

New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station

P-02137-8-98

June, 1998

Farmers Markets: Managers Characteristics and Factors Affecting Market Organization

Ramu Govindasamy

Marta Zurbriggen

John Italia

Adesoji Adelaja

Peter Nitzsche

Richard VanVranken

THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY
RUTGERS

In cooperation with:

Agricultural Marketing Service, United States Department of Agriculture
Markets Division, New Jersey Department of Agriculture

Department of Agricultural, Food, and Resource Economics
Rutgers Cooperative Extension
New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station
Cook College
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
New Brunswick, New Jersey 08901

Farmers Markets: Managers Characteristics and Factors Affecting Market Organization

*Ramu Govindasamy
Marta Zurbruggen
John Italia
Adesoji Adelaja
Peter Nitzsche
Richard VanVranken*

THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY
RUTGERS

Ramu Govindasamy is an Extension Specialist in Marketing,
Marta Zurbruggen is a Graduate Assistant, John Italia is a Program Associate,
Adesoji Adelaja is an Associate Professor and Department Chair,
Department of Agricultural, Food, and Resource Economics,
Peter Nitzsche and Richard VanVranken are Agricultural Extension Agents,
Rutgers Cooperative Extension

Correspondence Address:

Ramu Govindasamy, Marketing Specialist and Assistant Professor
Department of Agricultural, Food, and Resource Economics,
Cook College, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey,
55 Dudley Road, New Brunswick, New Jersey 08901-8520
Phone: (732) 932-9171 ext. 25

Acknowledgments

The authors of this report acknowledge the assistance and support given by the members of the coalition made up of farmers, managers and personnel of the New Jersey Department of Agriculture, New Jersey Farmers' Direct Marketing and North Jersey Farmers' Market Council. Appreciation is expressed to AMS-USDA for making available the funds for this research project.

We are grateful to Barbara Wolf for her valuable input; to Ron Good, Peter Nitzsche, Randy Brockway, Jeff O'Hara, Harvey Ort, Carol Kesler and Elaine Barbour for their comments on the questionnaire; to Peter Nitzsche and Rick VanVranken for reviewing the manuscript and to Randy Brockway for providing the list of New Jersey farmers' market managers and coordinators.

Appreciation is expressed to all North Jersey Farmers' Market Council members, advisors and volunteers who work hard to make community farmers' markets a "success story."

Special thanks and appreciation to all farmers' market managers and coordinators who, by responding to the survey, provided invaluable information necessary to carry out this project.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	<i>iv</i>
Introduction	<i>1</i>
Data Sources	<i>2</i>
Survey Results	<i>3</i>
Managers Profile	<i>3</i>
Recruitment of Producers	<i>5</i>
The Marketplace	<i>6</i>
Market Layout	<i>7</i>
Prices	<i>9</i>
Promotions and Advertisement	<i>9</i>
Market Season	<i>11</i>
Fees	<i>12</i>
Problems, Experiences and Suggestions	<i>13</i>
Demographics	<i>14</i>
Summary and Conclusions	<i>15</i>
References	<i>18</i>
Questionnaire	<i>19</i>

List of Tables

Table 1: Major Factors Considered When Choosing Farmers' Market Sites.	<i>5</i>
Table 2: Days of Operation	<i>12</i>
Table 3: Demographic Characteristics Of Farmers' Market Managers.	<i>16</i>

List Of Figures

Figure 1: Managers' Source of Employment	3
Figure 2: Part-time/Full-time Status	4
Figure 3: Are You at the Facility During the Selling Hours?	4
Figure 4: Number of Years on the Job	4
Figure 5: Do You Have Any Farming Experience Yourself?	4
Figure 6: Methods Used to Recruit Producers	5
Figure 7: Is There Competition Between Farmers' Markets and Other Retail Outlets?	6
Figure 8: Is Farmer Absenteeism a Problem?	6
Figure 9: Areas where Farmers' Markets are Located	7
Figure 10: Is Rivalry Among Vendors a Serious Problem in the Marketplace?	7
Figure 11: Are Vendors With Identical Produce Placed Adjacently?	8
Figure 12: Are Wholesalers and Resellers Allowed in the Market You Manage?	8
Figure 13: Type of Parking Area	9
Figure 14: Methods of Advertisement Used	10
Figure 15: Services and Farm Related Activities Provided by Farmers' Markets	11
Figure 16: Busiest Time of Day	12

Executive Summary

The resurgence of farmers' markets in New Jersey has been welcomed by farmers, consumers and municipalities alike. This form of direct marketing has the potential to benefit all three sectors simultaneously. Farmers' markets allow growers to capture a greater share of the consumer's food expenditure thus increasing their profitability. Similarly, consumers' need for fresh, high quality commodities as well as for farm-based recreational experiences are met. Also, drawing customers to downtown areas can contribute to the revitalization of these areas by boosting the business of local retailers. However, despite their rapid spread throughout the state, no study has been conducted on the efficiency of the farmers' markets in terms of management and organization.

This study provides an overview of various characteristics of managers as well as of the factors that have an effect on the organization and well functioning of these direct marketing outlets. Besides demographics, some of the managers' characteristics analyzed are: source of employment, years of experience, farming expertise, their presence in the facility during selling hours and methods used to recruit producers. With regard to market organization, some factors explored are: location, market layout, criteria for market's site, methods of promotion and advertisement (including special events), days of operation and fees charged to vendors. In addition, rivalry among farmers and between farmers and local retailers is considered as well.

The results show that farmers' markets managers are employed by several different entities. These are cities, townships, counties, downtown revitalization and special improvement district organizations, farmers' markets and business associations among others. The majority of the managers supervise the market's operations during selling hours, have no farming experience and have been working as managers for less than 2 years. Managers recruit farmers either personally, by contacting Ag Extension offices and/or through the North Jersey Farmers' Markets Council. The average age of the respondents was 45 and the majority were Caucasian, had at least graduated from college and had an annual household income of \$70,000 or over.

