



MEASURING MICHIGAN FARMERS MARKETS MARKET PROGRAMS INVENTORY

HOW TO COLLECT YOUR DATA

1. How to Collect Your Data

Before you start collecting data on the programs held at your market, you will need to decide what program information you would like to collect and how you are going to record it. Revisit the goals you've set for your market programming and the outcomes you hope to achieve to help you decide what information you'd like to collect. Be sure the metrics you decide on will also allow you to measure the impact of your market programming.

FOR EXAMPLE:

if your **goal is educational**, you could **measure the materials or samples distributed** or if you are **targeting youth**, you may want to **record the number of kids who participated**.

Other examples of data to collect include the type of activity held, the target population of the activity, the number of community partners supporting the activity, and participation numbers if applicable.

2. Prepare for data collection

The next step to prepare for data collection will be to decide how you are going to record the chosen information for each market program or event. One way would be to record the data as part of your daily [Market Day Report](#). Additionally, you will need to ensure you have designated a person at the market who will be responsible for recording each piece of information to collect. For example, if you are tracking the number of total participants, you will want to establish who will be responsible for counting participants and how they will be counted. Alternatively, if you are looking to measure the number of materials or samples distributed, you can simply subtract the number remaining at the end of the event from the number you started with to prevent the need from tallying every material or sample given out during the market day.

3. Record Your Data!

During each market program or event, record the information you've decided to collect.

HOW TO STORE, AGGREGATE, AND ANALYZE YOUR DATA

Store your data

If you used paper to collect your market programs data, we recommend transitioning the data to an electronic file after each market program or event as part of your market close-out activities as paper record logs are susceptible to being lost, damaged, or accidentally discarded. An Excel or Google Spreadsheet works well for storing this data. If you used an online form such as Google Form to collect market program information from a tablet or smartphone at the market, then your data should already be entered into an electronic file!

Try using [MIFMA's Data Entry Excel Template](#) for data storage.

Aggregate your data

At the end of the season, consider calculating averages and/or totals for each piece of applicable data you collected. Some examples of calculations to perform include the total number of activities hosted, the total number of youth-specific events, the total number of participants, the total number of materials given out, or the totals and/or percentages of each type of activity held. Using an Excel spreadsheet can help make these calculations easier. Examples of these types of calculations are pre-populated in [MIFMA's Data Entry Excel Template](#).

Analyze the data

Spend some time analyzing your data to determine if you've made progress toward goals established for your market programming such as the number of market programs held, market shoppers reached, or community partners who supported your activities. **It may also be helpful to compare your data to other metrics to identify key trends.** For example, did you see an increase in visitor counts and/or vendor sales on days with market events? Did hosting activities targeting youth bring in additional kids to your market? Creating graphs and/or charts of your data can also be helpful when identifying trends.

Use the data you've analyzed to inform decisions and improve your market programming for the next season. Does your data tell you what types of programs were most successful and should be repeated in the future? Did the impact seen meet your goal(s) or is additional outreach needed to bring in your target audience? Using your data to continuously improve your market programming ensures that the time and resources invested in programming results in the intended impact on your market.

HOW TO PRESENT YOUR FINDINGS

Report your findings

Consider publishing your data in a report to share with a variety of audiences. Think about what information your sponsoring organization, market sponsors, vendors, market shoppers, etc. might like to know, and build your report based on the audience you plan to share it with.

Try using [MIFMA's report and/or infographic templates!](#)

Share your data!

Share your report and/or infographics with your target audience and congratulate yourself on a job well done!