amount survey respondents indicate they spent (\$3,215) by the total number of shopping groups who completed the survey question (188).

## Estimated Total Market Sales

Using the Rapid Market Assessment methodology, **total market sales** can be estimated as follows:

- Number of shoppers divided by the number of adults per shopping group equals the number of shopping groups.
- Number of shopping groups multiplied by the average amount spent per shopping group equals the estimated total market sales.

The number of adults per shopping group is estimated to range from 1.6 to 2.0. Using 2.0 reflects a more conservative estimate on spending<sup>2</sup>.

Estimated Total Number of Shoppers	Shopping Group Size	Number of Shopping Groups	Estimated Market Sales (\$17.10 basket)
692	2.0	346	\$5,917
692	1.6	433	\$7,396

Estimated total market sales range from \$5,917 to \$7,396 (Table 5). Since at least 33%\* of the survey respondents indicated they lived outside Bonner County (see Table 3), we can estimate that approximately 33% of Market sales (between \$1,952 and \$2,441) were to customers residing outside of Bonner County, assuming there is no difference in average spending between these two groups<sup>3,4</sup>.

## Market Customer Spending in Downtown Sandpoint

In order to better understand the economic impact of the Market on downtown businesses, survey respondents were asked whether they planned on doing additional shopping or eating in the downtown area (outside of the market) and, if yes, how much they anticipated spending.

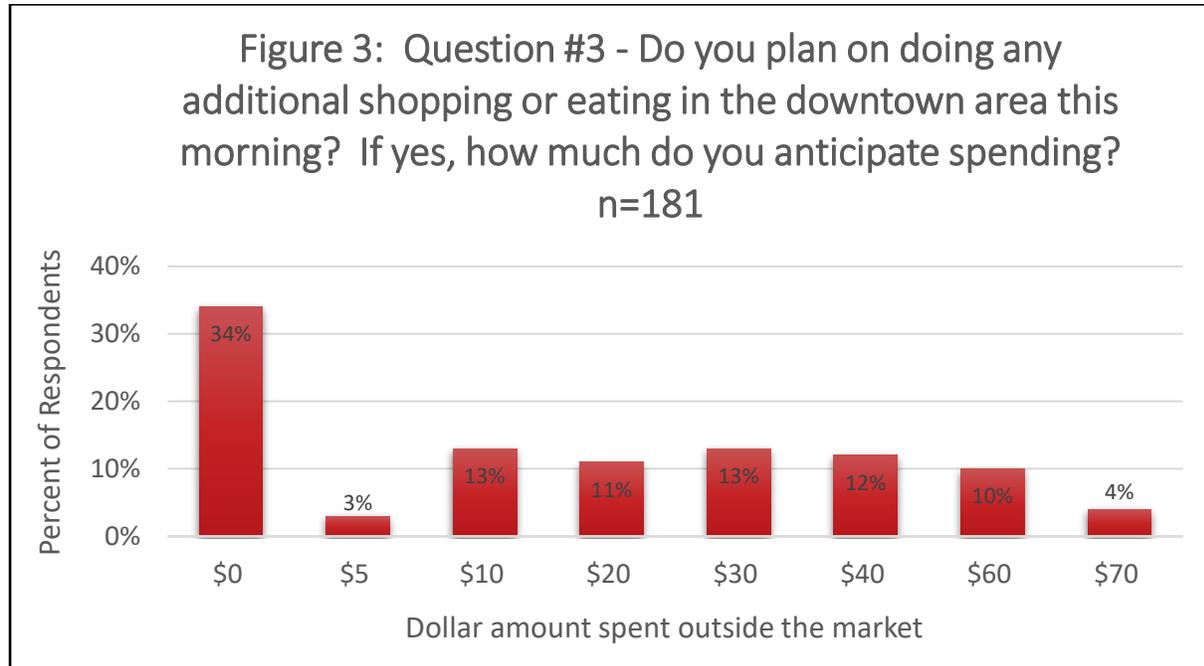
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<sup>2</sup> While many people shop at farmers markets alone, effectively being a shopping group size of 1, more conservative shopping group numbers of 1.6 and 2 are used to prevent overestimating market spending.

<sup>3</sup> One of the “Where do you live?” response categories included both Newport, WA and Priest River, ID. Since we were unable to determine the county of residence for respondents in this category, those respondents were not counted as residing outside of Bonner County.

