

One Sky One Earth Farmers' Market Rapid Market Assessment

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Executive Summary

The One Sky One Earth Farmers' Market, established in 2014, is located in the town of Plummer, Idaho. Just off Interstate 95, the market's location provides a high level of visibility for community members and highway travelers. On the day of this Rapid Market Assessment (RMA), Thursday, September 13, 2018, a total of 101 adults and 13 children attended the market. Approximately 48% of adult attendees were from Plummer and Worley, another 17% were from other nearby communities of Tensed, Desmet and St. Maries. Approximately 4% indicated they live off the reservation but stopped at the market after work on the reservation and 20% were visitors from off the reservation. When adults were asked what influenced their attendance at the market that day, 14% of market attendees saw the road signs, 35% drove by and saw the market, and 35% indicated word of mouth influenced their decision to attend.

A majority of adult respondents indicated their primary reason for shopping at the market was to buy produce (37%). The other primary reasons were baked goods (35%) and prepared foods (16%). When adult customers were asked what they would like to see at the market there were a variety of answers, including more produce, a larger variety of agricultural products, like meat and cheese, more people, and additional prepared foods. Nine adults and one child indicated they would like to see music at the market.

The RMA Team was asked to provide written 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 positive, welcoming and friendly. Suggestions for improving the atmosphere included adding children's activities and an area with tables and chairs for social activities, including lingering and eating. The comments regarding the **vendors and products** indicated the market has a good product mix and attractive booths with reasonable prices and engaging vendors. Suggestions for increasing the variety of products included adding meats and cheese. The RMA team also felt product display and signage could be improved. Specific suggestions for improvement included: vertical produce displays; improved signage with farm name and location; and, closing car trunks or removing cars from the vending area. The RMS team suggested the market consider providing vendor training on farmers market booth design and product displays. The markets' **physical space** provides for good highway visibility, easy access, ample parking and room for growth. Market management might consider using cones, signs or other means to better delineate parking areas and pedestrian/customer pathways and creating a seating area with tables and chairs for people to sit, eat and socialize. The **general public comments** heard by the RMA team emphasized customers' appreciation of the market and how it supports the community. Youth attendees were highly engaged in the RMA process which supports the suggestion of including youth activities in the market.

A similar RMA was conducted in 2015.¹ When responses from the September 13, 2018 RMA are compared with those from the August 20, 2015 RMA, some interesting similarities and differences can be seen. For instance, while estimated number of adults attending the market increased by approximately 15%, estimated market sales doubled. These similarities and differences are noted in the market report.

When considering the contents of this report, it is important to remember the RMA technique is a survey tool and input gathering process conducted for farmers' market managers and vendors to assess and improve their market. The results of the 2018 RMA for the One Sky One Earth Farmers' Market is 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. Similarly, the comparison between the 2015 and 2018 RMAs are comparisons of two market days only, not comparisons of market performance over the 2015 and 2018 market seasons. For more information on the RMA process see the publication, *Tools for Rapid Market Assessment* by Lev, et al., Oregon State University, 2008.

¹ Williams, C. One Sky, One Earth Farmers' Market Rapid Market Assessment, August 20, 2015.

One Sky One Earth Farmers' Market
Rapid Market Assessment
September 13, 2018

Market Name: One Sky One Earth Farmers' Market
Date of Assessment: September 13, 2018
Market Hours: Thursdays, 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm
Location: Lot on US 95, next to Gateway Cafe, Plummer, Idaho
Market Manager: Cheryl Lockard, University of Idaho Extension, Coeur d'Alene
Reservation, Plummer

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

Vendors: Number of vendors: 9
3 Produce / agricultural vendors
5 Prepared foods (1 also sells produce and crafts and is included in those numbers)
5 Crafts (2 also sell prepared foods and are included in that number)

Estimated Market Sales: \$1236.00

RMA Team Members: Colette DePhelps, U of I Area Extension Educator, Northern District, Moscow
Marci Miller, Executive Director, Rural Roots, Inc., Moscow
Ann McCormack, Economic Development Planner, Nez Perce Tribe, Lapwai
Danielle Scott, U of I Extension Educator, Nez Perce Reservation, Lapwai

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PART 1: CONSUMER INFORMATION:

Estimated Total Attendance:

101 Adults
13 Children

Comments: The RMA team endeavored to do an actual count of all the adults and children who attended the market on September 13, 2018. From observation, 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. Market attendance declined from 6 pm to 7 pm with a few people arriving just before market closed.

