

**EvaluationGroup,LLC**

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**North Country  
Norman, Mahnomen  
& Polk Public Health**

**EVALUATION PLANNING REPORT  
OF  
STATEWIDE HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM ACTIVITIES:  
REGIONAL FARMERS MARKETS**

**FARMERS' MARKETS AS A  
PUBLIC HEALTH INTERVENTION!?**

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## Part I. Background

### a) Review of Farmers Markets involved in SHIP 2.0.

#### Purpose

The purpose of this report is to 1) Review in brief the past activities of Farmers Markets within the region through SHIP, 2) identify current research relative to Farmers Markets, 3) research questions pertinent towards carrying out Farmers Market evaluations in future years and 4) design an evaluation plan to address to questions posed.

#### SHIP 2.0 Farmers Markets Participants

Through regional partnerships, the overarching goal of the Community Healthy Food Environment- Farm to Fork Initiative was to: increase the amount of food moved through farmers' markets and market-scaled farms over 18 months by increasing production, increasing vendor numbers, increasing vendor capacity, and improving access to Farmers Markets by low income households. To accomplish that end, the number of Farmers Markets that SHIP staff worked with increased from two markets in SHIP 1.0 to twelve markets in SHIP 2.0. In Table 1 below is a list of the 12 markets receiving training and consultation with SHIP staff. Specifically, SHIP resources were used to support a series of workshops and training opportunities to help new farmers and vendors learn from more experienced farmers and from researchers.

**Table 1: SHIP 2.0 Farmers Market Participants**

	<b>Market Name</b>	<b>County</b>
1	Gonvick Farmers Market	Clearwater
2	Bagley Farmers Market	Clearwater
3	Bemidji Area Farmers Market	Beltrami
4	Laughing Earth Farmers Market	Norman
5	White Earth Community Farmers Market	Mahnomen
6	Fresh Start Market	Lake of the Woods
7	Local Farmers Market	Hubbard
8	Park Rapids Farmers Market	Hubbard
9	Crookston	Polk
10	Fosston	Polk
11	Mentor	Polk
12	Bemidji's Natural Choice Market	Beltrami

There are a small and growing number of market-scale farmers serving several communities in the region. Many of these markets have been organized in the past 3 or 4 years, with encouragement from SHIP alongside, the Northwest Regional Sustainable Development Partnership (NW RSDP) which offered seed funding for start-up expenses and assistance in connecting regional markets to state resources. The NW RSDP has also supported on-farm research in season extension, focusing on organic production of vegetables, fruit and berries. This movement is growing with great momentum and so needs focused and directed services to help maximize positive contributions towards building healthy people.

### **Gonvick Farmers Market**

- A small market with 4-5 vendors. This is their second year of operation.
- Sell honey, maple syrup, baked goods, all sorts of produce.
- Run from Mid-May –Sept. Also host an event: Pumpkin Days, the last weekend in Sept.
- Utilized “Growing Up Healthy from the Ground Up” coupons at \$10 each.
  - 28 coupons came in toward the end.
  - Given out at WIC, ECFE.
  - Got some to give out to families with 0-5 y/o children at day cares.
- WIFI is available at the market as well as benches for people to sit on.
- Out of state people come to spend the summer in the area.

### **Bagley Farmers Market**

- Clearwater County Farmers Market in Bagley was the first Farmers Market ever formed in the county.
- Clearwater County used coupons to try and increase attendance and get new people to try the market. The coupon for \$5 of free food was placed both in the newspaper and given to individuals who were on SNAP as well.

### **Bemidji Area Farmers Market**

- In 2012 Bemidji Area Farmers Market got their 501c3 status.
- They estimate that over the 2012 they donated over 10,000 lbs of our produce and baked goods to food shelves, churches and other organizations.
- This was the market’s second year working with BCBS of MN to implement an EBT special program. EBT sales increased from the previous year as word spread about free Market Bucks in the community that uses EBT. The market will likely use the Market Buck special again this coming season.
- The Bemidji Area Farmers Market is one of the eight markets in the state piloting the Farmers Market EBT program through the Minnesota Farmers Market Association. The markets involved in this project can learn from the experience of BAFM, and with the MFMA in expanding access.

### **Laughing Earth Farmers Market (Ada)**

- Laughing Earth Garden & Gift will be holding its annual Farmers Market on Fri, beginning Jul 26-Sep 6, from 8:30a-2p.
- This is the fifth season of operation.
- Along with the vendors, Laughing Earth offers specials on plants & yard & home decor.
- The market has gained popularity with area residents.

### **White Earth Community Farmers Market (Mahnomen and White Earth Reservation)**

- The White Earth Community Farmers' Market felt that they were more successful at the Mahnomen location than at White Earth and therefore decided to set up at the Mahnomen location weekly.
  - White Earth and other surrounding communities are set up for special events.
- In 2012 they were approved for the WIC program right before opening and therefore only a few vendors were trained in to accept WIC vouchers.
- They received a few vouchers but didn't advertise it much and with the addition of SNAP feel they will get more vouchers in 2013.
- They have applied for an EBT system for the 2013 season.
- Mahnomen residents and commuters were surveyed long before the Farmers’ Market opened to find out what the public wanted to see at the Farmers Market.
- They tripled the amount of vendors from the year before.
- A permanent structure was built to protect vendors and consumers from the weather elements.
- Proper signage was placed around to direct the customers to the market.

- Vendors were given re-useable bags to hand out to consumers as they made purchases at the farmers' market.
- The Farmers Market was advertised on the local radio, in a few different local papers, on the casino display board, on flyers, and by emails.
- They are planning to offer cooking demo at the Farmers Market in 2013.

*“We received much positive feedback from the public. The one negative comment was due to lack of understanding how a Farmers Market works: A lady was upset because she showed up at 6:00 and wanted tomatoes, and the vendors were unable to meet her needs. So we need to educate people that this is not a grocery store that if there is something you are looking for then it is best to show up at the beginning of the Farmers' Market or to talk to the vendors because many will set some aside for you for the following week.”*

### **Fresh Start Market (Baudette)**

- City of Baudette, MN previously had a Farmers Market but it had gone through organizational difficulties.
  - With funding from SHIP and the Northwest Minnesota Regional Sustainable Development Partnership they were able to work through barriers and establish the market.
- Provide healthy produce, pantry grains & flours, honey, butter, fresh flowers, arts & crafts, breads, and jams/jellies.

### **Local Farmers Market (Park Rapids)**

- 22 vendors in 2012.
- Market runs May 22-Oct: Wed & Sat 9a-3p.
- They have locally grown produce, jams, pickles, maple syrup, kraut, greeting cards & many crafts.
- New products & vendors weekly and are always looking for new vendors.
- *“We're a friendly group & enjoy visiting with our customers; we try to keep our prices reasonable so everyone can enjoy our products.”*
- 75% out of town shoppers.

### **Park Rapids Farmers Market**

- 17 vendors in 2012.
- Market will open on the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend.
- Have vegetable seedlings, perennial plants, asparagus, rhubarb, radish, early spring greens, head lettuce, grass-fed beef and other products.
- Park Rapids Farmers' Market is located in a park right on Main Street where they are working on building a sense of community as well as provide customers with fresh food choices.
- Offer a broad range of vegetables and some fruits, domestic and wild jams and jellies, grass fed beef, plants and other products.
- They also have music by local musicians and have space reserved for local artists and non-profit service organizations.
- Their goal is to get an EBT machine, advertise more with social services and get different/bigger signage.

### **Crookston**

- The market provides consumers with natural & organic vegetables, produce, meat, flowers, herbs, jams, jellies, fruit, grains, home processed products & homemade crafts.
- Jun-Sep: Tue & Fri 4p-7p. Special dates in Oct.
- New location at Downtown Central Square, corner of S Ash & 3rd St in downtown Crookston.

## **Fosston**

- Fruit & vegetables from local farms, honey, eggs, bread, lefse, baked goods, arts & crafts and much more are available each week.
- Their mission is to promote food produced in sustainable ways by local growers.
- Located in Melland Park on the lawn of the East Polk Heritage Center - Hwy 2 E. May-Sep: Sat 8a-Noon.
- SNAP EBT Cards
  - The Fosston Farmers Market wants to support the local community by making nutritious, fresh foods readily available to at-risk populations by accepting SNAP EBT cards at the market.
- They support the efforts of the Fosston Food Shelf and encourage people to drop off donations of food or cash at the following locations: Loaves & Fishes Food Shelf, Fosston Farmers Market, Kingo Lutheran Church.

## **Mentor**

- Their goal is to provide high quality local foods to the community and to educate the public about the benefits of consuming and purchasing locally grown foods.
- Products include: Organic breads and other baked goods, Amish baskets, free range eggs, organic flours, berries, apples, fresh garden produce, live plants, cut flowers, Native wild rice, grass-fed beef & lamb, honey, jams & jellies, pickles, salsa, lefse, flatbread, maple syrup, donuts, bagels, live bait, handmade soap, handmade art, Native jewelry and crafts, woven wheat art and more.



