



## Example Survey for Determining New Farmers Market Feasibility

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### Introduction

Inspired by the success of established farmers markets in surrounding areas, community organizations and planning departments may consider starting a new farmers market in their locale. Before expending limited time, money, and labor on the establishment of a new farmers market, consider seeking valuable feedback from the community in the form of a consumer interest survey. Taking time to perform a preliminary farmers market interest survey may prevent poor planning mistakes that could impede the future success or contribute to the eventual demise of a newly planted farmers market. The following example survey template was developed to assist in determining consumer interest in starting a farmers market. The example survey may be adapted and utilized by extension professionals, community organizations, planning departments, or other interested individuals to determine new farmers market feasibility.

### Example Survey Template

#### 5-MINUTE <CITY OR AREA NAME> FARMERS MARKET INTEREST SURVEY

Have you ever wanted to buy fresh fruits and vegetables, meats, eggs, and other farm products directly from local farmers? Have you ever wished there was some place closer than the <NEXT CLOSEST FARMERS MARKET> to get these items? Are you interested in fresh produce or livestock products that are grown without excessive treatment of pesticides and other chemicals? Would you like to have the luxury of getting all this right here in <CITY OR AREA NAME>? If so, we would appreciate your responses to the following questions, which will guide us as we move forward in determining the feasibility of this consumer driven, farmer-direct marketing initiative.

1. Would you shop at a Farmers Market located in <CITY OR AREA NAME>?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

2. Where is the best location for a new farmers market in <CITY/AREA NAME>?

- <CHOICE A>
- <CHOICE B>
- Other, please enter location: \_\_\_\_\_

3. On a scale of 1 to 10 (10 = highest), how strongly do you feel that a farmer's market would be a great opportunity for the citizens of <CITY OR AREA NAME>? \_\_\_\_\_ (enter 1-10, 10 being highest, 1 being lowest)

4. What day of the week is the most convenient for you to shop at a farmers market?

- Monday  Tuesday  Wednesday  Thursday  Friday  Saturday  Sunday

5. What time of day should the market OPEN?

- 6 AM

- 7 AM
- 8 AM
- 9 AM
- Other, please specify time: \_\_\_\_\_

6. What time of day should the market CLOSE?

- 12 Noon
- 1 PM
- 2 PM
- Other, please specify time: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Which of the following services should be offered to farmers market shoppers?

- Protection from the elements
- Restrooms
- Food trucks
- Coffee vendor
- Dining tables
- Seating areas
- Free parking
- Information booth
- Educational events (cooking, nutrition, gardening, environment, health, etc.)
- SNAP (food stamps) Acceptance
- Other, specify: \_\_\_\_\_

8. How much of your produce do you currently buy from non-traditional outlets (for example: Farmers Markets, Community Supported Agriculture programs, Roadside Stands?)

- All (100%)
- Most (about 75%)
- Some (about 25%)
- None

9. Would you like to buy more produce directly from growers?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

10. What are your most important considerations when deciding to buy from local farms?

- V** = Very Important
- S** = Somewhat Important
- N** = Not Important

Indicate one of the following letters: V, S, or N for the items below:

- A. It sustains local farming communities \_\_\_
- B. It promotes open space and rural character \_\_\_
- C. It is convenient \_\_\_
- D. It is fresh (most products harvested and delivered on same day) \_\_\_
- E. It is grown in accordance with USDA National Organic Standards \_\_\_
- F. It is grown with environmentally sound farming practices \_\_\_

11. How much do you currently spend on fresh produce weekly?

- \$0.00-\$10.00
- \$11.00-\$20.00
- \$21.00-\$30.00
- \$31.00 or more

12. How much do you currently spend on fresh meats weekly?

- \$0.00-\$10.00
- \$11.00-\$20.00

- \$21.00-\$30.00
- \$31.00 or more

13. How much do you currently spend on fresh flowers weekly?

- \$0.00-\$10.00
- \$11.00-\$20.00
- \$21.00-\$30.00
- \$31.00 or more

14. How much do you currently spend on dairy products (cheese, milk, etc.) weekly?

- \$0.00-\$10.00
- \$11.00-\$20.00
- \$21.00-\$30.00
- \$31.00 or more

15. Where do you currently shop for fresh produce?

- Grocery Store: \_\_\_\_\_
- Farmers Market: List name here: \_\_\_\_\_
- Other, Describe here: \_\_\_\_\_

