

*One Sky One Earth
Farmers' Market
Rapid Market Assessment
AUGUST 20, 2015*



University of Idaho
Extension

Cinda Williams
University of Idaho Extension Educator
Community Food Systems

Executive Summary

Farmers markets often seek input from their customers, vendors and others who have experience in Farmers' Market development and success. Whether they are new markets, or more established, they can always benefit from input to help the market run efficiently, attract and serve customers and provide a profitable sales outlet for locally grown and made products.

The Rapid Market Assessment (RMA) technique is a survey tool and input gathering process conducted for farmers' market managers and vendors to assess and improve the market. For more information on the RMA process see the publication, *Tools for Rapid Market Assessment* by Lev, et al., Oregon State University, 2008: http://smallfarms.oregonstate.edu/sites/default/files/small-farms-tech-report/eesc_1088-e.pdf.

The One Sky One Earth Farmers' Market is a relatively new market with passionate leadership and a goal of helping this market succeed. On the day of the RMA (conducted on Thursday August 20, 2015) a total of 91 people attended the market, with over half of those arriving during the first hour between 4 and 5 pm. Over 45% of attendees were from Plummer or Worley, another 15% were from other nearby communities of Tensed or St Maries, 18% indicated they live off the reservation but stopped at the market after work on the reservation and 22% were visitors who saw the sign/activity that brought them into the market. When asked what influenced their attendance at the market that day, 41% of market attendees saw the road signs or market, 18% heard about it through email at work and 28% indicated word of mouth influenced their decision to attend.

The majority of people responded that their primary reason for shopping at the market was to buy produce (54%). The other primary reasons given were purchase of baked goods (16%) and prepared foods (4%). When customers were asked what additions they would like to see at the market there were a variety of answers. However, a common theme from respondents was that they want MORE: more farmers, more people, more prepared foods, more produce and more variety. Five people indicated they would like to see music at the market, four people wanted longer hours and one person thought a debit/credit machine nearby would be useful.

The RMA Team was asked to provide feedback through comments, suggestions and observations of the farmers' market atmosphere, vendors and products, physical site and general public comments. The team felt the **atmosphere** was low key, enjoyable and relaxing. Suggestions for improving the atmosphere included: more color and signage, add music, add youth activities. The comments regarding the **vendors and products** referenced a good variety of vendors and products, prices are very reasonable, and it appears the market is well poised to grow slowly and be successful. Suggestions for products that could be added were meats and cheese and more prepared foods (for eating dinner on site). It was suggested that vendors have their farm name on their booth and it would help some vendors to have more visible pricing. The management team might consider new methods to actively recruit more vendors. The highlight of the markets' **physical space** is the great location and the large sign on the truck. However, it was felt that the truck needs to be moved, Not only does it visually divide the market, it separate the vendors, impedes traffic flow and there were safety issues in traversing between the front vendors and those at the back. Management might consider putting all the vendors together in the back lawn space, with a table or two for people to sit and talk or eat. Overall, the **general public comments** were about how they love the market and want it to grow. The location of the market is excellent and with a bit of rearranging and a few additions (more vendors, youth activities, food, color and music) this market has huge potential for success!

Note: It is important to remember that the results of this RMA for the One Sky One Earth Farmers' Market is only a snapshot of one day at the market. While the results are helpful when taken in context, it is not constructive to look at this as an average or representative of every market day throughout the season.

**One Sky One Earth Farmers' Market
Rapid Market Assessment
20 August 2015**

Market Name: One Sky One Earth Farmers' Market
Date of Assessment: August 20, 2015
Market Hours: Thursdays, 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm
Location: Lot on US 95, next to Gateway Cafe, Plummer ID
Market Manager: Cheryl Lockard
Market Staff: Rebecca Walrod, Ken Hoyt, Yolanda Bone

Fees: \$5 each session, or \$25 for the whole season

Vendors: Approximately 10 vendors:
50 % Produce
40% Prepared foods
10% Crafts

Estimated Market Sales: \$617

RMA Team Members: Cinda Williams, UI Extension Educator, Moscow
Iris Mayes, UI Extension Educator, Latah County, Moscow
Colette DePhelps, UI Extension Program Associate, Moscow
Yolanda Bone, FRTEP Extension Educator, Cd'A Tribe, Plummer
Cheryl Lockard, UI Extension Program Assistant
Ken Hoyt, Traditional Foods Coordinator, hnqhesnet, BMWC
Rebecca Walrod, Demonstration Gardener, hnqhesnet, BMWC
Brenna VanDalsen, Registered Dietician, hnqhesnet, BMWC
Teri McKenzie, Executive Director INW Food Network

RMA Report Authors: Cinda Williams

Part 1: Consumer Information:

Estimated Total Audience: 91

	Count	Percentage
4:00 pm to 5:00 pm	48	53%
5:00 pm to 6:00 pm	30	33%
6:00 pm to 7:00 pm	13	14%

Comments: From observation (and numbers reflecting the same) the peak time for customers appears to be between 4 and 6 pm, especially between 4 pm and 5 pm in the first hour of the market. There was a drop in market attendance from 6 pm to 7 pm. However, this assessment may not be representative of a typical day. The assessment team noticed that some vendors also left before the market closed. This could be an issue if people come in that last hour and see vendors packing up.