## **Bemidji's Natural Choice Market**

- Bemidji's Natural Choice Farmers Market is a seasonal, open air Farmers Market committed to providing customers with fresh, locally grown and harvested produce.
- Featuring fresh, local, naturally grown garden produce, delicious fresh baked goods includes: gluten free products, candies, pickles, preserves, bison, free range eggs, honey, maple syrup, artists, crafters & more.
- Live music by local musicians, chefs demonstrations, and other special events.
- Bemidji's Natural Choice Farmers Market vendors are small-acreage, home based, family-businesses and farms located in and around the Bemidji area.
- Located in Union Square (2nd St & Beltrami Ave) in downtown Bemidji near the waterfront.
- May 18-Oct 26: Sat 8:30a-3p. Jul 2-Oct 29: Tue 11a-4p. WIC hrs: 11a-2p/sold out.

## **Special Market Incentives**

Of the twelve markets during the 2012 season, five of them offered special incentives to attract low income/at risk populations. These ranged from \$5 coupons to the use of (Electronic Benefits Transfer) EBT. While none of these activities were systematically evaluated, anecdotal evidence from market directors suggests that although there were challenges, low income participation did seem to increase with incentives, especially EBT availability. A challenge to these efforts is both the cost of the EBT machines and the learning curve associated with how to set them up and use them. SHIP efforts along with BCBS of MN, MDH and MN Department of Agriculture have focused financial and educational resources into trying to overcome those challenges.

Table 2: Overview of Market Special Initiatives 2012

<b>Farmers Markets Special Initiatives 2012</b>		
<b>County</b>	<b>Community</b>	<b>Special Initiative</b>
Clearwater	Bagley Farmers Market	Used \$5 coupons to entice people to use the market.
Beltrami	Bemidji Area Farmers Market	Second year with using EBT. Also implemented 'Market Bucks' for low income. Working with BCBS.
Mahnomen	White Earth Farmers Market (Mahnomen)	Approved for the WIC program before opening in 2012 and therefore only a few vendors we trained in to accept WIC vouchers. Will accept SNAP vouchers and have applied to get a EBT system for the 2013 season.
Polk	Fosston Farmers Market	SNAP/EBT Cards accepted. Farmers Market supports/works closely with local food shelf.
Clearwater	Gonvick Farmers Market	Growing up Healthy from the Ground Up Coupons, from \$10 to use at the Farmers Market. Given out at WIC, ECFE, and day cares.

Table 3: Approximate Age and Gender Percentages for Attendees at Farmers Markets 2012

<b>Market Name</b>	<b>Approximate Age of Attendees Percentage by Age Group</b>			<b>Gender of Attendees Approx. %</b>	
	<b>20-40</b>	<b>40-60</b>	<b>60+</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>F</b>
Gonvick Farmers Market	40%	40%	20%	20%	80%
Bagley Farmers Market	15%	45%	40%	15%	85%
Bemidji Area Farmers Market	60%	20%	20%	35%	65%
Laughing Earth Farmers Market	15%	35%	50%	25%	75%
White Earth Community Farmers Market	15%	60%	25%	50%	50%
Park Rapids Farmers Market	20%	65%	15%	40%	60%
Bemidji's Natural Choice Market	40%	50%	10%	40%	60%
Fresh Start Market	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd
Local Farmers Market	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd
Crookston	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd
Fosston	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd
Mentor	nd	nd	nd	nd	nd
<b>Overall Market Averages</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>68%</b>

nd=no data

In terms of the demographics of the market attendees overall, it's not surprising to see in Table 3 that 45% are likely between the ages of 40-60 and that almost 70% of attendees are female. This finding is almost equal to what other studies discussed in this report have found as their primary demographic (Reed et. al., 2008; Hugunin, 2012; Nenich, 2012). Fewer data exist regarding the reported professional occupations of Farmers Market participants. It appears that in several markets many attendees are retired or mothers. Attendance counts range from a low average of approximately 30 per day to a high average of approx. 250 daily (see Table 4).

Table 4: Additional Farmers Market Attendee Demographic Approximations

Market Name	Professions of Attendees				Number of Attendees: Estimates
	Business	Mothers	Retired	Blue Collar	Numbers:
Gonvick Farmers Market					30
Bagley Farmers Market	15%	50%	25%	10%	100-200
Bemidji Area Farmers Market					1500-1800/wk
Laughing Earth Farmers Market			50%		
White Earth Community Market	30%	15%	25%	30%	
Park Rapids Farmers Market				90%	
Bemidji's Natural Choice Market	60%	10%	25%		Mid week (10-15) Sat (50-80)
Fresh Start Market					250-400/wk
Local Farmers Market					
Crookston					
Fosston					
Mentor					

The markets in the region serve a combined 32,959 individuals within the city limits of the following communities (see Figure 1): Bemidji 13,431; Bagley 1,392; Fosston 1,527; McIntosh 625; Mentor 150; Crookston 7,891; Park Rapids 3,634; Baudette 1,106; Gonvick 282; Mahnommen 1,214; and Ada 1,707.

Figure 1: Farmers Market Locations: Northwest Minnesota



## Survey of Farmers Markets participating in SHIP

During the fall/winter of 2012, Farmers Market directors were individually contacted by SHIP staff to review with them their market experiences over the past season. These conversations were technically semi-structured interviews that generally followed a specific format by covering a series of pre-determined characteristics about the market. This form was completed as the conversation unfolded. (The complete review form can be found on page 29). Results from all 12 markets were then aggregated into a database and examined for commonalities. Results from those conversations are shown in the table below:

<b>Location/Site</b>	<b>Yes</b>
· Easy to find	100%
· Signage	100%
· Room for expansion	100%
· Visible	89%
· Accessible by bus	67%
· Handicap accessible	67%
· Surrounding neighborhoods	67%
· Unique features	56%
· Attractive grounds	56%

<b>Parking</b>	<b>Yes</b>
· Easy to find	100%
· Within walking distance	100%
· Handicap parking	78%
· Safety	78%
· Signage: entrance/exits	44%

<b>Traffic</b>	<b>Yes</b>
· Circulation	78%
· Congestion	22%
· Control – police, others	22%

<b>Proximity to:</b>	<b>Yes</b>
· Neighborhoods	89%
· Complementary businesses	89%
· Food markets	67%
· Farmers' markets	56%

<b>Accept</b>	<b>Yes</b>
· WIC coupons	33%
· Foods stamps	33%
· Credit/debit	22%

<b>Amenities</b>	<b>Yes</b>
· Bathrooms	67%
· Places to sit	67%
· Trash containers	67%
· Phone	33%
· Cash machines	11%

<b>Customer Service</b>	<b>Yes</b>
· Bags, carts	78%
· Market info booth	33%

<b>Market Layout</b>	<b>Yes</b>
· Easy to follow	100%
· Anchor vendors	100%
· Well spaced booths	89%
· Product mix throughout market	89%

<b>Vendor Spaces</b>	<b>Yes</b>
· Adequate space per vendor	100%
· Quality set-up and display	100%
· Umbrellas, tents	78%
· Clearly identifiable spaces	67%
· Sturdy display tables	67%

<b>Vendor</b>	<b>Yes</b>
· Variety	100%
· Product quality	89%
· Adhere to rules and regs	78%
· Signage	67%

<b>Atmosphere</b>	<b>Yes</b>
· Social (people talking)	100%
· Relaxed (not hurried)	89%
· Exciting/fun	78%
· Entertainment	44%
· Crowds	33%

Results from the structured interviews suggest that in 2012, overall:

- ❖ Few markets accepted WIC coupons, food stamps or credit/debit cards.
- ❖ Less than half of markets provide entertainment
- ❖ Only one-third of markets have an information booth
- ❖ 10% have cash machines
- ❖ Only 70% have trash, benches and bathrooms
- ❖ Only 33% of markets attracted crowds

All markets reported having:

- ❖ Signage
- ❖ Easy to find parking within walking distance
- ❖ A social atmosphere
- ❖ A variety of vendors with adequate space
- ❖ Quality set-up and display
- ❖ Room for expansion

## **Other Market Data**

### **a. Regional Marketing Plan**

Drawing new customers to Farmers Markets is an important way to grow new and young markets, increase fruit and vegetable consumption and support the economy. To help do this, the University of Minnesota (UM) Crookston Center for Rural Entrepreneurial Studies and UM Crookston, 2011 fall semester interns and course participants developed a regional marketing plan. Regionally, this means serving a population that has a relatively high percentage of seniors and those with limited financial resources.

The regional marketing plan developed by the UMC class (Lundbohm, 2011) focused on females with children with average to above average education and income their primary audience. A secondary target was individuals that participate in the SNAP program. Their marketing plan included:

- A new branding and logo for Rivers and Prairies Local Foods
- Affiliation with Minnesota Grown
- Radio advertisements at the beginning of the Farmers Market season along with on-site radio kickoff events.
- Minnesota Newspaper Association advertisements
- Posters
- Window clings
- Reusable shopping bags
- Road signs
- Food sampling
- Social networking/Youtube/blog
- Email marketing
- County Fair Booths
- Press releases
- Market kickoff event (musicians, etc.)