The majority of the markets were located in suburban areas but close enough to urban areas to enable them to serve both populations. The major factors taken into consideration when selecting the markets' sites were: visibility, sufficient parking, easy accessibility and traffic flow, available space for farmers' stands, proximity to downtown areas, number of potential customers, safety and use of public land for insurance and financial purposes. In terms of assigning spaces available in the facilities, first come first served was the prevalent method used. In order to attract customers to their markets, different point-of-purchase promotions and advertisement tools are used by all managers. Although rivalry among vendors and between them and local retailers is not serious in general, in some cases it threatens to hinder the continuity and efficiency of these marketing venues.

The insights provided by this research identify the qualities needed to successfully manage a farmers' market as well as the constraints affecting these markets so that their efficiency could be improved.

Introduction

Farmers' markets are booming across the nation and their resurgence is welcomed by farmers and consumers alike. While less than 100 farmers' markets were able to survive the supermarket explosion of the 1970's and 1980's, the USDA counted 1,755 markets in 1994, and more than 2,000 in 1996. The number of markets is expected to increase (Webb).

This trend is supported by Americans' growing concern with nutrition which has led consumers to increase their consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables. In a recent consumer survey conducted in New Jersey, 75 percent of the respondents indicated that consumption of fresh produce in their households has increased over the past five years (Nayga et al.). Moreover, as the American population becomes more heterogeneous, the demand for exotic produce increases, thus offering farmers the opportunity to capitalize on these profitable niches.

Producers are attracted to this form of direct marketing for two main reasons. First, farmers' markets allow them to capture a greater share of the consumer's food expenditure and second, the direct contact with consumers helps farmers better select which crops to grow since they are well aware of their customers' ever changing tastes and preferences.

Farmers' markets also serve a social function since they can become both community and economic tools (Deering). As Glickman, the current Agriculture Secretary noted, "farmers' markets have helped revitalize downtown areas, have allowed access to fresh produce for residents of inner cities where supermarkets are scarce and have brought urban and rural people together" (Webb). In addition, farmers' markets have a unique advantage over the other forms of direct marketing because they are readily movable to densely populated consumer locations. Consequently, New Jersey, the most densely populated state of the nation, is well suited for the development of farmers' markets.

Per capita income in the state is also one of the highest in the nation. Thus the demand for high quality fresh produce is quite high. Also the fact that New Jersey farms are relatively small compared to the national average gives New Jersey farmers greater flexibility to promptly respond to consumers' demand for new products. However, the success of farmers' markets depends heavily on how well the cities manage the area where the farmers' markets are located. In order to draw customers to these outlets, the neighborhoods must be attractive and safe (Davies). In addition, regulations must be set and strictly followed to avoid conflicts both among farmers and between farmers and other retailers in the area.

Because there are so many parties involved in the organization of farmers' markets, identifying the right manager who can act as a liaison among municipalities, producers and local retailers is one key to success. In today's competitive marketplace, farmers can greatly benefit if expert managers promote and advertise the commodities they grow, thus allowing producers to channel all their resources into farming.

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of various characteristics of managers and coordinators of farmers' markets as well as of the factors that have an effect on the organization and well functioning of these direct marketing venues. The insights provided by this report will help identify the constraints currently facing the markets so that measures can be taken to improve their efficiency.

Data Sources

A survey of New Jersey farmers' market managers and coordinators was conducted in 1997 to collect information on the constraints related to the organization of these facilities and on the key characteristics of both the markets and their managers. The survey instrument was developed by the Rutgers University Department of Agricultural Economics and Marketing in cooperation with the New Jersey Department of Agriculture, New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, North Jersey Farmers' Market Council and New Jersey Farmers' Direct Marketing Association. Questionnaires were mailed to 57 managers and organizers of farmers' markets in New Jersey. The purpose

of this research effort was explained in a cover letter and an addressed stamped envelope was provided. A dollar bill was included in the package as a small recognition for the participant's time and as an incentive to increase the rate of responses. Of the 57 questionnaires, 28 were returned (49 percent). Three of these 28 was returned because the addressees were not farmers' market managers. One questionnaire was not included because it was received after the data had already been compiled and analyzed. Therefore, the number of usable questionnaires was 24 (42 percent).

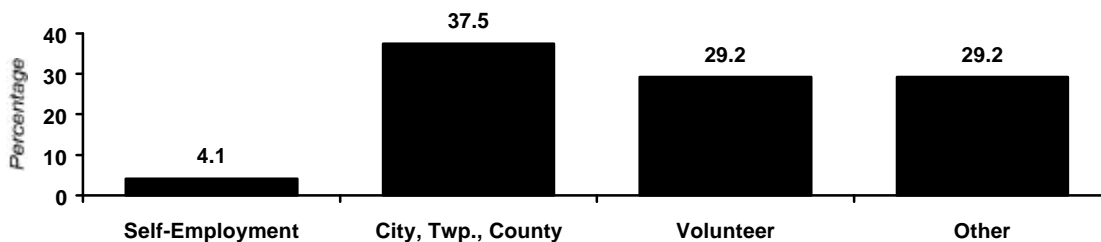
Survey Results

Managers Profile

In order to determine the employment status of the managers and coordinators of the farmers' markets, respondents were asked to describe themselves as self employed, volunteers, employed by farmers, employed by the city or township or otherwise asked to explain their position. Further, participants were to indicate if they were employed on a part-time or full-time basis.

