

# Ephrata Farmers' Market Survey

## September 13, 2003

**Market Hours:** Saturday 8 a.m. – Noon  
**Location:** Division and C Street at the Courthouse, Ephrata, WA  
**Market Season:** Third Saturday of June through October  
**Market Staff:** Part-time Paid Manager  
**Opened:** End of August, 2002  
**Fees:** \$10 farmers/\$5 crafters, plus 5% of sales, plus \$20/yr. membership  
**Vendors:** 23, including 8 farmers and 15 crafters  
**Market Attendance:** 877  
**RMA Team:**

Andy McGuire, Washington State University Extension, Grant-Adams Area

Kathy Morton, Ephrata Farmers' Market Manager

Sally Hubbs, Board, Ephrata Farmers' Market Association

Carol O'Callahan, Board, Ephrata Farmers' Market Association

Steve Morton, Board, Ephrata Farmers' Market Association

Anita Waller, citizen volunteer



### I. Total Attendance: 877 adults

	<u>9/13</u>		<u>8/30</u>	
Pre-opening shopper estimate =	7	1%	8	1%
1 <sup>st</sup> Hour (8:00-9:00) estimate =	114	13%	198	20%
2 <sup>nd</sup> Hour (9:00-10:00) estimate =	312	36%	300	30%
3 <sup>rd</sup> Hour (10:00-11:00) estimate =	312	36%	318	32%
4 <sup>th</sup> Hour (11:00-12:00) estimate =	<u>132</u>	<u>15%</u>	<u>162</u>	<u>16%</u>
	877	100%	986	100%

*Comment: Shoppers were heavily concentrated (71%) in the middle two hours of the market. However, by comparison two weeks earlier, those same two hours accounted for 63% of all customers.*

### Entrances (by number and percentage each hour)

	<u>North</u>		<u>South</u>		<u>ALL</u>	
1 <sup>st</sup> Hour	30	3%	84	10%	114	13%
2 <sup>nd</sup> Hour	138	16%	174	20%	312	36%
3 <sup>rd</sup> Hour	144	16%	168	19%	312	36%
4 <sup>th</sup> Hour	<u>30</u>	<u>3%</u>	<u>102</u>	<u>12%</u>	<u>132</u>	<u>15%</u>
	<b>342</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>528</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>870</b>	<b>99%</b>

[When added, percentages may not be exact due to rounding to the nearest whole number.]

*Comment: A full 54% more customers entered the market from the south side than the north side. However, this difference was only 23% for the market day two weeks earlier.*

## II. Dot Survey Questions

Four dot survey sheets were posted on tripods and the team began to solicit shopper responses to the four questions when the market opened at 8:00 a.m. Four new sheets were installed at 10:00 a.m., halfway through the market day. Thus, answers from early shoppers and later shoppers are compared under *Time Comment*. About 52% of all 271 dot respondents and 49% of all customers were during the first half of the market day, so the interception rate for customer respondents was fairly consistent throughout the morning. If we assume that the 877 adults counted generally came in twos, we can safely calculate that the dot respondents represent approximately 60% of the shopping groups that day. This is a good intercept rate.

### **Question 1: What is your primary reason for coming to the market today?** N=271

Vegetables/Fruit	63%	<b><u>Produce is the primary motivation for most customers.</u></b>
Entertainment	17%	
Crafts	14%	
Prepared Foods	6%	

*Comment: While 63% of customers have a fruit and vegetable focus, nearly one-third (31%) come primarily for the entertainment and crafts. A notable 6% say they are most motivated by the prepared foods.*

*Time Comment: While 68% of early customers are motivated by produce, only 58% of later shoppers say that is the case. Later shoppers are more motivated by crafts (16% vs. 10%) and prepared foods (8% vs. 5%).*

### **Question 2: What advertising most influences your attendance at this market?** N=242

Word-of-mouth	60%	<b><u>Word-of-mouth most influences 60% of customers.</u></b>
Newspaper ads	20%	
Main St. banner	12%	
Posters	8%	

*Comment: While three in five customers say word-of-mouth most influences their coming to market, one in five claims they respond to newspaper ads and another one in five responds to the banner or posters. The impact of word-of-mouth, while less than in many other markets, reinforces the importance of customer service. Advertising is a critical complement to WOM.*

*Time Comment: Early customers are more likely to respond to word-of-mouth advertising than later customers, by 66% to 54%. While slightly less likely to respond to newspaper ads (19% vs. 22%), late shoppers responded more to the Main Street banner (16% vs. 7%) and posters (11% vs. 5%). Thus, late visitors are likely to be more impulsive in their decision to shop the market, with 27% responding to the banner or poster.*



**Question 3: Will you be shopping at downtown businesses before or after visiting the market?**

N=233

Yes	56%	
No	41%	<b><u>Most customers do other shopping along with the market.</u></b>
Maybe	3%	

*Comment: A strong majority of customers (56%) will shop at local businesses in conjunction with their market visit. This is similar to responses in other communities. With future surveys we may explore the amount customers spend to see the secondary impact of the market.*

*Time Comment: Early customers are slightly more inclined than late customers to do other shopping downtown in conjunction with their market visit, by a margin of 58% to 53%, but the difference was moderated by late customers saying “maybe” by a margin of 6% to 0%.*

**Question 4: Where do you live?** N=260

Ephrata	62%	
Soap Lake	14%	<b><u>The market serves as a regional marketplace.</u></b>
Quincy	3%	
Moses Lake	3%	
Other Grant County	5%	
Outside Grant Co	14%	

*Comment: While the market gains most of its support (62%) from Ephrata residents, a significant number come from surrounding communities including Soap Lake (6 miles), Quincy (17 miles), Moses Lake (20 miles) and other areas of Grant County. One in seven customers comes from outside Grant County, similar to statistics for the Pasco Farmers Market.*

*Time Comment: Early customers are substantially more likely to be Ephrata residents (67%) than late customers (56%). Most of the difference is explained by visitors from outside Grant County who are 18% of the late shoppers while only 10% of the early shoppers.*

**III. Summary of Observations**

Since produce plays a primary role in attracting customers, we may assume that a greater variety of produce and farmers would attract more customers. Still, 42% of later shoppers are motivated primarily by entertainment, crafts and prepared foods, so these elements should not be ignored. As in studies of other communities, early customers are more likely to be local residents and to be responsive to word-of-mouth advertising and newspaper ads. Also, later customers are more likely to come a distance and respond to readily visible street advertising. While word-of-mouth accounts for a majority of customers, a diverse combination of advertising is valuable in attracting other shoppers. A majority of all customers will combine market shopping with other downtown shopping. Further research might address these and other subjects in more detail.