16. Do you or family members grow your own fruits & vegetables?

- Yes
- No

17. Which of these products would you be interested in buying at your farmers market?

- V** = Very Important
- S** = Somewhat Important
- N** = Not Important

Indicate one of the following letters: V, S, or N for the items below:

- A. Seasonal and Local grown fruits and vegetables \_\_\_\_
- B. Freshly baked goods \_\_\_\_
- C. Jellies, Jams, Honey, and Syrups \_\_\_\_
- D. Salsas, mustards, sauces, relishes, and vinegars \_\_\_\_
- E. Fresh herbs \_\_\_\_
- F. Garden plants: vegetables and herbs \_\_\_\_
- G. Poultry meats \_\_\_\_
- H. Pork meats \_\_\_\_
- I. Beef meats \_\_\_\_
- J. Lamb meats \_\_\_\_
- K. Goat meats \_\_\_\_
- L. Cut Flowers \_\_\_\_
- M. Milk & Cheese Products \_\_\_\_
- N. Eggs \_\_\_\_
- O. Seafood \_\_\_\_
- P. Please list specific produce requests and any other product suggestions:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

18. Would a **<CITY OR AREA NAME>** farmers market increase your quality of life?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

19. What is the best way to inform you about the **<CITY OR AREA NAME>** farmers market opening?

- Television
- Newspaper
- Email, enter email address \_\_\_\_\_
- Mobile Text, enter mobile phone number \_\_\_\_\_

20. If you would like to participate in a **<CITY OR AREA NAME>** Farmers Market community initiative (as a vendor, volunteer, etc.), or receive timely information concerning the development of the **<CITY OR AREA NAME>** Farmers Market, please provide your name, email address, and phone number in the space below:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

This survey can be returned to the spot where you picked it up or to the **<ORGANIZATION NAME>** office front desk located at **<ADDRESS>** during **<DAYS, HOURS>**. The **<CITY OR AREA NAME>** is working with the **<COUNTY>** County Cooperative Extension to connect local farms to the residents of **<CITY OR AREA NAME>** through the planting of a Farmers Market. Your opinion is highly valued by **<NAME OF PLANNING ORGANIZATION>**.

If you have further related questions, please contact the following individuals:

For **<CITY OR AREA NAME>** Farmers Market Development related questions, contact:

**<NAME OF PLANNING ORGANIZATION>**

**<NAME>**, **<OFFICIAL TITLE>**

Phone: **<PHONE NUMBER INCLUDING AREA CODE>**

Email: **<EMAIL ADDRESS>**

For Local Farm and Food Systems Development related educational questions, contact:

**<LOCAL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION OFFICE>**

**<NAME>**, **<OFFICIAL TITLE>**

Phone: **<PHONE NUMBER INCLUDING AREA CODE>**

Email: **<EMAIL ADDRESS>**

### Recommendations

Creating both a hard copy and an online version of the survey may improve participant response rate. In the case of the Town of Holly Springs NC planning department, their new farmers market interest survey returned 52 hard copy responses, while the electronic version garnered 544 responses. It appears from the NC example that online surveys may have improved response rates over hard copy distribution alone. However providing both survey submission options is recommended, since not all community members have convenient access to a computer.

### Additional Resources

National Farmers Market Coalition. (2016). *Farmers market coalition resources*. Retrieved from <https://farmersmarketcoalition.org/education/>

Stephenson, G., Lev, L., & Brewer, L. (2008). *When things don't work: Some insights into why farmers markets close*. Oregon State University Extension Service. Special Report 1073-E. Retrieved from <https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/sr1073>

Town of Holly Springs NC Planning Department. (2006). *Farmers market survey executive summary*. Retrieved from <http://www.hollyspringsnc.us/DocumentCenter/View/8357>

United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service. (2015). *Trends in U.S. local and regional food systems: Report to Congress*. Retrieved from <http://www.ers.usda.gov/media/1763057/ap068.pdf>