About 4 percent described themselves as self-employed, 37.5 percent as employed by the city, township or county and 29.2 percent volunteered their time. The remaining 29.2 percent corresponds to participants were employed by downtown revitalization or special improvement district organizations, farmers' markets, a business association (SID), a local Chamber of Commerce, a non profit organization or worked as a social worker (Figure 1).

Figure 1
Managers Source of Employment



The majority of the respondents (77 percent out of 22 responses) worked full-time, however, managing a farmers' market was, in many cases, one of the many tasks they had to perform in their larger jobs (Figure 2). Seventy five percent of the respondents indicated that they were at the facility during the selling hours (Figure 3). If that was not the case, people such as senior citizens were hired to supervise the market's activities.

Figure 2
Part-Time/Full-Time Status

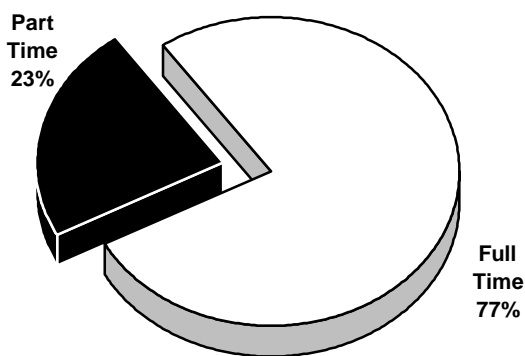
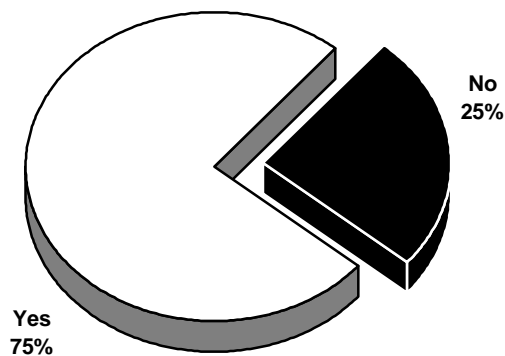


Figure 3
Are You at the Facility During Selling Hours?



In regard to seniority, about 58 percent of those surveyed indicated that they had been managing or organizing farmers' markets for less than 2 years, while the remaining 42 percent had 2 to 5 years experience (Figure 4). When asked about any direct farming experience, the overwhelming majority (over 83 percent) indicated that they had none (Figure 5).

Figure 4
Number of Years on the Job

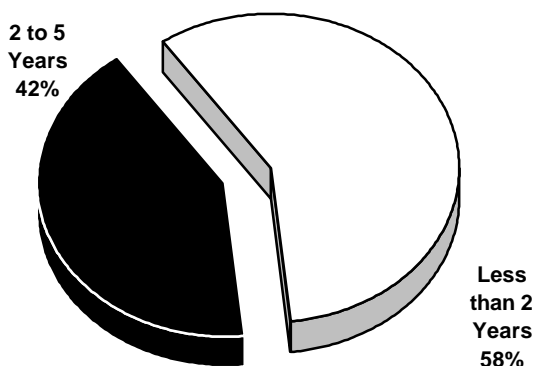
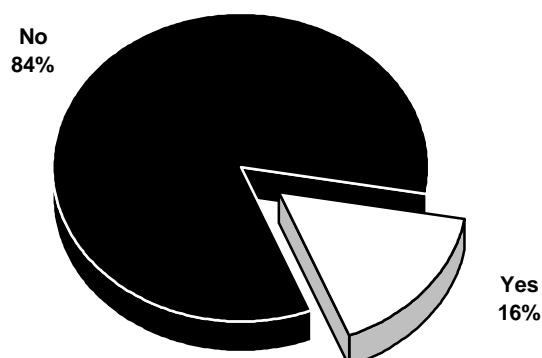


Figure 5
Do You Have Any Farming Experience Yourself?

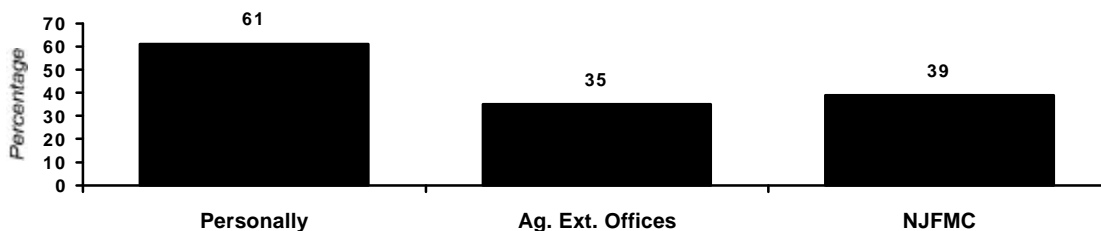


Only two out of 23 respondents visited the farms regularly to ensure the authenticity of the products sold in the marketplace. In general, managers and coordinators of farmers' markets relied on the North Jersey Farmers' Market Council reports to prove that the produce was locally grown and also relied on the farmers' own assurances.

Recruitment of Producers

Recruitment of farmers is vital to the survival of farmers' markets since the success of this direct marketing channel lies in the farmers' willingness to participate. According to the results, almost 61 percent of the respondents recruited farmers personally, about 35 percent contacted Ag Extension offices and 39 percent recruited farmers through the North Jersey Farmers' Market Council (Figure 6). Approximately 22 percent relied on two of the different methods of recruitment and almost 9 percent used all three.

Figure 6
Methods Used to Recruit Producers



Since urban farmers' markets are usually set up in downtown areas with established retail grocery stores, one question dealt with competitive tension between farmers and local merchants. Of those who responded, 86 percent indicated that farmers and grocers coexisted without problems (Figure 7). Although 14 percent felt there was tension, they did not believe it was serious enough to create major problems.