<sup>4</sup> In the case of this dot survey, cross-tabulations across survey questions was not possible. Therefore, there is no way to determine if there were differences in spending between those living inside and outside of Bonner County.

Approximately sixty-six percent (66%) of respondents indicated they would be shopping at other downtown establishments on the day of the assessment (Figure 3).



About 27% of shoppers indicated they would spend between \$5 and \$20.00 outside of the Market and 39% indicated they would spend between more than \$20.00 outside of the Market. The average downtown expenditures anticipated by survey respondents was \$20.77 per shopping group.

The total downtown spending reported by survey respondents was \$3,760. Approximately 17% (\$650) were baskets ranging in value from \$0 to \$20.00 and 83% (\$3,110) in baskets \$30.00-\$70.00 in value.

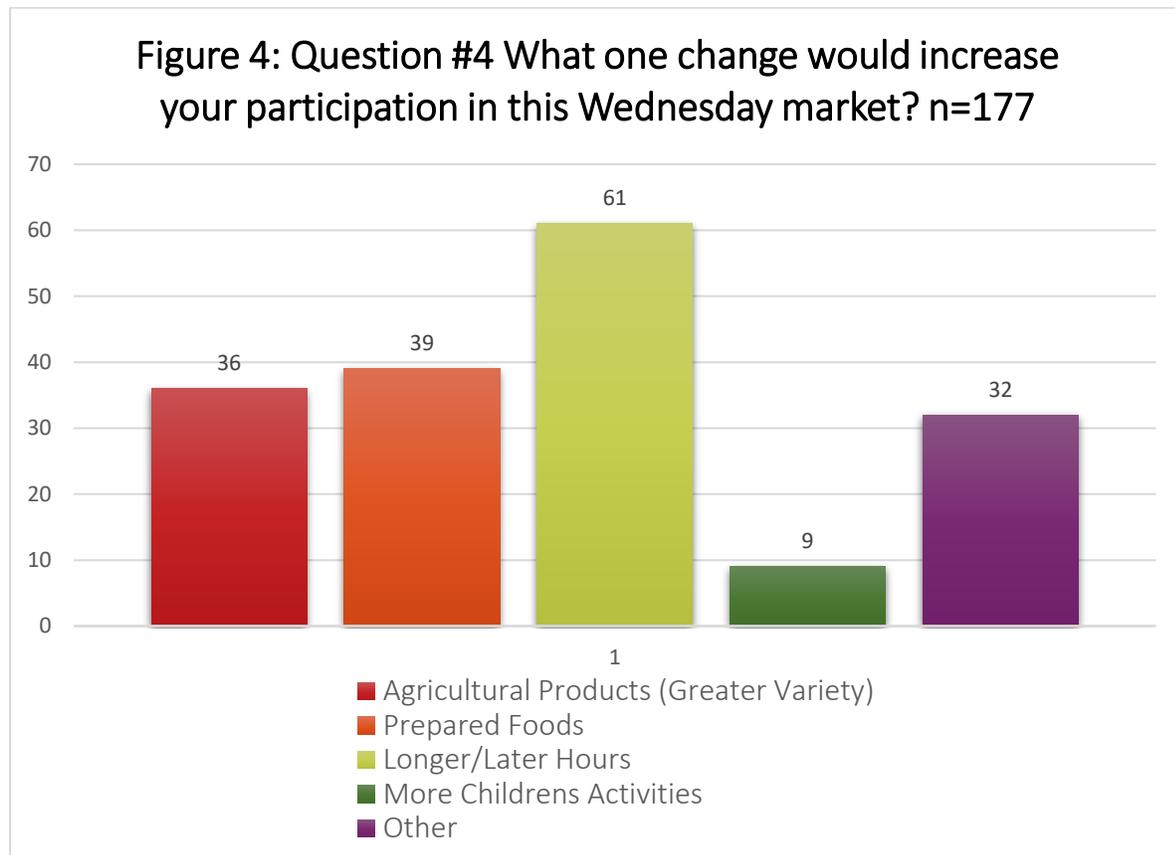
Estimated Total Number of Shoppers	Shopping Group Size	Number of Shopping Groups	Estimated Downtown Spending (\$20.77 basket)
692	2.0	346	\$7,189
692	1.6	433	\$8,983

The estimated total downtown spending by market shoppers ranges from \$7,186 to \$8,983 (Table 6). Since at least 33% of the survey respondents indicated they lived outside Bonner County (Table 3), we can estimate that 33% of downtown spending (between \$2,372 and \$2,964) was by market customers residing outside of Bonner County, assuming there is no difference in average spending between these two groups.