Lundbohm (2011) set out a foundational marketing plan for meeting a broad range of markets and casting the broadest marketing net in NWMN. This broad array of marketing tools identified will likely aid local markets in attracting new customers, however more work remains for more clearly identifying specific messages and strategies for reaching at-risk populations.

## **Research Gaps**

- ✓ Some of the markets in the region have indicated that locals are not as good at coming to the markets as are visitors/out of town guests. Future marketing efforts might look at ways to better advertise/capture local residents.
- ✓ Consider the use of tracking each week the number of voucher returns or EBT transactions as a function of different marketing approaches usage.

## **II. Farmers Market Evaluation Questions for SHIP/CTG**

Farmers Market evaluation questions that would be of potential benefit for future consideration include the following:

1. *What are the demographics of those currently attending Farmers Markets in NWMN?*
2. *Why do low SES populations generally not attend Farmers Markets?*
  - a. *What are the barriers for low SES to shopping at a Farmers Markets in NWMN?*
3. *What might incentivize/influence low SES populations to attend Farmers Markets on a regular basis?*
4. *What would make it easier for high risk populations to shop at a Farmers Market?*
5. *Are Farmers Market prices competitive with or cheaper to alternatives in NWMN?*
6. *Does having a Farmers Market in a community alter the fresh fruit/veg intake of its members?*

A current review of the Farmers Market research/evaluation literature regarding each of the questions is reviewed in the following section.

### ***1. What are the demographics of those currently attending Farmers Markets in NW Minnesota?***

#### **Farmers Market Attendees: General Demographics and Market Behaviors**

In 2008/09 a total of 9 Farmers Markets in Michigan were evaluated by Reed, et. al., (2008), demographically they found:

- The vast majority of survey respondents from the seven Farmers Markets evaluated were females.
- 67% of survey respondents were older than forty.
- The majority of survey respondents had an annual household income of \$49,999 or less and spent \$5 to \$20 per visit.
- The largest numbers of visitors to markets were first timers.
  - Approximately 20% reported that they began visiting their respective Farmers Market three or more years ago.
- Most attendees drove a car to visit the market, while few walked or biked to their respective Farmers Market.

While the Reed et. al., (2008) study did not encompass Minnesota Farmers Markets, these demographics are found to be similar to those of other markets found across the country, including Minnesota. Last summer the Minnesota Grown Program through the Minnesota Department of Agriculture conducted a customer survey at 57 Farmers Markets throughout the state. More than 1,100 customers participated in this convenience survey study (Huginin, 2012). Among other things, demographically they found:

- 85% of Farmers Market survey respondents were female
- The average age of Farmers Market attendee was 49
- The average distance traveled to the market was 6 miles
- 23% of respondents brought children and 31% brought their spouse. 42% attended alone.
- Almost 60% of respondents attend Farmers Markets once per week.
- The average purchase amount was \$26 (total for market-not per vendor)

- Besides the quality of products, cleanliness of vendor space, courteousness/friendliness of vendor followed by price were top rated factors when choosing between vendors with similar products.
- 44% of respondents said that they spent money at nearby businesses as a result of their visit to the market (on average \$32).

In relationship to online behaviors, Nennich (2012) indicated that demographically, individuals who attend Farmers Markets are similar to users of the popular website Pinterest. This demographic similarity may be of some importance given potential attempts at online marketing of Farmers Markets. Sixty-eight percent of Pinterest users are female, 50% have children and 28% have annual incomes of more than 100k. Pinterest users are also avid patrons of Nordstroms department stores and Whole Foods Market grocery retailers (www.mashable.com).



Govindasamy, Italia, & Adelaja (2002) examined attitudes, preferences, and characteristics of New Jersey consumers who shop at farmers' markets. The results of 336 patrons revealed that on average, consumers spent \$16 per visit, and the majority had attended between two to four different farmers' markets. The majority visited these facilities once a week, or once every 2 weeks.

**Farmers Market Attendees: Low SES**

According to Nennich (2012), Extension Professor at the University of Minnesota with expertise in Farmers Markets, food safety and public health, there are three basic groups of low SES individuals who may use EBT services/participate in the SNAP program, those people who:

- 1) Have a short-term run of bad luck financially and find themselves in an emergency situation (suddenly lost a job, spouse, etc.). These individuals typically are on nutrition assistance less than six months.
- 2) Have more extended term challenges, such as those battling an illness or serious injury. This group is on assistance anywhere from 1-3 years.
- 3) Are afflicted by long-term chronic generational poverty. These people don't know how to cook and/or use fresh produce and have been on assistance for extended periods of time (greater than 3 years).

**Research Gaps**

- ✓ Currently, no studies to our knowledge have closely examined market segmentation/strata within low SES Farmers Market participants.
- ✓ No articles exist examining rural markets meeting the needs of low SES residents dwelling outside of city limits.
  - In urban settings it is suggested that markets establish themselves in low SES neighborhoods for those that want to serve low SES families (Project for Public Spaces, 2012).

**2. *Why do low SES populations generally not attend Farmers Markets? What are the barriers for low SES to shopping at a Farmers Market in NWMN?***

**Location and Convenience**

Govindasamy, Italia, & Adelaja (2002) found that absence of a market in customers' vicinity and inconvenience in terms of time and location were among the main reasons for most individuals not patronizing Farmers Markets.

A study undertaken by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation examined market management data tracked over several years in addition to surveys of market shoppers and non-market shoppers. As well, they found that location is a critical factor. A common reason cited by non-market shoppers and low SES shoppers for not patronizing a Farmers Market was the desire (and convenience) to purchase all of their goods in one location (as in a grocery store) (Project for Public Spaces, 2012).

### **Cost**

The Project for Public Spaces (2012) found that among those who did not shop at Farmers Markets, only 17% cited price as a barrier to shopping at their local Farmers Market. Among the respondents almost 60% of Farmers Market shoppers in low-income neighborhoods believed their market had better prices than the grocery store.

Stewart, Blisard, & Jolliffe (2003) revealed poor households are found to spend less on fruits and vegetables than other households. This is often thought to be due to perceptions that fruits and vegetable cost more than other foods. Calorie for calorie, junk food costs less than fruits and vegetables (Mosivais & Drewnowski, 2007). According to Parker-Pope (2007), a typical American will spend \$7 daily for food, however lower income individuals spend only \$4. Given the need for inexpensive sustenance, lower income individuals typically gravitate toward foods yielding the most calories per dollar (Parker-Pope, 2007)

### **Social Class**

One generally unexplored and highly complex issue involves social class and the perception of whole foods movements including Farmers Markets. A documentary entitled 'People Like Us' examined the role of social class in America by presenting stories illustrating class differences. One stark example of the fundamental ways in which class is most evident is through the foods we eat, including bread. Higher income families consume more wheat/whole grain bread than low SES families (Alvarez & Kolker, 2001).

An illustration of this tension occurred in Burlington Vermont where the community was in the midst of a battle between low SES residents and a local food cooperative. The question was who would build a new grocery store to serve them when the local grocery chain that served primarily lower income groups closed down. The local food cooperative ultimately won the zoning rights to open a new store, but low SES residents felt both displaced and unheard. A general sense of 'someone ramming their ideals down their throats' was a common theme as more wholesome foods offered by the coop did not include many of the less-healthy standbys that residents were used to (and demanded). A primary complaint was that lower income residents wanted 99 cent white bread (Wonderbread) and not multi-grain or other more nutritious and wholesome varieties.

Social class influences Farmers Markets to the extent that all attendees need to feel comfortable participating in the setting together. Seeking activities and alternatives that appeal to all demographics could be part of a solution that will enhance successfully reaching at-risk populations.

### **Marketing/PR**

Related to marketing, the Project for Public Spaces, (2012) as well as Govindasamy, Italia, & Adelaja (2002) found that information is key. Shoppers need better access to information about schedules and seasonal changes in order to become more regular market shoppers. Making sure current, up-to-date information is available to all consumers in conspicuous location is a key to success. Lack of awareness that EBT machines are available for use at the market may also have adverse impacts on low SES users participating at the market.

## **Research Gaps**

- ✓ Currently the costs of foods offered at NWMN Farmers Markets are unknown relative to similar foods offered at alternative sources.
- ✓ Exploring the ways in which social class impacts Farmers Market participation is warranted.
- ✓ Aligning marketing efforts of Farmers Markets with those messages tailored to known population subtypes has yet to be explored in any relevant literature (see PRISM marketing for more information on population subtypes at [www.claritas.com](http://www.claritas.com)).
- ✓ Currently it is unknown which methods of promotion are most effective in getting at-risk populations to attend farmers markets.
- ✓ It is unknown what kinds of foods are generally being purchased by low SES users at farmers markets.

***3. What might incentivize/influence low SES populations to attend Farmers Markets on a regular basis?***

***4. What would make it easier for high risk populations to shop at a Farmers Market?***

## **Partner with Organizations Serving Low SES/At-Risk Populations**

Markets targeting an at-risk customer base must partner with organizations that share the goal of reaching at-risk populations. Partnering with neighborhood organizations like food shelves, church groups, social services, mental health treatment centers and others helps facilitate better outreach efforts to hard-to-reach, at-risk groups (Project for Public Spaces, 2012).