Consumers often become very loyal to farmers and their products, thus the farmers' commitment is very important for the continuity and well functioning of the markets. Furthermore, a market with insufficient vendors or produce is not appealing to prospective customers. According to the results, 80 percent of the respondents

claimed that absenteeism was not a problem (Figure 8). Those managers who dealt with this type of problem indicated that they usually contacted the farmers by phone or by mail to discuss this matter and eventually would resort to the cancellation of their contracts if the problem persisted.

Figure 7
Is There Competition Between Farmers' Markets and Other Retail Outlets?

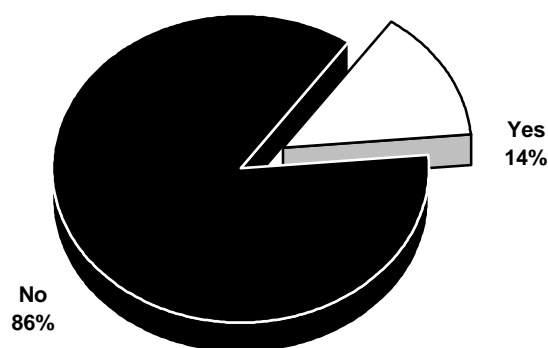
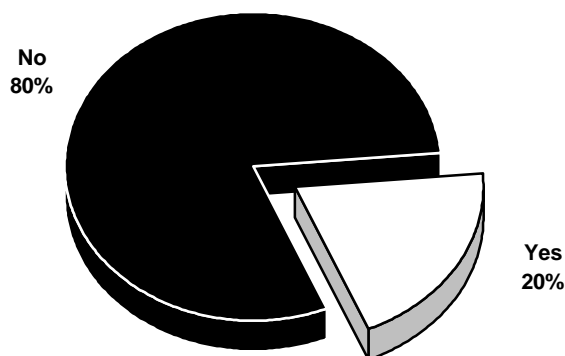


Figure 8
Is Farmer Absenteeism a Problem?



The Marketplace

The majority of the farmers' markets (79 percent) was located in suburban areas although its proximity to urban areas allowed them to serve both populations (Figure 9). Managers and coordinators were asked to list the major factors that were considered when choosing a site for the farmers' markets (Table 1).

Table 1: Major Factors Considered When Choosing Market Size

<i>Factors</i>	<i>Number Of Responses</i>
Easy accessibility and traffic flow	15
Enough parking for both farmers and customers	12
Visibility	10
Proximity to downtown and other retail stores	10
Enough space for farmers' stands	9
Safe neighborhood	7
Adequate density of potential customers	3
Use of public land for insurance and financial purposes	3

Among other factors taken into account when planning the market, some were specific to the producers and their activities. Those mentioned were growing season dates, friendliness of vendors, proximity of farmers to market locations, number of producers that could be attracted, truck sizes as well as variety of produce and value added items. With respect to the demand side, tastes and preferences of consumers were taken into consideration and hours of operation were set so as to attract the most people. In terms of marketing, attractiveness of each display, advertisement, publications, use of signs and the coordination of special events to draw people to town and markets were mentioned. Setup and cleanup activities were also factors that played a role when the markets were organized. In addition, the availability of volunteers and the input from Town Hall and residents also had an effect on the planning of farmers' markets. Conversely, one participant indicated that the market was allowed to evolve by itself.

Figure 9
Areas where Farmer's Markets Are Located

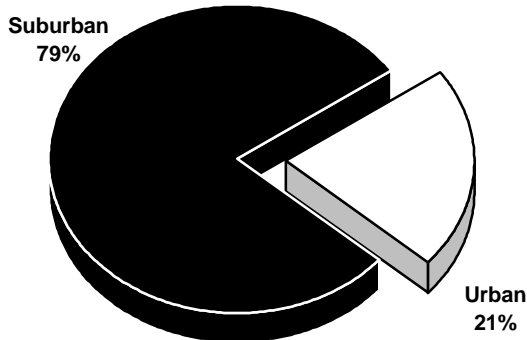
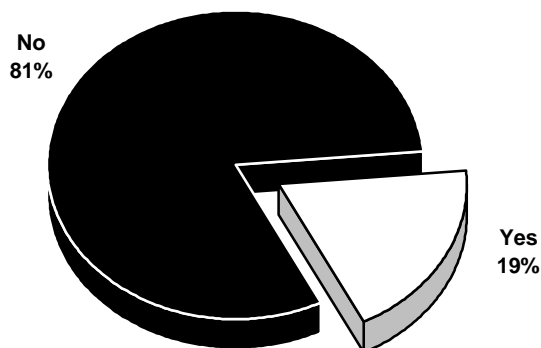


Figure 10
Is Rivalry Among Vendors a Serious Problem in the Marketplace?



Market Layout

In order to assign the spaces available in the facility, different criteria were used. First come first served was the prevalent method and most markets tended to honor seniority, that is, returning farmers were allowed to choose their sites before new participants. Some markets, however, assigned spaces according to the size of the farmers' operations or by lottery drawing. Because customers prefer consistency, some markets encouraged farmers to occupy the same site every season.

Rivalry among vendors was not a serious problem in 17 out of 21 responses (81 percent). However, the remaining 19 percent indicated that open hostility, negative remarks, false accusations about the origin of the produce and problems with respect to the acceptance of food stamps or WIC vouchers put a strain on the normal development of the markets' activities (Figure 10).

When asked if, to avoid competition among the vendors, the market was set up so that two vendors with identical produce were not placed in two adjacent spaces, about 58 percent of the respondents indicated that they did not follow this practice (Figure 11). However, one participant stated that farmers' personalities were taken into account when planning the market layout.

Figure 11
Are Vendors With Identical Produce Placed Adjacently?