Question #1: Where so you live?

(Answered by 55 attendees)

- Plummer – 14
- Worley - 11
- Tensed – 2
- Desmet – 0
- St. Maries – 6
- Off reservation (but work here) – 10
- Off reservation (visiting) - 12

Comments: While the majority of customers (over 45%) came from Plummer or Worley, it is significant to note that about 18% of respondents live off the reservation but stopped after work (on the reservation) to attend the market. Another 22% were visitors who stopped by as they were passing through and saw the sign and activity. Other places listed by name included: Moscow, Deary, Potlatch, Spokane, Montana, Wisconsin and Minnesota.

Question #2: What is the primary reason for visiting the market today?

(Answered by 56 attendees)

Produce – 30
Baked goods - 9
Crafts - 0
Prepared foods - 2
Other (please list): 15
 Everything – we buy randomly
 Support the market
 Everything
 I like small town outdoor markets
 Check it out x4
 Eggs
 I work here
 Great people
 I am selling

Comments: The majority of respondents indicated their primary reason to attend the market was to buy produce. However, over 25% listed “other” and provided comments to include: support of the market, stopping to check it out, like everything, etc. The most responses mirrored what is available at the market – mostly produce and baked goods.

Question #3: What advertising influenced your attendance at this market?

(Answered by 54 attendees)

Road signs – 17
Email – 10
Word of mouth – 15
Other – please list – 12
 Relative of vendor
 Came with my mom
 Saw the market x3
 Drive by and saw it x2
 Facebook
 Just know about it...
 Vendor

Comments: It is obvious from the responses that people came because of your location and the signage. Of the 54 respondents on this question, 17 people indicated they saw the road signs and another 5 said they saw the market as they were driving by (41% of attendees). You have an excellent opportunity to capture even more of the drive by traffic in this prime location. Your emails and word of mouth are also getting people’s attention about the market.

Question #4: What would you like to see at the market? (Open-ended question)

More farmers x3
More
More people
More of everything
Fun things
Pre-made food
Variety of goods
More stuff x2 x3
Even more attendance
Open longer hours x4 (one said “open earlier”)
More produce
Dairy products
Music! x5
Debit/credit machine

Comments: Current market attendees are looking for this market to grow! They want more farmers, more people, more products, and more diversity. Several people indicated they would like to see music at the market. Four respondents indicated longer hours but only one indicated they preferred earlier hours.

Amount Spent Per Shopping Unit: From the attendance numbers and the estimated market sales for the day we can estimate amount spent per shopping unit. Through research and experience of farmers market assessments, Oregon State University faculty were able to define that most purchases at farmers markets were made by shopping units.¹ As many people come to the market in family groups or couples that spend from one wallet it is estimated the average shopping units will range between 1.6 to 2 people. For this market we will use 1.6 as our shopping unit. The total number of shoppers (91) is divided by 1.6 (as our representative shopping unit) and we get approximately 57 shopping units. When the total amount spent for the day (\$617) is divided by 57 we end up with the average amount spent per shopping unit on that day as \$10.82.

¹ Lev, L. L. (2008). *Tools for Rapid Market Assessments*. Oregon State University.

Part 2: RMA Team Member Comments, Suggestions and Observations

The purpose of this section of the report is NOT to provide an overall “grade” to this market or rank it against any other market; rather the team of volunteers used their “fresh eyes” to provide feedback about the individual elements that they observed. They noted what they liked, what they thought could be changed or improved and questions they had. The RMA process is about sharing – both the market being observed and the observers should gain new insights and ideas.

Atmosphere

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

Most important messages about the atmosphere to convey to Market Manager:

- A nice low key atmosphere is a good thing – maybe use that somehow in advertising??? (Encourage people to come get their produce, visit with friends and relax on a weekday afternoon.)
- Increase color and signage at market booths.
- Advertise a children’s area with signs and balloons!

Most significant observations team members will take back with them:

- Diversity of shoppers (all ages, people from different walks of life). Lots of homemade, homegrown goodies.
- Friendly, community feel.
- Relaxing and enjoyable atmosphere.