## **Use Vouchers/Coupons of at least \$10**

A study assessing Boston Farmers Market incentive programs used a number of different distribution methods for vouchers, including a health/fitness expo, counseling, at a health center, counseling program for pregnant teens, physicians, and an after-school program among others (Amuda, 2010). Redemption rates ranged between 43% and 90%. In order to get the greatest redemption rates, they recommended handing out coupons directly at the market or at a location very near to it.

Their research also suggests that five dollars in coupon incentives might not be enough to entice people. Rather, ten dollars (or more) might be closer to the mark. Other incentives they mentioned included providing financial incentives to bring a friend to the market. While coupons are a great incentive but it might not be enough motivation for customers to continue to shop at markets after their coupons have run out given other closer alternatives that may have a wider selection of foods. Thus, establishing personal connections with individuals at the market is important (Amuda, 2010) (See Make Personal Connections). Currently, scant evidence exists regarding the efficacy of long term market attendance by the use of coupons.

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota (2012) study found that 43% of respondents would shop at the market less than they currently do if Market Bucks were no longer offered. Market Bucks were offered in the form of up to \$5 matching funds for all money spent at the markets.

## **Use (and Advertise the use of) EBT Machines**

Efforts underway by BCBS of MN have examined the spread of EBT use and evaluated the proliferation of EBT machines (primarily in Metro areas), including Bemidji (Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota, 2012). While the study design primarily focused on counting the dollar amount of EBT transactions, their study conducted a convenience survey of 165 EBT users.

The Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota, (2012) study found that repeat SNAP customers said one of the reasons they shopped at the Farmers Market was because they could use EBT there. In the recent past, a primary method for attracting more low SES people to Farmers Markets has been the proliferation of Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) machines. By increasing the number of EBT access points at Farmers Markets (and advertising as such), low SES populations are believed to be more likely to attend Farmers Markets. The challenge to this assumption is that it is unknown exactly how many low SES individuals participated at Farmers Markets prior to EBT implementation efforts. What has been shown is that the amount of SNAP redemptions via EBT at Farmers Markets is likely to increase with greater numbers of EBT machines available and the promotion of EBT availability.

Another assumption is that the majority of those foods purchased via EBT transactions are fruit/vegetable-related. While these purchases must follow SNAP guidelines, numerous Farmers Markets offer excellent tasting foods that are not necessarily healthy food options (such as pies, bars, etc.), it is unknown at this time what kinds of foods SNAP purchasers are acquiring at markets in general. According to SNAP guidelines (USDA Food and Nutrition Service: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, n.d.) (<http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/retailers/eligible.htm>) items such as soft drinks, candy, cookies, snack crackers, and ice cream, bakery cakes are also food items and are therefore eligible items. USDA states on their SNAP website:

*Since the current definition of food is a specific part of the Act, any change to this definition would require action by a member of Congress. Several times in the history of SNAP, Congress had considered placing limits on the types of food that could be purchased with program benefits. However, they concluded that designating foods as luxury or non-nutritious would be administratively costly and burdensome.*

Further detailed information about the challenges of restricting the use of SNAP benefits can be found here (USDA Food and Nutrition Service, 2007): Implications of Restricting the Use of Food Stamp Benefits <http://www.fns.usda.gov/ora/menu/Published/snap/FILES/ProgramOperations/FSPFoodRestrictions.pdf>. Furthermore, Nennich (2012) found that over the past few years it has been challenging both in getting vendors the equipment and training to use the EBT systems throughout the region and more importantly getting potential EBT users to attend markets.

### **Make it Clear where EBT is not Accepted**

The BCBS (2012) study revealed that low-income participants would feel more comfortable if they knew up front which vendors did or did not accept EBT so they did not have to ask and feel embarrassed.

### **Build Farmers Markets in Areas that Can be Reached Easily by Foot**

Distance, transportation and time are all major factors in accessing food in low income people and where they shop for food. (Amuda,2010). Providing transportation to and from the market was successful for a Farmers Market reaching out to seniors (Amuda, 2010)

### **Make Personal Connections**

Amuda (2010) found it important that the market provide a method for making a personal connection with individuals in order to instill a sense of community to the market, this could include providing incentives to consistent shoppers, engaging with new customers, and/or hosting events at the market designed to engage families in fun events.

### **Identify what Marketing Strategies are Most Effective for High Risk Populations at Each Market**

Huginin's (2012) survey of Minnesota Farmers Markets found that the top factors in order of importance influencing respondents' decision to shop at the market were:

- Personal recommendation
- Sign/billboard
- Market website
- E-newsletter
- Minnesota Grown Directory
- Social Media
- Newspaper ad

### **Advertise Market Times and Locations That Will Reach At-Risk Populations**

Farmers Markets need to expand marketing and outreach efforts to reach consumers. Many market organizers are already well aware of the importance of successful marketing for the success of their Farmers Market. However, the need for constant marketing and outreach to local consumers to educate them about the location, time, and acceptance of SNAP and WIC benefits is greatly stressed (Project for Public Spaces, 2012).

### **Turn Market into A Community Gathering Place with Events that Appeal to a Broad Range of Population Segments**

The authors advocate that market operators who are serious about long term sustainability turn their market into a destination. The market should not only be a place to buy produce, but should incorporate programming that integrates the market into the fabric of the surrounding community (Project for Public Spaces, 2012). For example NASCAR day at the Farmers Market or other marketing strategies that meet the interests of lower SES demographics.

### **Understand Shopping Patterns of Market Users**

One interesting finding from the Project for Public Spaces (2012) study was the varying intensity in market use depending on the income of shoppers. What this tells us is that knowing your most frequent shopper, and other shopper demographics, is important for markets to achieve financial sustainability and develop a more stable consumer base. Knowing your shoppers has implications for both the kind of marketing and the location of marketing that the market should produce (Project for Public Spaces, 2012).

### **Cooking Demonstrations/Education**

BCBS (2011) hosted a roundtable with Farmers Market administrators and participants to identify barriers to and opportunities for low SES people to embrace greater participation in Farmers Markets. Participants suggested that limited food literacy is an issue that affects many low-income shoppers. Recommendations for overcoming this included:

- Offer cooking and nutrition education,
- Develop and execute a SNAP curriculum (including cooking, nutrition, food literacy and shopping skills) affiliated with Farmers Markets.

To encourage use of the Farmers Markets and community gardens, The Michigan Department of Community Health (2008), Building Healthy Communities program included providing nutrition education at Farmers

Markets including cooking demonstrations, taste testing events, and teaching gardening skills, food safety, food preservation techniques, and nutrition information from the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.

### Research Gaps

- ✓ The Blue Cross Blue Shield: Farmers Market Roundtable Proceedings (2011) called for best practice research for effective promotions and outreach to low SES, elderly and culturally diverse populations.
- ✓ Little if any research has been conducted that identifies which events (demonstrations, shows, etc.) are most successful in bringing out at-risk populations to Farmers Markets.
- ✓ It is unknown to what extent coupons, bringing a friend to market incentives and other incentives get at-risk populations to become repeat attendees.

### **5. Are Farmers Market prices competitive with or cheaper to alternatives in NW MN?**

The answer is likely that it depends. In a quasi-scientific study, Roth (2007) conducted a price comparison study between the local Farmers Market compared to a local food stand, three grocery stores (one specialty foods, the other a large chain, and a discount chain). Go to <http://www.getrichslowly.org/blog/2007/08/21/grocery-store-vs-farmers-market-which-has-the-cheapest-produce/> in order to learn more. His methodology examined price as well as additional factors of convenience, quality, selection, and locality of origin. The outlet food chain and food stand were superior compared to Farmers Markets food costs. The challenge with this study is that it was local in nature. However, the methodology could be applied to any community wishing to examine how their Farmers Market costs compare to other local food sources.

Claro (2011) organized a five-member team that collected price information from 10 farmers' markets and 10 conventional supermarkets serving the same towns in Vermont during the summer of 2010. The group compared costs for a dozen items: blueberries, cantaloupe, sweet corn, cucumbers, eggs, bell peppers, lettuce, potatoes, peas, string beans, squash, and tomatoes. When comparing conventional (non-organic) prices between farmers' markets and grocery stores, farmers' market prices were lower for 5 out of the 14 (36%) of items compared. One of the largest percent differences was between Mesclun and spring mix lettuces (49% cheaper at the Farmers Market) and Cantaloupe (73% cheaper), cucumbers, and snow peas were the other lower cost items at farmers' markets. Grocery store items were cheaper for 9 out of the 14 (64%) items compared. The greatest percentage differences were observed between eggs and potatoes.

In 2007, Stacey Jones an economics professor at the University of Seattle, had her students compare costs of 15 items at a farmers' market and a nearby supermarket (Seattle Times.com, 2007). The farmers' market was slightly less expensive. The [Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture](#) compared prices of conventional food in four Iowa cities and found that the farmers' market prices were often equal to or lower than those at grocery stores (The Atlantic, May 10, 2011).