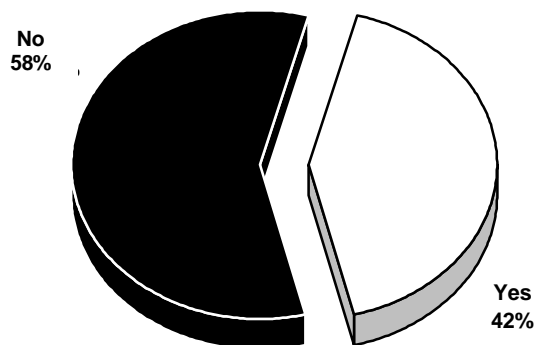
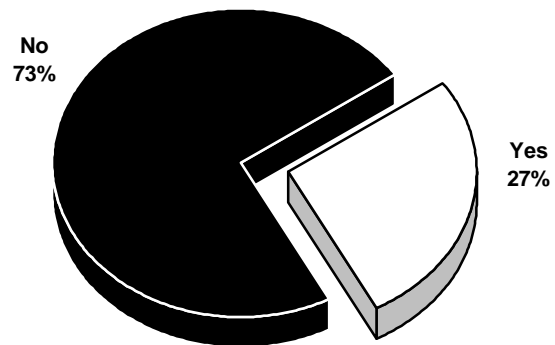
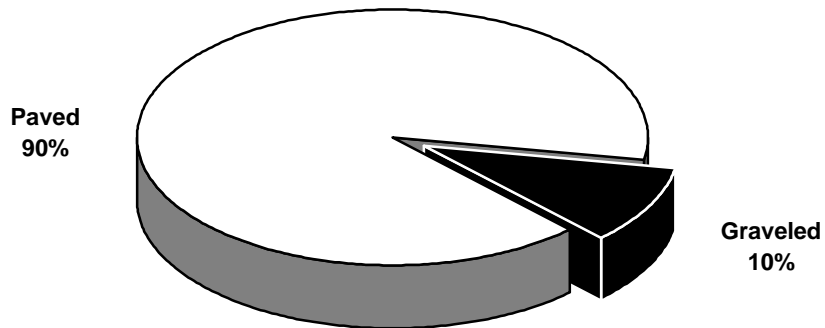


Figure 12
Are Wholesalers and Resellers Allowed in the Market You Manage?



With regard to allowing wholesalers and resellers into the market, sixteen respondents (73 percent of those who answered) indicated that these types of vendors were not allowed in the markets they managed (Figure 12). In terms of parking, the area was paved in 90 percent of the cases that responded. In contrast, 10 percent had gravel covered parking areas (Figure 13).

Figure 13
Type of Parking Area



Prices

When asked if prices fluctuated through the day, all participants (19) that provided this information replied that prices tended to remain constant, thus indicating that not too much bargaining takes place. This suggests that farmers either are able to sell all their produce at the asking price or, otherwise, they prefer to bring it back home rather than selling at lower prices.

Promotions and Advertisement

The point-of-purchase promotions most commonly used by vendors were the following,

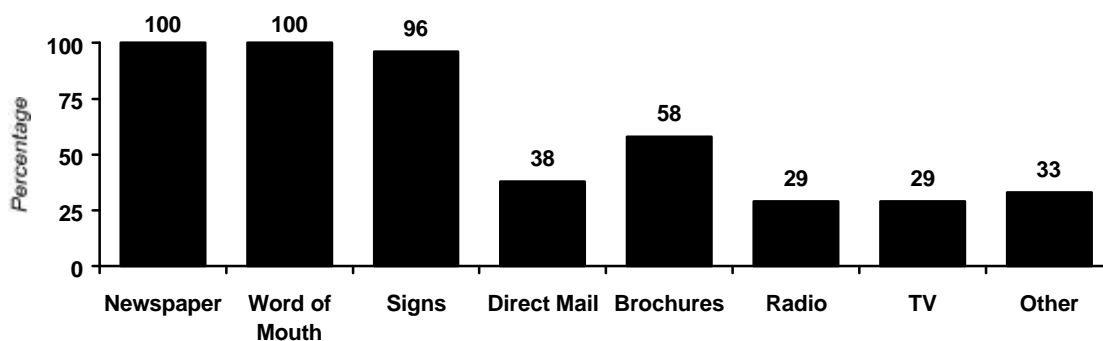
- 1) Free sampling
- 2) Recipe handouts
- 3) Colorful displays
- 4) Price signs
- 5) Quantity discounts
- 6) Discounts on over-ripened or near over-ripened produce
- 7) Information about produce

One respondent indicated that the farmers' market was so "consumer aggressive" that farmers did not need to promote sales since they could hardly keep up with customers in line.

Several different methods of advertisement were used in order to increase public awareness and to attract customers (Figure 14). Each respondent relied on more than one advertisement tool. All participants indicated that they used newspaper advertisements, which have the potential of reaching out to a considerable number of people. Word-of-mouth was another method used by all managers and coordinators. The spread of positive experiences associated with visits to farmers' markets exerts a greater impact on prospective customers and can be considerably more persuasive than any other marketing tool.

Almost 96 percent of those surveyed used signs to advertise the farmers' markets they sponsored. The number of on-site and off-site signs used ranged from 1 to 12 and from 1 to 50, respectively. Further, when asked if they had ever experienced any major difficulties with regard to the use of signs within their municipalities, 87 percent of those who responded indicated that they had not encountered any problem as long as sign codes such as sign size and special permission to post signs on State roads were adhered to. On the contrary, those who did face problems indicated that their communities did not allow much in the way of signs.