Question #1: Where so you live?

(Answered by 85 adult attendees)

Plummer – 31
Worley - 19
Tensed – 1
Desmet – 1
St. Maries – 13
Off reservation (but work here) – 3
Off reservation (visiting) - 17

Comments: A majority of customers (58%) came from Plummer (36%) or Worley (22%). Another 15% were from St. Maries. Approximately 4% of attendees lived off reservation but stopped after work (on the reservation) to attend the market. Another 20% were off reservation visitors who saw the signs and/or activity and stopped at the market as they were passing through Plummer. These off reservation visitors were from Potlatch, Boise, Tekoa, Santa, Rockford and Coeur d'Alene. Approximately, two-thirds of the children who attended the market lived in Plummer or Worley and the other third were visiting from off reservation.

Comparison to August 20, 2015 RMA: Estimated market attendance on the day of the 2015 RMA was 91 adults (children were not counted). Forty-five percent (45%) of the adult customers indicated they were from Plummer and Worley and 18% indicated they lived off the reservation but stopped by after work (on the reservation) to attend the market. Approximately 20% were off reservation visitors to the market.

Question #2: What advertising influenced your attendance at this market?

(Answered by 83 adult attendees)

Road signs – 12
Email – 5
Word of mouth – 29
Facebook – 4
Drove by & saw it – 29
Other (please list) – television – 4

Comments: Approximately 35% of market attendees drove by, saw the market and decided to stop and shop at the market which indicates the market's visibility from Highway 95 and side streets is a benefit to market attendance. Another 35% indicated word of mouth influenced their decision to attend the market. Road signs, which influenced 14% of adults to attend, were also effective at influencing market attendance. Advertising through Facebook (5%), email (6%) and television (5%) had an almost equal influence on market attendance. Market managers and vendors may have an opportunity to increase awareness of the market through increased email communication and by boosting Facebook posts, which would be considerably less expensive than television ads.

Comparison to August 20, 2015 RMA: It is interesting to note that in 2015, approximately 18% of attendees indicated email advertising influenced their attendance at market – three times as many people as indicated email advertising influencing their decision to attend the market in 2018.

Question #3: What is your primary reason for visiting the market today?

(Answered by 86 adult attendees)

Produce – 32
Baked goods – 30
Crafts – 4
Prepared foods – 6
Other (please list) – 14

Comments: The majority of respondents, 37%, indicated their primary reason to attend the market was to buy produce. However, baked goods were a close second at 35%. About 5% of adults came because of the crafts and another 7% because of prepared foods. Fourteen percent (14%) listed "other" primary reasons including dinner (which could be considered prepared foods), bread (which is a baked good) and socializing.

Comparison to August 20, 2015 RMA: It is interesting to note that the percentage of shoppers indicating baked goods as the primary reason they attended market increased from 16% in 2015 to 35% in 2018. The number of shoppers indicating produce as their primary reason for attending declined from 54% in 2015 to 37% in 2018. This may be reflective of the existing vendor mix, rather than overall customer priority for products, as the primary thing 2018 attendees indicated they would like to see more of at market is produce (see question #4 below for details) and many indicated they would like to see other agricultural products such as cheese, herbs and meat.

Question #4: What would you like to see at the market?

(Answered by 77 adult attendees)

More produce – 30
More prepared foods – 8
More people – 13
Longer hours – 6
More variety of goods – 8
Other (please list) – 12

Comments: Over a third, 39%, of adult shoppers would like to see more produce at the market and another 16% would like to see an increased variety of agricultural products including meat, local cheese, herbs and farm soap. Additionally, 17% would like to see more people at the market and 12% specified they would like to have live music at the market. Approximately 10% would like to see more prepared foods. At the top of the children's list for what they would like to see more of at the market was toys! Overall, attendees would like to see the market grow!

Comparison to August 20, 2015 RMA: In 2015, market attendees also indicated they would like to see more produce, more prepared foods, more variety of goods, more people, longer hours and music.

Market Spending

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.² As people often come to the market in family groups or as couples that spend from one wallet, it is estimated the average shopping units will range between 1.6 to 2 people.