### Research Gaps

- ✓ Local Markets seeking to best serve at-risk populations should conduct market price point checks similar to Roth (2007) and Claro (2011) in order to ensure that they are the lowest cost provider given that cost is of paramount concern, especially to low income individuals.

**6. Does having a Farmers Market in a community alter the fresh fruit/veg intake of its members? Is it a lasting impact that ultimately influences the health of its' members?**

It is well known that increasing fruit and vegetable consumption may prevent chronic ailments such as cancer and cardiovascular disease (Block, Patterson & Subar, 1992; Ness & Fowles, 1997), and may be an effective strategy for weight management (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2010).

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2010) sparse work has been done to document the direct relationship of farmers' markets to increased fruit and vegetable consumption by customers although it is assumed that farmers' markets are a way to increase access to high-quality produce. Kaiser Permanente (2010) surveyed patrons at work-site farmers' markets and found that nearly three out of four shoppers reported eating a few more fruits and vegetables because of the market, and more than half reported eating an increased variety of fruits and vegetables.

According to the Center for Economic Development, University of Alaska (2011), other benefits of Farmers Markets to a community include: downtown and neighborhood renewal and revitalization, economic opportunities for vendors, local economy building, public health promotion, public space enlivened and peoples' diversity celebrated. Markets serve as anchors for local businesses, encourage spin off development, enhance real estate values, increase the tax base and keep money in the local area. They are started and operated by local food advocates, have a high degree of sustainability and address local food security issues including affordability, hunger prevention, cultural responsiveness, social integration and access to fresh products.

MDCH (2008) developed a 19-item, self-administered market customer survey. This survey included questions designed to gather information and identify key outcomes, such as fruit and vegetable consumption, as well as attitudes and beliefs about the markets, products sold, and customer satisfaction. Lev, Brewer & Stephenson (2008) developed a comprehensive series of Rapid Market Assessment Tools. The tools from both these resources are included in this report.

**Research Gaps**

- ✓ Long-term studies comparing similar sized cities fruit/vegetable consumption with and without Farmers Markets should be considered. We are not aware of any comparative studies of this type that have been conducted to date.
- ✓ The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2010) indicates that little work has been done to document the direct relationship of farmers' markets to increased fruit and vegetable consumption by customers.

**Research Gap Summary**

- ❖ The Blue Cross Blue Shield: Farmers Market Roundtable Proceedings (2011) called for best practice research for effective promotions and outreach to low SES, elderly and culturally diverse populations.
  - ❖ The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2010) indicates that little work has been done to document the direct relationship of farmers' markets to increased fruit and vegetable consumption by customers.
1. Future studies should more closely examine market segmentation/strata within low SES Farmers Market participants.
  2. Few if any studies have examined rural markets meeting the needs of low SES residents dwelling outside of city limits.

3. The costs of foods offered at NWMN Farmers Markets are unknown relative to similar foods offered at alternative sources.
4. Exploring the ways in which social class impacts Farmers Market participation and marketing efforts of Farmers Markets messages tailored to known population subtypes has yet to be explored in NWMN
5. Little research has been conducted identifying which market events are most successful in bringing out at-risks populations.
6. Do coupons, bringing a friend to market incentives, coupons, discounts and other financial incentives get at-risk populations to become repeat attendees?
7. We don't know what current methods of marketing promotion are most effective in getting at-risk populations to attend.
  - a. Consider the use of tracking each week the number of voucher returns or EBT transactions as a function of marketing tools use.
8. It is unknown what kinds of foods are generally being purchased by at-risk populations in NWMN.
9. Long-term studies comparing similar sized cities fruit/veg consumption with and without Farmers Markets should be considered.

#### IV. Recommendations for Farmers Markets 2013

1. **Location**– A common reason cited by non-market shoppers for not using a Farmers Market was the need to complete their shopping at one location. Placing Farmers Markets near other important amenities for shoppers, such as banks, schools, or even supermarket parking lots of willing stores, may increase the access and use of the markets therefore increasing the potential for financially sustainable markets (Project for Public Spaces, 2012).
2. **Know your shoppers** –Knowing your most frequent shopper, as well as the shopper demographic who purchases the highest percentage of their produce at the Farmers Market, is important for markets to achieve financial sustainability and develop a more stable consumer base. Knowing your shopper has implications for both the kind of marketing and the location of marketing that the market should produce. To identify this intense shopper market managers should survey their market's customer base, with a focus on how frequently people shop at the market, how much they spend, and how much of their total food purchases come from the market (Project for Public Spaces, 2012) (see page 12).
3. **Markets targeting a low-income customer base must partner with organizations that share the market's goals** – Partnering with neighborhood organizations helps facilitate better outreach efforts to the intense-use shopper, as previously identified (Project for Public Spaces, 2012).
4. **Farmers Markets need to expand marketing and outreach efforts to reach consumers** - The data from the studies examined in this report re-affirms the need for constant marketing and outreach to local consumers to educate them about the location, time, and acceptance of SNAP and WIC benefits (Project for Public Spaces, 2012). Some of the markets in the region have indicated that locals are not as good at coming to the markets as are visitors/out of town guests. Future marketing efforts might look at ways to better advertise/capture local residents.
5. **Consider using a Farmers Market consultant** – A Farmers Market consultant could act as a disinterested third party to work collaboratively with new markets to help them objectively review options for market enhancements. A consultant might review markets using a tool similar to the Farmers Market Comment/Observation Review Form found in this document.

## **Farmers Market Evaluation Plan**

### Purpose of Program

The goals of the SHIP Farmers Market program are to increase the consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables in the general population and in at-risk populations:

- Goal Area 1: Implement marketing campaigns to increase awareness of market days, times and events
- Goal Area 2: Increase the number of events/activities that will attract at-risk populations to markets.
- Goal Area 3: Increase the number of promotions that will attract at-risk populations to markets
- Goal Area 4: Identify target markets at each of the participating Farmers Markets

### Evaluation questions and sub-questions

The questions and sub-questions for this evaluation are included in the Table 2 which follows. The audiences interested in each question and its associated sub-questions are also identified in the table as is the importance of each set of questions.

### **Options for Evaluation Implementation in Future Efforts**

A wide range of future options exist for the implementation of evaluative activities using the tools contained in this report. Some of them include:

- ✓ The markets use the tools contained herein and select which ones they want to use to assess themselves and report to SHIP/CTG staff.
- ✓ The markets receive benefits from SHIP/CTG funding and as a requirement, complete some of the forms and submit them to a program evaluator for analysis, reporting and tracking.
- ✓ Assessment/Evaluation of all (or some) of the farmers markets are evaluated by a farmers market consultant or evaluator. Reports are provided to market directors to make improvements to the markets and to SHIP/CTG program staff to keep them informed of efforts.

**Table 2. Step 3: Evaluation Questions for Farmers Markets**

<b><u>Evaluation Questions</u></b>	<b><u>Sub-questions</u></b>	<b><u>Audience</u></b>	<b><u>Importance</u></b>
<i>1. What market segments/demographics are currently attending Farmers Markets in NW Minnesota?</i>	1) # of male/females at markets? a. income 2) are there differences between markets in terms of demographic segments that attend? 3) does one size fit all for marketing across the region?	1. Public health staff 2. SHIP staff 3. Farmers Market Directors 4. Minnesota Grown/MN Dept. of Ag 5. MN Farmers Market Assn.	To identify what market segments exist. To make management and marketing decisions based on the types of people attending the market.
<i>2. Why do low SES populations generally not attend Farmers Markets?</i>	4) What are the barriers for low SES to shopping at a Farmers Market?	1. PH Staff 2. CLT 3. MN Dept. of Health	Research base is unclear. Help inform markets, public health and others.
<i>3. What might incentivize/influence low SES populations to attend Farmers Markets on a regular basis?</i>	5) Is building partnerships with low SES serving institutions the key? a. Which partners are best...Food shelves? b. What role do partnerships play? 6) How effective are coupons, market bucks and other incentives?	1. Market Directors 2. PH Staff 3. Publicist/PR Director 4. Legislators	Need to know more about what incentives work best in order to use resources more effectively.
<i>4. What would make it easier for high risk populations to shop at a Farmers Market?</i>	7) How many markets offer EBT? 8) How many installed new EBT machines? 9) How much in WIC/SNAP redemption? 10) How important is transportation?	1. Market Directors 2. PH Staff 3. Publicist/PR Director 4. Legislators	In order for each market to be competitive it must know the prices of competitors outside the market.

5. <i>Are Farmers Market prices competitive with or cheaper to alternatives in our region?</i>	11) Organic vs. organic 12) Inorganic vs. inorganic 13) Organic vs. inorganic 14) What are the operational definitions of organic and inorganic?	1. Market Vendors 2. Market Directors 3. U of M Extension	Understanding health-related outcomes contributes to new knowledge of effective practices.
6. <i>Does having a Farmers Market in a community alter the fresh fruit/veg intake of its members? What about other health outcomes?</i>	15) What are the impacts on the physical health of community members? 16) What are the impacts on the mental health of community members? 17) What are the impacts on the social health of community members? 18) What are the impacts on the economic health of the community? 19) Are communities with FMs healthier? (comparing same size/similar communities with and without)	1. SHIP Stakeholders 2. U of M Extension 3. MN Dept. of Health 4. Legislators	Identifying to what extent involvement by public health in the growth and development of Farmers Markets improves community health is important to funders and stakeholders.