## Increasing Customer Participation

The Farmers' Market at Sandpoint Board of Directors and market management were interested in learning what would increase customers' participation in the Wednesday market. Survey respondents were encouraged to choose from a pre-determined list of responses or provide their own written comments (Figure 4).

Sixty-one percent (61%) of survey respondents indicated the number one change the market could make to increase their participation was longer or later hours. The next most popular market changes were more prepared foods (39%) and a greater variety of agricultural products (36%). While only 9% of respondents indicated more children's activities would increase their participation, it is important to note that on this market day, there were two children's activities, one provided by the library and another by market volunteers.



Thirty-two percent (32%) of market shoppers selected the “other” category. If they selected the “other” category, shoppers were given the opportunity to provide written comments. Thirty-one written comments were received. The most common was that no change was needed (9 written comments). Seven (7) respondents indicated addition of a brewery or craft beer vendor at market would increase their participation and two (2) respondents indicated they would like to see more art. Changes receiving one response included: Keto options, greens not wrapped in plastic, more singing, cookie vendor, huckleberry vendor, baby bins, an adult craft class, more vendors, and happy hour/dinner.

## PART 3: CONSTRUCTIVE COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS SUMMARY

The purpose of this section of the report is to provide the Market with feedback about individual aspects of the market observed by the RMA Team. Comments and observations were not solicited from market volunteers. These remarks are not intended to be comprehensive nor do they provide an overall “grade” to the market. Rather, the feedback provides information as to what team members appreciated and what they thought might be changed or improved. When multiple team members made the same or a very similar comment or observation, x2, x3, etc. are used to indicate the number of times the comment was made.

### Vendors and Products

Product mix, product quality, signage, display, customer service, etc.

Most important message to Market Manager from this sheet:

- Great assortment of vendors and overall good products.
- Looks like a really nice market. Good thing to build on.
- A lot of potential for local foods and products & more arts and education.
- Very nice to meet producers at all the stalls.
- More vendors. Maybe talk to local restaurants about hot food.

Most significant observation I will take back with me:

- Short, mid-week market can play an important role in the local food system. Needs to be well promoted so that it's worth it to the vendor.
- It looks half-full.
- What was there was great & I would like to see more!
- Positive outgoing vendors.
- Great variety.

#### What I appreciated about the Market:

- I liked that there was a presence by the library and also UI Master Gardeners.
- Vendors were mellow and had time to chat as they served you. x2
- Nice diversity of vendors
- Beautiful produce/High quality produce x3
- Great access, wide range of vendors offering diverse goods. x3
- Awesome that there is a bunch of food trucks across the street.
- Vendors and customers support the market
- Most vendors look very professional with nice tents and tablecloths and displays x2
- Some vendors are obviously popular.

#### Changes or improvements that may be needed:

- More vendors, more local business/organizations
  - Meat guy?
- More booths:

- Educational/materials X2
- Parks & Rec department booth
- Book clubs
- Sports clubs/teams
- More music & street performers X2
- Comparatively few arts and crafts at market, more produce and processed goods (like soaps) x2
- More games/activities for kids x2
  - Bouncy house
- More signage around park x2
- Provide signage for bathroom locations
- Would be nice if all vendors used tablecloths/Some booths looks less professional x2
- More prepared foods & drinks might result in customers staying longer and enjoying the music.

## Physical Site

Access, parking, flow of people, liability issues, organization

Most important message to Market Manager from this sheet:

- Great to have lawn + shade! People stay and bring their kids to enjoy the site.
- Spacing and planning for booth locations could result in better crowd movement and distribution.
- There is room to expand, but sidewalks are often crowded.
- Walkways are tight and layout does not lend for an easy one-way loop, but overall nice.

Most significant observation I will take back with me:

- This is a great community gathering spot. There were all kinds of visiting & interaction among the public as well as vendors.
- Crowd spacing is inconsistent.
- Good shade covering.
- I really like the park setting with shade trees.

### What I appreciated about the Market:

- Lawn and big shade trees. Park like setting. Strolling atmosphere. X5
- Places for kids to play.
- Market manager is available & accessible.
- Bandstand Stage is great!
- Town-centered location, but still off the main roads, with signs advertising market are nice.
- Great access to parking.
- Good flow of people, don't think they stay around long enough though.
- Well organized

- Not too crowded!

