Results of a survey taken in spring 2021

In early June, the PA Farm Markets team of Penn State Extension sent a survey out to farmer’s markets throughout Pennsylvania. 37 markets responded, representing roughly 10% of the markets in the Commonwealth. Penn State Extension is also working with 18 markets submitting weekly data for the 2021 market season. This is an attempt to create a baseline to build a data collection culture for markets that will ultimately tell a story of the farmer’s markets in Pennsylvania.

24 of the respondents were market managers, 10 were staff or volunteers, 7 market board members, 8 vendors, and 4 from organizations that manage multiple markets. The respondents could select all titles that applied to them, such as a vendor who is also a market manager.

The number of vendors at a market ranged from 1 to 41, with one-third of the markets having between 13 to 15 vendors. One market reported 120 vendors, and another reported 227. These could be organizations that manage multiple markets.

Markets that collected annual gross sales figures (13) ranged from $25 thousand to $500 thousand for 2020.
The average number of vendors that participated on an average market day was between 10 to 15.

Half the markets don’t have a paid staff person, and one-quarter of the respondents had one paid staff person, and a quarter had two or more.

One-third of the reporting markets had no volunteers, while the rest ranged from 1 volunteer to 15.

Two-thirds of the markets were started after the year 2000. One market has been operating since 1752.

13 of the 37 reporting markets accept SNAP(Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), and 8 said they accepted WIC (women, infants & children) or P-EBT (pandemic EBT) cards. 11 of the markets that do not accept SNAP said they had vendors who do. 26 markets have vendors who accept FMNP (farmers market nutrition program) vouchers. 12 of the markets have a dollar match for their nutrition incentive program.

The survey will be sent to these markets again at the end of the season to see what, if anything, has changed for the markets, such as new vendors added or vendors leaving, along with questions regarding sales and customer attendance.

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