**Table 3. Step 4: Question-Procedure Plan**

Q=Evaluation Question, s=sub question

<b>Assessment Tool / Collection Procedure</b>	<b>Question 1.</b> <i>1. What market segments/ demographics are currently attending Farmers Markets in NW Minnesota? Sub-questions: Q1; s1,s1a,s2,s3</i>	<b>Question 2.</b> <i>2. Why do low SES populations generally not attend Farmers Markets? Sub-questions: Q2;s4</i>	<b>Question 3.</b> <i>What might incentivize/influence low SES populations to attend Farmers Markets on a regular basis? Sub-questions: Q3; s5,s5a,s5b,s6</i>	<b>Question 4.</b> <i>What would make it easier for high risk populations to shop at a Farmers Market? Sub-questions: Q4; s7,s8,s9,s10</i>	<b>Question 5.</b> <i>Are Farmers Market prices competitive with or cheaper to alternatives in our region? Sub-questions: Q5;s11,s12,s13,s14</i>	<b>Question 6.</b> <i>Does having a Farmers Market in a community alter the fresh fruit/veg intake of its members? What about other health outcomes? Sub-questions: Q6;s15,s16,s17,s18,s19, s20</i>
<b>Attendance Counts</b>	<i>Q1,s1,s1a,s2,s3</i>	--	<i>Q3,s6</i>	<i>s7,s8</i>	--	<i>Q6</i>
<b>Dot Surveys</b>	<i>Q1,s1</i>	<i>Q2,s4</i>	<i>Q3,s6</i>	<i>Q4,s10</i>	--	<i>Q6,s15,s16,s17</i>
<b>Constructive Comments and Observations</b>	--	<i>s4</i>	<i>Q4</i>	<i>Q4</i>	--	--
<b>Detailed Survey of Farmers Market Participants</b>	<i>Q1,s1,s1a,s2,s3</i>	<i>Q2,s4</i>	<i>Q3,s6</i>	<i>Q4,s10</i>	--	<i>Q6,s15,s16,s17,s18,s19</i>
<b>Review of archival data (MNSS/BRFSS, other)</b>	--	--	--	--	--	<i>Q6,s15,s16,s17</i>
<b>Food Price Comparisons</b>	--	<i>Q2,s4</i>	--	--	<i>Q5,s11,s12,s13,s14</i>	--
<b>Review of NAICS Code sales data for Farmers Markets</b>	--	--	--	<i>s9</i>	--	<i>s18</i>
<b>Cross Comparative Community Study</b>	--	--	--	--	--	<i>s19</i>

# Assessment Tools

## Rapid Market Assessment

Adapted from Kansas Farmers Market (n.d.): <http://www.ksfarmersmarkets.org/resources/evaluating-your-market?v=organizers>

### A. Attendance Counts

It is hard to plan events, obtain grant monies, measure the need for more vendors, and more when you have no idea how many customers your market draws each market day. Designating someone to count every person can be difficult. The rapid market assessment method suggests placing spotters at each entrance way to the market and having them count customers for 10 minutes each hour and then multiply this number by six. The numbers will be nearly as accurate as a full count and certainly be easier. Accuracy depends on both planning and personnel.

#### *Tips for this part of the assessment:*

- Count everyone entering the market in a 10-minute period each hour and multiply by six to give hourly estimates.
- Record each hour's attendance separately so the market can know its busiest time.
- Establish clear communication between counters.
- Count only adults entering the market.
- Do counts on at least two days before decisions are based on the numbers.



#### *Additional Resources:*

Attendance Count Worksheet Template: download [here](http://www.ksfarmersmarkets.org/sites/default/files/RMA_ATTENDANCECOUNTWRKSHEET.xls)  
[http://www.ksfarmersmarkets.org/sites/default/files/RMA\\_ATTENDANCECOUNTWRKSHEET.xls](http://www.ksfarmersmarkets.org/sites/default/files/RMA_ATTENDANCECOUNTWRKSHEET.xls)

### Attendance Count Worksheet

<b>Market:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
----------------	--------------

**Assessment Team Member Completing this Sheet:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Note Weather Conditions, Season and if Holiday Period:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Attendance Count Guidelines:**

- Only count adults.
- Only shoppers entering the market during the counting period are included. Re-entering shoppers shouldn't be counted.
- Coordinate the boundaries of where you are counting with other counters.

Time	Location A:	Location B:	Location C:
Total Shopper Count at Opening			
7:25-7:35			
8:25-8:35			
9:25-9:35			
10:25-10:35			
11:25-11:35			

**\* Before leaving the workshop today, please return this worksheet and your market observations to**

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Adapted from Kansas Farmers Markets: (n.d).



**Q: What is the most important reason that brings you to this market?**

A: Fresh produce; Plants & flowers; Jam, jelly and honey; Crafts; Variety of vendors; In town for concerts; Other

**Q: What is your PRIMARY reason for coming downtown this afternoon?**

A: Farmers Market, Eat downtown, Shop downtown, Go to/from my job, Other

**Q: What is your primary reason for coming downtown today?**

A: Shop at the Farmers Market, Eat downtown, Shop downtown, Birmingham atmosphere & experience, Other

**Q: How often do you shop at downtown businesses or restaurants when you come to this market?**

A: Never, Occasionally, Often, Always

**Q: How much did/will you spend at businesses OUTSIDE the market on this trip?**

A: \$0, \$10, \$20, \$30, \$40, \$50, \$60, \$70, \$80, \$90, \$100, More

**Q: How often do you shop at this market?**

A: Just visiting – only today, First timer – I'll return, Several times during season, Most weeks

**Q: I/We shop at this market...**

A: Regularly – for as much of our food as we can buy here, Fairly often – for some specific items that we can get only here, Occasionally – to find unique and interesting things

**Q: Are you a?**

A: Seasonal resident, Year-round resident, Visitor

**Q: Where do you live?**

A: City of \_\_\_\_\_, City of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ Township, \_\_\_\_\_ Township, Other

A: Outside this area

**Q: What educational amenity would you most like at this market?**

A: Food demos, Master Gardener presentations, Entertainment, None

**Q: What structural change would you most like to see at this market?**

A: Additional covered stalls, Restrooms, Heated stalls, Additional vendor parking, Benches and picnic tables, None

**Q: What one change would you recommend to improve the market?**

A: Location, Product variety, Market layout, Parking, No changes, Other

**Q: Which location do you prefer for the Empire Farmers Market?**

A: Current location, \_\_\_\_\_

**Q: What would you most like added to the market?**

A: More organic, More prepared foods, More arts/crafts, More activities for kids, Other

**Q: Which of the following products would most likely bring you to this market in May?**

A: Cut flowers, Hanging baskets & bedding plants, Locally grown produce, Prepared foods, Would not come in May

**Q: How important is it to you that food/produce sold at the market be locally grown?**

A: I prefer the ONLY food/produce grown within about 100 miles of here is sold, I prefer that food/produce grown locally within 100 miles be sold supplemented with clearly labeled Minnesota Grown produce, I prefer that only food/produce grown in Minnesota be sold, It is OK to sell food/produce grown outside Minnesota if it is clearly labeled, I don't have a preference

### **C. Constructive Comments and Observations**

If your market is serious about making changes and has an open mind about what might need to be done, this one can be the most helpful. You invite members of another market, business people, or another group familiar with farmers' markets to come to your market and critique what they see.

You ask them to comment on:

- Physical characteristics of the market
- Vendor diversity and product selection
- Market atmosphere
- Safety considerations
- Anything else the market is interested in

After the team visit, the team gets together to decide the most important message to the market. One person then prepares a report and talks with the market board. If you find yourself giving excuses or being defensive, then you won't get much from this exercise. If you can take the opportunity to "see" the market like others see it, this exercise will prove to be the most powerful.

#### ***Tips for this part of the assessment:***

- Recruit 3-6 volunteers to assist. Part of their time will be spent with customer counts and assisting with the dot survey, and their remaining time can be devoted to comments and observations.
- Provide each team member with a clipboard holding copies of each of the worksheets.