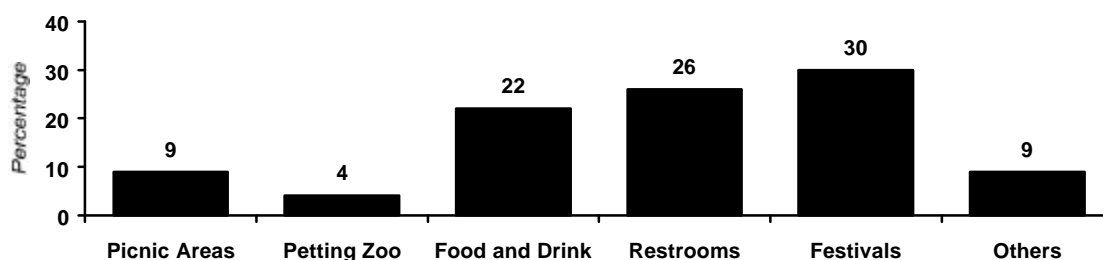
Figure 14
Methods of Advertisement Used



Direct mail was used by 38 percent of the respondents. Although this method has the potential to reach out to a lot of people, postage expenses could be substantial. About 58 percent of those sampled published and delivered brochures. Radio and television advertisements were used, in each case, by 29 percent of the participants. Other

methods employed were the Internet, ads at the local movie theater, posting of flyers in office buildings and on corporate bulletin boards, hanging across-the-street banners on main streets, distribution of newsletters, public relation and business and professional associations networking.

Figure 15
Services and Farm Related Activities Provided by Farmers' Markets



Consumers are drawn to farmers' markets not only to purchase fresh, locally grown produce but also because this type of retail outlet gives them the opportunity to socialize and become acquainted with those who produce their food. Therefore, one question dealt with different services and farm related activities that the farmers' markets provide to attract customers. Of those who provided this information, about 9 percent reported they had a picnic area, 4 percent had a petting zoo in the facility. Approximately 22 percent sold food and drink items and 26 percent had restrooms. According to the results, 30 percent of the respondents indicated that they offered musical festivals in the markets. Of those surveyed, nine respondents selected "other" and reported that they organized special events such as food demonstrations and hoe down shows, distributed coupons, had an information booth at the facility and/or offered homemade crafts (Figure 15).

Market Season

Managers and coordinators of farmers' markets were asked when their markets open and close. According to the responses, the period of operations ranged from the beginning of June to mid-November. However, the majority waited until the end of June to start their activities and closed by the end of October.

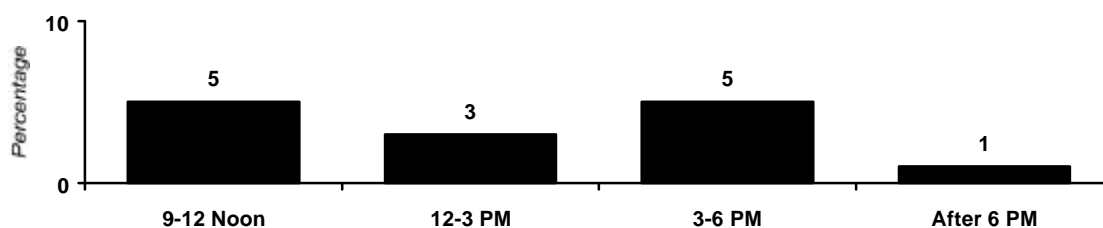
With regard to days of operation, the collected data indicated that no farmers' market opened on Mondays. Friday was the most popular day with 7 responses, followed by Wednesday with 5 responses and Tuesday with 4 responses. Lastly, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday had 3 responses each (Table 2). Only two respondents indicated that their markets were opened twice a week.

Table 2: Days of Operation

Day	Number of Responses
Monday	0
Tuesday	4
Wednesday	5
Thursday	3
Friday	7
Saturday	3
Sunday	3

The busiest time of the day for the operation of the farmers' markets that opened during the week was between 9-12 a.m. and between 3-6 p.m. with 5 responses each. Three participants indicated that their busiest time was between 12-3 p.m. Only 1 respondent reported receiving most of their business after 6 p.m. The 9-12 p.m. period was the busiest time for all the markets that opened on weekends (Figure 16).

Figure 16
Busiest Time of Day



Fees

There is no uniformity with regard to the fees a vendor is charged. Most markets ask for a registration fee which ranges from \$50 to \$100 and in one case, farmers have to pay \$40 to cover the Health Department license fee, which is required if markets allow

cheeses, bakery items, etc. In addition to the registration or Health Department fee, 8 markets charge a daily, weekly or monthly fee. Some markets do not collect registration fees and charge only daily, weekly or monthly fees (7) or per season (2). On average, the weekly fee is \$17.

When asked to identify the expenses covered with these fees, the following items were mentioned:

- 1) Advertisement
- 2) Promotional efforts such as Jersey Fresh T-shirts and food demo expenses
- 3) Banners, signs, brochures, flyers and business cards
- 4) Purchase of needed items: tent for market volunteer, furniture for customers
- 5) Staff: salaries of market managers and traffic patrol personnel
- 6) Site insurance (liability)
- 7) Port-a-potty for farmers
- 8) License, council and registration fees
- 9) Cleanup expenses

Also, one respondent stated that any left over money was handed over to a local community group.

Problems, Experiences and Suggestions

Participants were asked to list the major obstacles they faced as farmers' market managers. Some indicated that their markets ran smoothly and had no major problems to report. However, three participants mentioned parking to be a constraint, either because it was insufficient or because it drew objections from local merchants. Another three respondents stated that they needed more farmers for their operations. Other problems mentioned were getting farmers to pay the fees and fill out application forms, lack of volunteers, lack of funding to promote consistently, tardiness of farmers, farmers rivalry and drawing customers to downtown areas.