If we use 1.6 as our shopping unit on September 13, 2018, the total number of adult shoppers (101) is divided by 1.6 (as our representative shopping unit) and we get approximately 63 shopping units. When the total amount spent for the day (\$1236.00) is divided by 63 we end up with the average amount spent per shopping unit on that day as \$19.62. If we use the estimate of 2 people per shopping unit, the average amount spent per shopping unit was approximately \$24.24.

Comparison to August 20, 2015 RMA: In 2015, the total number of shoppers was 91. The total sales on that day was \$671.00. If the total number of shoppers is divided by 1.6, as the representative shopping unit, there were approximately 57 shopping units. When total sales of \$671.00 is divided by 57, the average amount per shopping unit was \$10.82. When we use 2 as the representative shopping unit, average sales per shopping unit was \$13.41. ***Overall, sales per shopping unit increased approximately 44%, between 2015 and 2018.***

² 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 RMA is for the RMA team, a set of “fresh eyes” on the market, to provide feedback about the individual elements they observed. RMA team members noted what they appreciated, what they thought could be changed or improved and questions they had with respect to market atmosphere, vendors and products, and the physical site and recorded general comments from market shoppers. While the RMA team is sharing their observations, they are also learning – gaining new insights and ideas for supporting farmers markets in the communities where they work and live.

Atmosphere

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

Most important messages about the atmosphere to convey to Market Manager:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Such a lovely feeling market. Get folks to stay longer!
Most significant observations team members will take back with them:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>So much</u> opportunity for this market – keep going!

What team members appreciated about the atmosphere of the market:

- Friendly, welcoming.
- So nice! People & vendors are so friendly.
- The interactions were all positive.
- Positive energy.
- Social atmosphere.
- Friends meet-up.
- Unhurried.

Suggested changes or improvements regarding the atmosphere of the market:

- Music would be so nice!
- Kids activity game.
- Table & chairs to linger at to eat?
- Many people talked about music and how that would be a great addition to the market.
- A kids’ play area.
- Kids activities would be great.

Vendors and Products

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

Most important messages about the vendors and products to convey to Manager:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is a wonderful mix of vendors.• More produce is what most people are interested in.• Overall, great product mix.
Most significant observations team members will take back with them:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The vendors and customers have great rapport.• Maybe have an off-season “farmers market booth design workshop” – signage, materials, arrangements.

What team members appreciated about the vendors and products:

- The easy access to fresh, healthy food.
- The variety of vendors.
- Having market tents for vendors is a great idea!
- Vendors have very nice, inviting booth spaces and products.
- Vendors are very engaging and have a great balance of sales & personable.
- Wide product mix.
- Vendors very approachable.
- Offer tastes/samples.
- Very reasonable prices.
- Appreciate some vendors have signs with products available.

Suggested changes or improvements regarding the products or vendors:

- It would be more visually appealing to have care trunks closed behind booth or choose to not have cars parked behind booth.
- Clearly display farm names / business names & locations at booths.
- Produce displays could use a vertical dimension to better see produce (one vendor has everything in used boxes of various types – could not see the produce and also a food safety concern).
- Open trunks visually distracting from displays.

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">• Great location! Hope you can stay here long-term.
Most significant observations volunteers will take back with them:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It definitely seems like people are accustomed to shopping @ the market.

What volunteers appreciated about the atmosphere at the Market:

- Easy access, decent parking.
- Great location along highway.
- Tents are all uniform – very attractive!
- Open area.
- Room for growth.
- Arrangement of booths creates areas to easily stroll through market.

Suggested changes or improvements regarding the physical site:

- Consider parking signs/cones/rope to help direct folks.
- If the location is permanent, maybe permanent wood structures would be nice (like the Hayden/Kootenai Market).

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:

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keep the feel of this market – small & local. |
|---|

Most significant general observations or things heard that volunteers will take with them:

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• So much room to grow the market. |
|--|

General positive comments from volunteers, market attendees or vendors:

- People really seem to love this market.
- Double Up Market Bucks is a great offering.
- Customers were very glad to see the market.
- Market supports the community.

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

- Some type of music, produce & prepared food additions over time. Tables & chairs for customers.
- Mixed reviews/comments on the TV ads. A number of people appreciated the ads and were excited to see the market on TV. One person expressed concern TV ads would not bring people down from Coeur d’Alene so money could be better spent elsewhere.