



MEASURING MICHIGAN FARMERS MARKETS VENDOR PROFILES



HOW TO COLLECT YOUR DATA

1. Determine what data to collect

Vendor profiles provide data about the products sold at your market and the individuals involved in growing and producing those products as it relates to the economic, ecological, intellectual, and social aspects of the creation and marketing of goods. Before you begin building your vendor profiles, take a moment to consider what information about your market's impact would be of greatest interest to you and your target audience(s).

Examples of metrics you can report from vendor profiles:

- Farmland kept in production.
- Number of people employed by your vendors.
- Number of women-owned businesses at the market.

Do these metrics reflect your market's mission or vision, do they align with the values of your market or the values of your target audience(s), and would they be something you would be interested in being able to report for your market? If you're interested in collecting vendor demographic data or other diversity, equity, and inclusion-related metrics, you might consider consulting the Farmers Market Coalition's [Anti-Racist Farmers Market Toolkit](#).



Vendor profiles are an opportunity to collect data from vendors outside of the busy market environment.



Try not to ask vendors for data you can get elsewhere. For example, if vendors provide you with the address of their farm, then you do not also need to ask them the distance they travel to the market as this can be calculated from their address.

Be conscientious about not collecting more data than you will analyze and use to inform your market. **Collecting more data than you will use will increase the number of questions you will ask of your vendors and is a waste of time to collect and record.** You may want to collect some information every year to track how it changes and make comparisons, other information you may only need to collect every 3-5 years, or even just once if you do not expect it to change as frequently.

2. Create your questions

Once you've decided on the data you'd like to collect from your vendors, it's time to draft your questions. Below is a list of questions we recommend asking:

FOR ALL VENDORS

Identify the primary type of product that you will sell at this market this year, based on greatest revenue (select one):

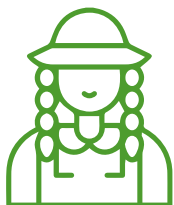
- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Produce | <input type="radio"/> Value-added |
| <input type="radio"/> Meat & seafood | <input type="radio"/> Prepared food |
| <input type="radio"/> Dairy | <input type="radio"/> Crafts/art/services |
| <input type="radio"/> Eggs | <input type="radio"/> Alcohol |
| <input type="radio"/> Plants & flowers | <input type="radio"/> Other |



Including yourself, how many people worked for your business either seasonally or year-round?



Please include family workers (paid and unpaid), hired production or office workers, people hired to sell at markets, contract or custom hire farm labor, and paid interns or apprentices.



Is your business women-owned?

Select 'yes' if 51% or more of your business is women-owned.

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

Is the owner of the farm a military veteran?

Select 'yes' if 51% or more of your business is veteran-owned.

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

Which of the following best describes the primary owner of your business? Ownership refers to the equity, interest, or stock of the business. **Select all that apply:**



- ☐ White (not Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino)
- ☐ Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino
- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
- ☐ Asian or Asian American
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- ☐ Multi-Racial
- ☐ Prefer not to answer



Is the primary owner of your business younger than 35 years of age? Ownership refers to the equity, interest, or stock of the business.

Select 'yes' if 51% or more of your business is owned by someone younger than 35 years of age.

☐ Yes ☐ No

Provide the physical address of your primary point of production. Please include the street address, city, state, and zip code.

FOR FARM VENDORS

Are you a farm vendor? Answer yes only if you grow the items you sell at the market.

☐ Yes ☐ No

How many acres does your farm business:

_____ acres owned.

_____ acres leased.

How many years has the primary owner/operator of your farm been farming?

_____ years.



How many acres do you cultivate, or use for grazing?

_____ acres.



Does your farm or business hold Organic Certification (or is the farm in the 3-year transition process)?

☐ Yes ☐ No



Asking your vendors these few questions can give you a wide variety of metrics to report on later. Below are a few examples:

| IF YOU ASKED... | YOU CAN REPORT ON |
|---|--|
| How many acres does your farm cultivate or use for grazing? |  Farmers markets preserve farmland. X acres of farmland were kept in production by X market. |
| Is your business women-owned? |  Farmers markets offer opportunities to all members of the community. X% of vendors at X market are women-owned businesses and farms. |
| Including yourself, how many people worked for your business either seasonally or year-round? |  Farmers markets create new employment opportunities. X employees are supported by our X market's vendors. |

3. Survey your vendors

After you've drafted your questions, you're ready to conduct your survey to create each vendor profile. Surveys can be completed at any point in the season, though **we recommend including your survey questions in your vendor applications at the start of the season.** Surveying this way makes for a much easier and more organized process.

Whenever you survey your vendors, be sure to include an explanation of why you are collecting this data and how you plan to use it. **Your farmers and vendors will be more likely to cooperate with data collection efforts if they understand why you are collecting the data and how it will be used.** Communicate with your farmers and vendors before the start of the market season to explain how data from the vendor profiles will help you better run the market and show the market's impact on the community.



HOW TO STORE, AGGREGATE, AND ANALYZE YOUR DATA

Store your data

If your market used paper surveys to collect data from vendors, we recommend transitioning the data to an electronic file shortly after the surveys are completed. **An Excel or Google Spreadsheet works well for storing this data.** Paper record logs are susceptible to being lost, damaged, or accidentally discarded. **Google Forms, Survey Monkey, and Qualtrics** are all online survey software programs that can be used. Electronic vendor applications in market management software programs can also be used to collect and store vendor profile information.

Aggregate your data

At the end of the season, aggregate the **data collected from vendors by calculating totals or percentages where appropriate.** Using an Excel spreadsheet can help make these calculations easier. Examples of these calculations are pre-populated in [MIFMA's Data Entry Excel Template](#).

Analyze the data

Sort your data to help recognize key trends. For example, how many women-owned businesses does your market support? How many acres of farmland are kept in production by your vendors? etc. If you've collected vendor profiles previously, compare the data to previous years to identify trends.



Analyze these trends to determine if you've made progress toward goals set by your market. For example, if your goal was to support new farmers, has the percentage of farmers at your market with less than 10 years of farming experience increased? Creating graphs and/or charts of your data can be helpful when identifying trends.

Try using [MIFMA's Data Entry Template](#)!

If you used an online survey, then your data should already be entered into an electronic file.



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](#) to share your vendor profile data.

Share your data!

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



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