When asked to share some experiences they had with their municipality, vendors or other entities, two respondents indicated that the city supported the program entirely and one participant added that good relations with the municipality was vital for without its cooperation markets would not exist. One manager mentioned the preparation of vendors for Health Department requirements as an experience and another indicated that planning the opening of the market (getting permits, licenses, etc.) was the greatest challenge. One participant was concerned with the competition with privately owned produce markets on the outskirts of the town, while one complained about the Boro/Chamber members' attitudes.

Managers and coordinators believe that the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station/Rutgers Cooperative Extension could best assist them in the following ways:

- 1) By contacting farmers who are willing to participate in their markets
- 2) By designing the best layout for a new market
- 3) By giving ideas to make markets better and more profitable
- 4) By supporting the New Jersey Farmers' Market Council
- 5) By continuing to advertise farmers' markets
- 6) By organizing workshops or seminars where all market managers could get together to share information
- 7) By providing information on growing seasons and products
- 8) By setting up a stand in the market to educate the public
- 9) By communicating new ideas and suggestions to those participating in the Farmers' Market Council

Demographics

The last section of the questionnaire was concerned with the demographic characteristics of the respondents such as age, gender, education, ethnicity as well as household size, composition and income.

The average age of the participants was 45. The youngest respondent was 22 years of age while the oldest was 79 years of age. The largest representative age group was the category 50 or older with 38 percent of the population sampled, followed by the 30-

39 and 40-49 year old categories with 29 percent each. The less than 30 year old category comprised only 4 percent of those surveyed. With regard to gender, almost 42 percent of the participants were male and 58 percent were female.

The majority of the respondents (71 percent) had at least graduated from college: 38 percent had completed their undergraduate degree, 13 percent had some graduate school, almost 17 percent had received masters degrees and 4 percent of the sample had completed doctoral degrees. Respondents with only high school education accounted for 4 percent of the population, while 25 percent of the participants had some college background. Of the 22 respondents who provided information about their ethnicity, 96 percent were Caucasian, 1 respondent (4 percent) was African American.

The average household size of those who responded was 2.86 people. While the household sizes ranged from 1 to 6, the ranges for the number of adults and children under 18 were 1 to 4 and 0 to 3, respectively. The majority of those sampled (59 percent) lived in households with adults only. The annual household income of 52 percent of the 21 respondents who revealed this information was at least \$70,000, while almost 29 percent was between \$60,000-\$69,999 and about 5 percent indicated that their income was between \$50,000-\$59,999. The remaining 14 percent of the respondents had household incomes that fell into the \$20,000-\$49,999 bracket.

Summary and Conclusions

The purpose of this research was to document the characteristics of those who manage and coordinate farmers' markets and to examine the factors affecting the development and maintenance of these operations. A survey of 24 managers and coordinators of farmers' markets in New Jersey revealed that the majority of the respondents were employed by different sources and although they worked full-time, in general, their managerial tasks were performed only on a part-time basis. Moreover, the majority was at the markets during the selling hours and those respondents with the most seniority had been working as managers for no more than five years. In general, they did not visit the farms where the produce was grown regularly or have any farming experience.

This constitutes a gap in the producer-manager relationship for many farmers feel that managers do not fully understand what farming actually entails. The average age of the managers was 45 and the majority was Caucasian, had at least graduated from college and had an annual household income of \$70,000 or over (Table 3).

Table 3: Demographic Characteristics of the Farmers’ Market Managers

Characteristics	Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
Age		45	11
Household size		2.86	1.7
Female	58%		
College graduate	71%		
Caucasian	91%		
Annual income of \$70,000 or over	52%		

Growers were recruited either personally, by contacting Ag Extension offices or through the North Jersey Farmers’ Markets Council. Farmers’ absenteeism was not reported to be a major problem, nor was competition between the farmers’ markets and the local stores. However, almost 20 percent indicated that rivalry among farmers was serious.

The majority of the farmers’ markets were located in suburban areas but its close proximity to urban areas allowed them to serve both populations. When choosing the site for the markets, the major factors considered were proximity to downtown areas, visibility, sufficient parking, easy accessibility and traffic flow, enough space for farmers’ stands, number of potential customers, safety and use of public land for insurance and financial purposes. However, number of producers that could be attracted, proximity of farmers to market locations and consumers’ tastes and preferences also played a role in this selection.

Most markets did not allow wholesalers and resellers and first come first serve was the prevalent method used to assign spaces available in the facilities. In order to draw customers to their markets, numerous point of purchase promotions and advertisement methods were used by all managers and coordinators.

Farmers' markets have the potential to offer growers a greater profit margin than other marketing outlets and the state of New Jersey provides a good environment for their development. Yet, many obstacles still hinder the continuity and efficiency of these direct marketing channels. Among the most important are the difficulty in attracting farmers to these markets, rivalry among the producers already participating in the programs, not enough support from the municipalities where the markets are located and drawing customers to downtown areas.

References

Davies, Stephen. "Managing Downtown Public Spaces." *Technology Review* August/September 1985: 18-25, 60-61.

Deering, R. and G. Ptucha. "Super Marketing." *Planning* October 1987: 27-29.

Govindasamy, Ramu. "Direct Marketing Operations in New Jersey: The Past and the Present." Paper presented at the 1996 Mid-Atlantic Direct Marketing Conference and Trade Show, Feb 7-10, Fredericksburg, Virginia 1996.

Nayga R., R. Govindasamy , T. C. Wall and D. W. Thatch. "Characteristics of Farmer-to-Consumer Direct Market Customers in New Jersey." New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, P-02136-3-95, 1995.

McGrath, M. A., J. F. Sherry and D. D. Heisley. "An Ethnographic Study of an Urban Periodic Marketplace: Lessons from the Midville Farmers' Market." *Journal of Retailing* 69(3): 280-316. Fall 1993.

Webb, Tom. "Both Growers, Consumers Enjoying Flourishing Farmers' Markets." *Knight-Ridder/Tribune News Service* 23 August 1996: 823.