What team members appreciated about the atmosphere of the market:

- Calm atmosphere
- Low key, friendly atmosphere
- Variety of shoppers
- Good conversations between customers and vendors (because they have time to talk)
- Shoppers are a mix of tourists (stopping off the highway) and regular shoppers. Has strong sense of being a community meeting place.
- Lots of people stopping after work – earlier shoppers, mostly unhurried).
- Smoothie bike blender is great!! Advertise it with signs!! Tell people how they can use it, do it or even buy one themselves!

Suggested changes or improvements regarding the atmosphere of the market:

- Possibly expand on outreach to promote market
- Try featuring a youth activity at a specific time – maybe just once per month? Maybe this will draw in more families? (Maybe you already do this??)

- Offer educational programs or short demonstrations?
- More activities or special events might pull in more people – such as live music.
- Have vendors face out toward the streets – so people on the road feel welcome!
- Have a colored market tent with signs for information. The one colored tent (green) was a vendor.
- Music on the grass would create more festive atmosphere and might encourage more families to attend. Consider moving all vendors to the grass and staging trailer on road side just south of the Gateway Café sign.
- Provide directions on where people ought to park. Signage

Vendors and Products

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

<p>Most important messages about the vendors and products to convey to Manager:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wide variety of vendors, some who are dialed into “marketing” and others less so. • Vendor workshops on post-harvest handling and selling @ market (display) would be useful and help increase sales. • This market is poised well to grow slowly and be successful.
<p>Most significant observations team members will take back with them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nice diversity of foods and crafts (not too many crafters). • Good product mix. Would be nice to have proteins (eggs, meat, dairy/cheese) and more artisan breads • Lower prices of produce and baked goods than in larger markets. (maybe a benefit of your market for promotions/advertising??)

What team members appreciated about the vendors and products:

- Great sign on the truck (eye-catching from the road).
- Vendors were super friendly.
- Friendliness of vendors and staff. Most vendors actively engage their customer in conversation.
- Vendors have professional appearance.
- For such a small market – you have a nice variety of produce, baked goods. Nice to have prepared food available (burritos/tacos).
- Good percentage of vendors with produce (50% farmers is a good percentage).
- Vendors were friendly!
- Like the matching tents (but could use more color – with signs or decoration??)

Suggested changes or improvements regarding the products or vendors:

- Would it be possible to get vendors who sell meat or cheese? Maybe a couple more folks selling meals?
- Also someone demonstrating food/cooking (especially traditional foods)?
- Training for produce vendors on maintaining product quality (some product was wilting by 4:30) and with product display, business signage and price visibility. Could have some produce sold in smaller (1/2 pint) size for people stopping (tourists) as they drive through.
- Place early departing vendors on the edge of market so they don't leave holes in the market as they leave.
- Consider actively recruiting more vendors – more farmers – meats, cheeses, and more produce. Also more high quality crafts and jewelry. You may have to consider having some standards for crafts – so you don't get all the same types of crafts or poor quality. Larger markets have juried arts and crafts – not sure you need that yet but good to think now about your needs as you grow.
- Vendors should have their farm or business name on their booth! The vinyl banners are great – but anything is better than nothing. Customer recognition is very important!!
- Some vendors could use more visible pricing on products. Making it easier on customers and themselves.

Physical Site

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

Most important message to Market Manager about the physical site:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Move all vendors to grass and create a more defined market space.• Rearrange so that trailer does not divide the market vendors.
Most significant observations volunteers will take back with them:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good location with ample parking. Good visibility. □• Potential for use of grassy area.• The signs are doing a good job drawing in people driving through town!

What volunteers appreciated about the atmosphere at the Market:

- Provision of market tents, tables and chairs.
- Good visibility and access from the highway.
- Signs, flags, trailer create visibility
- Market location definitely draws in customers.
- The signs are visible to hwy but trailer needs to be relocated.

Suggested changes or improvements regarding the physical site:

- Suggest creating a more even flow for shoppers. The vendors in the back are hidden from the road. I think more people might stop at the market if they see a lot of vendors.
- Create designated parking area with signage
- Provide sandwich boards for side of highway.
- Put all vendors in the grassy area (helps with dust, and creates market cohesiveness.)
- Create child activity table
- Provide weights for tents.
- Could you move the trailer?
- Add a table for people to sit and eat or talk.
- The board on the ground by trailer and in between the two divided sides of the market is a huge safety hazard. Recommend rearranging market so people do not have to walk over that.

General Public Comments

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

Most important ‘general messages (some overheard from the public) to convey to the Market Manager:
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The market has huge potential to grow. |
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Most significant general observations or things heard that volunteers will take with them:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vendors quite friendly and engaging. |
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General positive comments from volunteers, market attendees or vendors:

- Public comments captured on flip charts
- Customers seem happy with the market

General comments and suggestions for changes from volunteers, attendees or vendors:

- Customers indicate they would like more variety of products – dairy, meat, corn...
- A place to sit, mingle, eat