**Changes or improvements that may be needed:**

- More seating x3
  - Perhaps another bench, esp. closer to music. I didn't see that there was a drinking fountain or a way to provide water for dogs.
  - Perhaps to fill up space, get people to stay.
- Inconsistent spacing of booths/Arrangement of booths x4
  - Spacing results in huge crowds in one area & trickle to other booths. A planned 'track' hitting all booths with popular locations spread out could result in a steadier crowd flow, more organized feel, maybe longer browsing times.
  - Stage is far away from vendor area, which makes the market busy at one end and feel segmented/isolated on Oak.
  - Consider putting additional vendors on Main toward stage
  - You could maybe organize it to have better flow like more vendors on the Main Street side - there is always congestion around those booths.
- Odd to have vendors leave at 4 pm.
- Sign says no dogs allowed but dogs were allowed.
- Uneven ground well navigated w/ booth placements & traffic patterns. x2
- Narrow walkways. It gets a bit tight around some vendors.
- Live music feels disconnected. It feels like the market is literally facing away from the music. Music is too far away from the rest of the market. X2

## Atmosphere

Feel of the market, type of shoppers, conversations, educational activities, color, etc.

Most important message to Market Manager from this sheet:

- I hope there is enough revenue being generated for the vendors. I like that it wasn't too crowded, but I am worried that sales might have not been sufficient to make it worth their while.
- More community-based groups, clubs, & performers would be awesome!
- It would be a good idea to advertise/support activities for children.
- Great atmosphere, relaxed, friendly, lots of conversations with vendors and between shoppers.

Most significant observation I will take back with me:

- Very relaxed and friendly atmosphere.
- Great to have such a nice venue for people to gather & interact.
- Welcoming atmosphere, very chill, maybe in need of more energy.
- Strong sense of community present, it feels like half of market (customers & vendors) are friends/familiar with each other.
- Mostly older couples and young families (couples w/ young children).

**What I appreciated about the Market:**

- Friendly Crowd. Very friendly community feeling with lots of children. X4
- Bike friendly
- Pet-friendly x3
- It was a nice touch that there was something for kids to do. X2
- Nice live music!
- Variety of ages are present x2
- Friendly vendors x2
- A lot of people seem here to buy produce!
- Colors and themes

**Changes or improvements that may be needed:**

- Bikes riding through the market are awkward.
- Maybe it should be promoted a bit more.
- Maybe more upbeat tunes.
- Maybe more farmers present would be good.
- Not as many 20-30 year olds.
- The library table behind other vendors is hard to see and I saw very few people there.

### General Public Comments

Additions to dot answers, conversation points, comments on survey, market, etc.

Most important message to Market Manager from this sheet:

- RMA could be a more regular thing! Is there a way to provide regular feedback?
- Credit/Debit card commerce apps or token-exchange/"market-money" booth could help with accessibility.
- Listen to and keep public/vendors involved.
- Overall positive comments heard.

Most significant observation I will take back with me:

- How else can we help to facilitate finding out more about public markets like these? They are a great amenity for communities.
- General satisfaction but very little time spent in-market per customer.
- Surprised by how willing people were to take the survey.

**What I appreciated about the Market:**

- The market seems to be working well for them if a little slow, is all.
- Everybody is happy to be here! X2
- Heard someone saying they prefer this market to Saturday's market as it was less busy.
- One gentleman lives out of town but if he is in town he stops by for produce.
- Overall positive comments heard from vendors.
- Customers seem to enjoy milling around the market, visiting friends, chatting with vendors.

### Changes or improvements that may be needed:

- Do RMAs on regular basis!
- Ask vendors how it's working for them.
  - What can UI Extension do to help them in terms of programming or other ways to mentor each other, facilitate this type of marketing?
- Time of market may not be ideal--should go later to access people getting off work and maybe people who want to make an evening of the farmers market.
- "Do you take debit?"
- More hot/prepared foods x3
- Heard people complain/ask about having Coeur d'Alene and Spokane as locations on RMA question "Where are you from?"
- "Coeur d'Alene isn't tourist"



<sup>i</sup> The Rapid Market Assessment methodology was developed by Larry Lev, et. al, at Oregon State University. For more information on Rapid Market Assessments, see Oregon Small Farms Technical Report No. 6: Lev, Larry, Linda Brewer and Garry Stephenson. Tools for Rapid Market Assessments. Special Report 1088-E, Oregon Small Farms technical Report No. 6. Oregon State University, May 2008. Retrieved from <https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/sr1088>