Survey of Farmers' Market Managers

1 How would you describe yourself as?

- self employed
- employed by farmers
- employed by the city or township
- volunteer
- other _____

2 Please indicate on what basis you are employed.

- part-time
- full-time

3 How many years have you been working as a farmers' market manager?

- less than 2 years
- between 2 and 5 years
- more than 5 years

4 Do you have any farming experience yourself?

- Yes
- No

5 Which of the following do you think best describes the area in which your market is located?

- urban
- suburban
- rural

6 Please, list the major factors that are considered when choosing a site for the farmers' market.

- a _____
- b _____
- c _____
- d _____

7 Please explain how the space available in the facility is assigned (for example, seniority, first come first serve, etc.)

8 Is the market set up so that two vendors with identical produce are not placed in two adjacent spaces?
 Yes No

9 What other factors are taken into account when planning the market?
a _____
b _____
c _____
d _____

10 Please indicate fees charged to each vendor. \$_____

11 What are the expenses covered with these fees?
a _____
b _____
c _____

12 Are wholesalers or resellers allowed in the market you manage?
 Yes No

13 Do you recruit the farmers
 personally?
 by contacting Ag Extension offices?
 other _____

14 Do you feel that rivalry among vendors is a serious problem in the marketplace?
 Yes No

Please comment:

15 Is there competitive tension between the farmers' market and the other retail grocery outlets in the area?
 Yes No

16 Is farmers absenteeism a problem?
 Yes No

If yes, please indicate what measures are taken to avoid this behavior

17 Are you at the facility during the selling hours?

- Yes No

If no, please indicate who supervises and ensures the well functioning of the market.

18 Do prices tend to remain constant throughout the day?

- Yes No

19 Do you visit the farms regularly to ensure the authenticity of the products sold in the marketplace?

- Yes No

If you indicated yes, please indicate how often you inspect the farms. _____

If you indicated no, what means do you rely on to prove that the produce was locally grown?

20 Please list the main point-of-purchase promotions used by the vendors (for example, free sampling, quantity discount, etc.)

a _____

b _____

c _____

21 Method(s) of advertising used. (Check all that apply)

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> newspaper | <input type="checkbox"/> direct mail |
| <input type="checkbox"/> radio | <input type="checkbox"/> signs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> television | <input type="checkbox"/> word of mouth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> brochures | <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify) _____ |

21 What services or farm related activities does your farmers' market(s) provide for the customers?

- | | | |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> restroom | <input type="checkbox"/> food and drink items area | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> picnic area | <input type="checkbox"/> musical festivals in the market | <input type="checkbox"/> petting zoo |
| <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify) _____ | | |

23 Indicate the number of signs used for advertising.

a on-site no. _____ total sq. ft. _____

b off-site no. _____ total sq. ft. _____

24 Have you experienced any major difficulties with regard to the use of signs within your municipality?

Yes No

Please comment:

25 Market Season

a This market is open _____ to _____
day, month day, month

b Circle days when closed: M, T, W, Th, F, Sat, Sun.

c What time of day is busiest for this operation:

DURING WEEK ***WEEK-END***

<input type="checkbox"/> before 9a.m.	<input type="checkbox"/> before 9a.m.
<input type="checkbox"/> 9-12 a.m.	<input type="checkbox"/> 9-12 a.m.
<input type="checkbox"/> 12-3 p.m.	<input type="checkbox"/> 12-3 p.m.
<input type="checkbox"/> 3-6 p.m.	<input type="checkbox"/> 3-6 p.m.
<input type="checkbox"/> after 6p.m.	<input type="checkbox"/> after 6p.m.

26 Parking Area

I Indicate number of automobile spaces available _____.

II Is area:

paved?
 graveled?
 dirt?
 grass?

27 What are the major problems you have as a farmers' market manager? (List in order of importance)

28 Have you had recent experience(s) with your municipality, vendors or other entities which you would be willing to share so that others could learn from your experience?

Yes No

If yes, please explain:

29 How do you believe the N.J. Agricultural Experiment Station/Rutgers Cooperative Extension can best assist you with the operation of the farmers' market you manage?

30 Other comments/recommendations, etc:

**YOUR ANSWERS TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WILL HELP US
INTERPRET THE RESULTS OF THIS SURVEY**

31 Age _____

32 Gender

Male

Female

33 Which of the following best represents your level of education?

Some grade school

College graduate

Grade school graduate

Some graduate school

Some High School

Masters degree

High School graduate

Doctoral degree

Some college

34 Your ethnicity

African American

American Indian

Asian/Pacific Islander

Caucasian

Hispanic

Other _____

35 Regarding your household,

number of adults _____

number of children under 18 _____

36 In what range does your household annual income fall?

\$0 - \$9,999

\$50,000 - \$59,999

\$10,000 - \$19,999

\$60,000 - \$69,999

\$20,000 - \$49,999

at least &70,000

**THE INFORMATION PROVIDED WILL BE USED TO PREPARE A REPORT
IN WHICH STRICT CONFIDENTIALITY WILL BE OBSERVED.**

MANY THANKS FOR YOUR INTEREST AND TIME IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT



**Rutgers Cooperative Extension
N.J. Agricultural Experiment Station
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, New Brunswick**

Cooperating Agencies: Rutgers the State University of New Jersey, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and County Boards of Chosen Freeholders. Distribution In cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture in furtherance of the Acts of Congress of May 8th, and June 30th, 1914. Cooperative Extension work in agriculture, home economics, and 4-H, Zane Helsel, Director of Extension. Rutgers Cooperative Extension provides information and educational services to all people without regard to sex, race, color, national origin, handicap, or age. Rutgers Cooperative Extension is an Equal Opportunity Employer.