#### ***Additional Resources:***

The following rapid market assessment worksheets are available for download below:

- [Market Atmosphere](http://www.ksfarmersmarkets.org/sites/default/files/RMA_MARKETATMOSPHERE.xls)  
[http://www.ksfarmersmarkets.org/sites/default/files/RMA\\_MARKETATMOSPHERE.xls](http://www.ksfarmersmarkets.org/sites/default/files/RMA_MARKETATMOSPHERE.xls)
- [Physical Characteristics](http://www.ksfarmersmarkets.org/sites/default/files/RMA_PhysicalCharacteritics.xls)  
[http://www.ksfarmersmarkets.org/sites/default/files/RMA\\_PhysicalCharacteritics.xls](http://www.ksfarmersmarkets.org/sites/default/files/RMA_PhysicalCharacteritics.xls)
- [Market Vendors and Products](http://www.ksfarmersmarkets.org/sites/default/files/RMA_VENDORS&PRODUCTS.xls)  
[http://www.ksfarmersmarkets.org/sites/default/files/RMA\\_VENDORS&PRODUCTS.xls](http://www.ksfarmersmarkets.org/sites/default/files/RMA_VENDORS&PRODUCTS.xls)

## Farmers' Market Comment/Observation Review Form

Taken from: <http://www.nyfarmersmarket.com/PDF2009/FMEvaluation.pdf>

<b>Market name:</b>			
<b>Location:</b>			
<b>Date/time:</b>			
<b>Weather during visit:</b>			
<b>Site description:</b>			
<b>Number of vendors:</b>			
<b>Products available:</b>			
<b>Season of operation:</b>			
<b>Day(s) of week and time:</b>			
<hr/>			
<b>Location/Site</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>
· Easy to find			
· Visible			
· Accessible by bus			
· Handicap accessible			
· Unique features			
· Signage			
· Room for expansion			
· Attractive grounds			
· Surrounding neighborhoods			
· Comments			
<hr/>			
<b>Parking</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>
· Easy to find			
· Within walking distance			
· Handicap parking			
· Safety			
· Signage: entrance/exits			
· Comments			
<hr/>			
<b>Traffic</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>
· Circulation			
· Congestion			
· Control – police, others			
· Comments			
<hr/>			
<b>Proximity to:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>
· Neighborhoods			
· Food markets			
· Farmers' markets			
· Complementary businesses			
· Comments			
<hr/>			
<b>Accept</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>
· WIC coupons			
· Foods stamps			
· Credit/debit			
· Comments			
<hr/>			

<b>Amenities</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>
- Bathrooms			
- Places to sit			
- Trash containers			
- Phone			
- Cash machines			
- Comments			
<b>Customer Service</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>
- Market info booth			
- Bags, carts			
- Comments			
<b>Market Layout</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>
- Easy to follow			
- Well spaced booths			
- Product mix throughout market			
- Anchor vendors			
- Comments			
<b>Vendor Spaces</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>
- Clearly identifiable spaces			
- Adequate space per vendor			
- Sturdy display tables			
- Quality set-up and display			
- Umbrellas, tents			
- Comments			
<b>Vendor</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>
- Product quality			
- Variety			
- Adhere to rules and regs			
- Signage			
- Comments			
<b>Atmosphere</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>
- Social (people talking)			
- Relaxed (not hurried)			
- Exciting/fun			
- Entertainment			
- Crowds			
- Comments			
<b>Customer Profile</b>			
- Approximate ages: 20-40 __% 40-60 __% 60+ _____%			
- Gender : M __% F __%			
- Professions: Business ____% Mothers _____% Retired ____% Blue Collar ____%			
- Numbers:			

Developed by Monika Roth, Cornell Cooperative Extension, South Central NY Agriculture Team

## **D. Surveys of Farmers Market Participants**

(Lev, Brewer, & Stephenson, 2008).

### **Spending and Pricing Questions**

- How much have you (or will you) spend in the Farmers Market this morning?
- Do you plan on doing additional shopping or eating downtown this morning? If yes, how much do you anticipate spending?
- On average, if a specific item costs \$1.00 in the grocery store, how much would you be willing to pay in the farmers' market for a similar product produced locally?
- Has shopping at this Farmers Market caused you to shop at (community name) businesses and restaurants more often?

### **Do markets attract customers? Why? What would make them more attractive?**

- Was the Farmers Market your primary reason for coming downtown this morning?
- What is your primary reason for coming to the market today: agricultural products, the atmosphere, prepared foods or crafts?
- What products would you buy if they were sold in the market? (Must provide options)
- What ONE CHANGE would you recommend to improve this market? (MUST provide a restricted number of potential changes)
- If pastured poultry were sold in this market in a weekly basis would you change the frequency of your visits to the market?

### **Geographic pull of the market & interactions with other markets and distribution channels for local products**

- Where do you live? (Answer indicated by county, city or by zip code in urban areas.)
- What stopped you from buying more at the market today?
- This summer, what will be your primary source of purchased locally produced agricultural products?

### **Market attendance questions**

- How often do you shop at this market? (Either a specific number or categories)
- What market advertising, if any, influences your attendance at this market?
- How did you find out about the market? (Include an "old-timer" category to separate out those who have shopped at the market for more than 2 years.)
- How long have you shopped at this market? (Include an "old-timer" category to separate out those who have shopped at the market for more than 2 years.)
- How did you travel to the market?
- How long have you shopped here?
- What other area markets have you shopped this season (select all that apply)?
- What area markets did you shop last season (select all that apply)?
- How would different hours affect your market attendance?
- How would a different day affect your market attendance?
- How would a different location affect your market attendance?

### **Miscellaneous**

- What do you prefer - answering a written questionnaire or using DOTS (this technique) to answer questions?
- When you have a choice between organic and non-organic produce at the farmers' market, which do you choose?
- This year, have you encouraged anyone to shop at this farmers' market? If YES, what was your one main selling point?

## Farmers Market Survey

Following questions adapted from: Govindasamy et al., (1998)

1. Did you visit any farmers' markets in 2012?  
 Yes  No
2. Have you visited any farmers' markets in the past five years?  
 Yes  No **IF NO, STOP AND RETURN SURVEY**
3. If you did not shop at any farmers' markets in 2012, please tell us why not:
  - a. \_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_
4. In the past five years, has the consumption of fresh fruits and/or vegetables in your household:

<i>Fruits</i>	<i>Vegetables</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Increased	<input type="checkbox"/> Increased
<input type="checkbox"/> Decreased	<input type="checkbox"/> Decreased
<input type="checkbox"/> Stayed the same	<input type="checkbox"/> Stayed the same
5. Is your family consuming a wider variety of fruits and vegetables compared to 5 years ago?

<i>Fruits</i>	<i>Vegetables</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> No
6. Did your farmers' market offer organically grown produce?  
 Yes  No
7. How often do you choose organic fruits and vegetables for consumption?  
 Never  Seldom  Usually  Always
8. In 2012, how often did you go to a farmers' market?

<input type="checkbox"/> Once a week	<input type="checkbox"/> Once in two weeks	<input type="checkbox"/> Twice a week
<input type="checkbox"/> Once a month	<input type="checkbox"/> One time only	
9. In reference to your answer to question 8, how does the number of visits compare to previous years?  
 Increased  Decreased  Stayed the same
10. How many different farmers' markets did you go to in 2012?  
 1  2 to 4  5 to 9  10 or more
11. On average, how much did you spend each time you visited a farmers' market? \$ \_\_\_\_\_

12. How did you expect the produce at the farmers' markets to be different from that of other retail facilities?
- a. In terms of *quality*  
 Better  Worse  Same
  - b. In terms of *variety*  
 Better  Worse  Same
  - c. In terms of *prices*  
 Higher  Lower  Same

13. Where and in what amounts did you purchase or obtain your fruits and vegetables during the 2012 farmers' market season?

	<i>All</i>	<i>Most</i>	<i>Some</i>	<i>None</i>
Farmers Markets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pick your own	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Roadside stands	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Direct farm markets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supermarkets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Friend's garden	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Own garden	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (specify)				
<u>    </u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

14. Do the availability and quality of fresh produce affect where you do most of your food shopping?  
 Yes  No

15. Do you care where the fresh produce you buy was grown?  
 Yes  No

16. How do you use the produce purchased from farmers' markets? Please circle all that apply.
- Fresh consumption       Preserving       Other
  - Canning       Freezing      \_\_\_\_\_

17. Do you intend to visit a farmers' market in 2012?  
 Yes  No  Undecided

18. How did you find out about the farmers' market(s) you shop at?
- Roadside signs       Newspaper
  - Passing by       Magazine
  - Word of mouth       Flyers
  - Radio       Television
  - Internet       Other (specify)
- \_\_\_\_\_

19. How would you rate the following farmers' market characteristics? Please write the appropriate number in the blanks for each characteristic. Please use the following rating:

**5= Excellent 4= Very good 3= Good 2= Fair 1= Poor**

- |                             |                             |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ___ Quality of products     | ___ Variety of products     |
| ___ Appearance of facility  | ___ Cleanliness of facility |
| ___ Convenience of location | ___ Parking                 |
| ___ Employee attitude       | ___ Prices                  |
| ___ Other (specify)         |                             |

20. When deciding where to purchase produce, which do you consider most important?

- Convenience  Price  
 Quality  Freshness

21. Please indicate the commodities you buy most frequently from farmers' markets in a 1, 2, 3, ... order (with 1 being bought most frequently).

- | <i><b>Fruits</b></i> | <i><b>Vegetables</b></i> | <i><b>Value added products</b></i> |
|----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ___ Apples           | ___ Broccoli             | ___ Baked goods                    |
| ___ Blueberries      | ___ Carrots              | ___ Dried fruits                   |
| ___ Melons           | ___ Peppers              | ___ Juices                         |
| ___ Peaches          | ___ Snap beans           | ___ Flowers                        |
| ___ Strawberries     | ___ Sweet corn           | ___ Herbal products                |
| ___ Watermelon       | ___ Tomatoes             | ___ Jams, jellies, preserves       |
| ___ Other (specify)  | ___ Other (specify)      | ___ Other (specify)                |

***HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS?***

22. Freshness and direct contact with farmers are the main factors that drive people to farmers' markets.

- Agree  Neutral  Disagree

23. Farmers' markets help support local agriculture.

- Agree  Neutral  Disagree

24. Farmers' markets boost local economies by attracting customers to downtown areas.

- Agree  Neutral  Disagree

***YOUR ANSWERS TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WILL HELP US INTERPRET THE RESULTS OF THIS SURVEY AND WILL BE KEPT STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL***

25. Please indicate your age

- Less than 20  21-35  
 36-50  51-65  
 Over 65

26. Please indicate your gender.

- Male  Female

27. Regarding your household,  
a. Number of adults  
b. Number of children under 18
28. Please name the county in which you currently live
29. Are you the primary shopper of food in your household?  
 Yes  No
30. Are you vegetarian or semi-vegetarian?  
 Yes  No
31. Do you consider your neighborhood  
 Urban  Suburban  Rural
32. Please indicate the highest level of education you have achieved.  
 Grade school  High school  Some college  
 Undergraduate  Some graduate school  Graduate
33. Please indicate your ethnicity:  
 African American  Caucasian  
 Asian /Pacific Islander  Hispanic  
 American Indian  Other (please specify)
- 
34. In what range does your household annual income fall?  
 Less than \$20,000  \$60,000-\$79,999  
 \$20,000-\$39,999  \$80,000-\$99,999  
 \$40,000-\$59,999  \$100,000 or more

Question	Response Option
What is the reason for your trip to the Farmers Market today? CHECK ALL THAT APPLY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Purchase fruits and vegetables</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Purchase baked goods</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Purchase crafts</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Socialize and look around</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Support local farmers</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Other</li> </ul>
How often do you visit this Farmers Market?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Every week</li> <li><input type="radio"/> 1-2 times per month</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Less than 5 times per month</li> <li><input type="radio"/> This is my first time</li> </ul>
When did you start coming to this Farmers Market?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> 3 years ago or more</li> <li><input type="radio"/> 2 years ago</li> <li><input type="radio"/> 1 year ago</li> <li><input type="radio"/> This is my first season</li> </ul>
How do you rate the following aspects of this market? CHECK ALL THAT APPLY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Variety of products</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Price of products</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Quality of products</li> </ul>
Convenience of location parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Very good</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Good</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Poor</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Very poor</li> </ul>
What feature about the Farmers Market produce is most important to you?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Price</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Taste</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Personal health</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Ecologically/organically grown</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Product freshness</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Supporting local growers/economy</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Other</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Multiple answers to one or more responses above</li> </ul>
How far do you travel to get to this Farmers Market?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Less than one mile</li> <li><input type="radio"/> 1-5 miles</li> <li><input type="radio"/> 6-10 miles</li> <li><input type="radio"/> 11-20 miles</li> <li><input type="radio"/> More than 20 miles</li> </ul>
How did you get to this Farmers Market?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Car</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Bus</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Walked</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Bicycled</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Other</li> </ul>
On a typical day do you consume fruits or vegetables five or more times per day?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Yes</li> <li><input type="radio"/> No</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Don't Know</li> </ul>

<p>How much money do you usually spend at the Farmers Market?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> \$0 to \$5</li> <li><input type="radio"/> \$5 to \$10</li> <li><input type="radio"/> \$10 to \$20</li> <li><input type="radio"/> More than \$20</li> </ul>
<p>As a result of shopping at this Farmers Market, have you been eating more fruits and/or vegetables than before you started to shop here?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Yes, a little more fruits and vegetables</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Yes, a lot more fruits and vegetables</li> <li><input type="radio"/> No, about the same amount of fruits and vegetables</li> <li><input type="radio"/> No, less fruits and vegetables</li> <li><input type="radio"/> This my first time at this market</li> </ul>
<p>What types of information would you be interested in seeing at the Farmers Market? CHECK ALL THAT APPLY</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Recipes that use fresh fruits and vegetables at the market</li> <li><input type="radio"/> General health and wellness information</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Advice about foods and diet from a dietician or health educator</li> </ul>
<p>How is your general health?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Excellent</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Very good</li> </ul>



## **E. Food Price Comparisons**

Food price comparison activities can use the Food Price Comparison Form found in this document. Future evaluation efforts should review the food price comparison activities conducted by Claro (2011) to obtain an excellent source of knowledge regarding the implementation of price comparison reviews. Price reviewers should strive to examine as large a sample as possible (over as large a time frame as feasible) to get a good sampling of the basic foods supplied by all markets. Reviewers may want to gather prices from a range of vendors and their individual markets in order to obtain an average market price for each item. Special attention should focus on operational definitions of organic and using appropriate price/weight (volume) comparisons.

## **F. Review of Archival Data: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Survey (YRBSS) and Minnesota Student Survey (MNSS)**

### *Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS)*

The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is a state-based system of health surveys that collects information on health risk behaviors, preventive health practices, and health care access primarily related to chronic disease and injury. The BRFSS questionnaire is designed by a working group of state coordinators and CDC staff and is administered annually through a random-digit-dialed telephone survey of the U.S. adult (18 and over) non-institutionalized population. The survey includes core questions that are asked by all participating states in a given year, optional modules that a state may use in their survey and state-specific questions. Furthermore core modules consist of fixed-core questions and a rotating core.

While fixed core BRFSS items include questions about height and weight information that allows calculation of indices of obesity such as *body mass index* (BMI), as well as leisure time exercise in the past 30 days. Some rotating core modules are only used biannually and include specific questions about weekly levels of moderate and vigorous physical activity and daily consumption of fruits and vegetables.

While the 2008 BRFSS database contained responses from 4,187 Minnesotans, only a handful (less than 100) participants reported being from one of the 7 SHIP counties. While nationally available BRFSS data provide fairly accurate and representative information on the state as a whole, only estimates of behavioral risk factors (as shown in the Morbidity and Mortality MN County Tables published by the MDH) are available. These estimates were derived using a synthetic estimation method which operates by adjusting statewide BRFSS percentages according to the age and gender distributions of adults in the county for which estimates are being made.

### *Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Survey (YRBSS)*

Priority health-risk behaviors including tobacco use, unhealthy dietary habits, physical inactivity and the prevalence of obesity among youth and young adults is monitored by the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS). The YRBSS includes a national school-based survey conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and state, territorial, tribal, and local surveys conducted by state, territorial, and local education and health agencies and tribal governments.

### *Minnesota Student Survey (MNSS)*

The nationally available YRBSS datasets do not include individual state and county codes. For this reason, the description of behavioral health risk in youth and young adults for individual MN counties should be based on

the 2013 Minnesota Student Survey (MNSS). In the past this survey has been completed by upwards of 90% of public operating school districts. Similar to the YRBSS, the Minnesota Student Survey encompasses a number of health risk behaviors including tobacco use, diet, fruit and vegetable intake, physical activity and prevalence of obesity and is administered to public school students in Grades 6, 9, and 12. Future evaluative efforts should involve contacting MNSS Survey administrators to obtain a copy of the raw dataset for further analysis.

### **G. Review of NAICS Code sales data for Farmers Markets**

North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) is the standard used by Federal statistical agencies in classifying business establishments for the purpose of collecting, analyzing, and publishing statistical data related to the U.S. business economy. This official U.S. Government Web site:

<http://www.census.gov/eos/www/naics/> provides the latest information on plans for NAICS revisions, as well as access to various NAICS reference files and tools. The official 2012 U.S. NAICS Manual includes definitions for each industry, background information, tables showing changes between 2007 and 2012, and a comprehensive index. For farmers markets, the NAICS code 445230 is the one related to establishments primarily engaged in retailing fresh fruits and vegetables. County level data should be available for tracking trends over time. NAICS code data are also one of the primary data tools used by IMPLAN (Impact Analysis for Planning) economic modeling.

### **H. Comparative Community Studies**

Another potentially fruitful avenue of analysis could include comparing health-related data points between communities (in same county or regional area) with and without Farmers Markets. Data would include BRFSS, MNSS and other locally conducted surveys. And while there are a multitude of extraneous variables that undeniably influence the health of each community (regardless of Farmers Market presence), an exploration of differences is worthwhile none-the-less. Because pairing quantitative outcomes with additional qualitative endeavors that seek to explore the relative nature of communities with and without such markets could be instructional. Identifying those community characteristics necessary to bring a market to fruition may help nascent markets grow to their full potential if those factors are more clearly understood. Cross community comparisons also helps those communities in the analysis to benchmark themselves to indicators outside of themselves.

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