

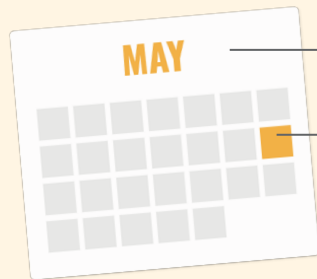
Census of MI Farmers Markets

Locations & Infrastructure

This document is part of the MI Farmers Market Census series. More available at mifma.org/census



When do Michigan Farmers Markets Operate?



Most popular months
May - October

Most popular day
Saturday

Peak season
June - October

Daily Foot Traffic

337
median daily
visitor count

75%
have 1,000 or
fewer visitors

Winter Season

In winter months, the number of markets open hovers around 14%. Large markets are most likely to be open during the winter: half (56%) of them are open in all four quarters of the year. And while they account for only 7% of markets statewide, they make up 38% of markets open in winter months.

Large Markets as a Share of...

Large markets (56+ vendors)

All other markets

...all Michigan markets

7%

93%

...those open in winter

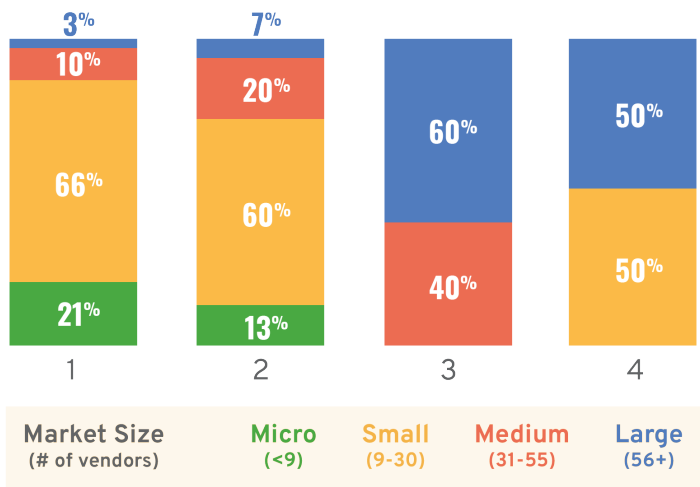
38%

62%

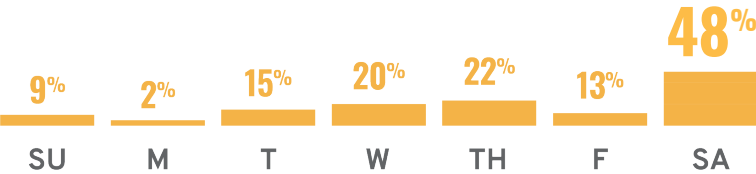
Days Per Week

Most markets (80%) operate one day per week. Larger markets are most likely to occur multiple days per week.

Number of Operating Days Per Week by Market Size



Percent of Markets Open by Day



Where Can You Find Michigan Markets?

Why Location Matters



As with any business, location matters! Visibility, accessibility, and amenities are key considerations. Many markets are classified as temporary-use, are located on property they do not own, and/or are repurposing a space (such as a shopping mall). This can cause instability year-over-year and impact markets negatively, particularly if they have to move locations.

Market operators must be able to articulate the advantages of hosting a market in these places, and must be able to advocate for market growth and expansion with key decision-makers. Advocacy organizations have a role to play in promoting market visibility and allowance of markets in these places. Specifically, they might work closely with local government associations or local chambers of commerce to articulate the benefits and best practices of farmers markets.

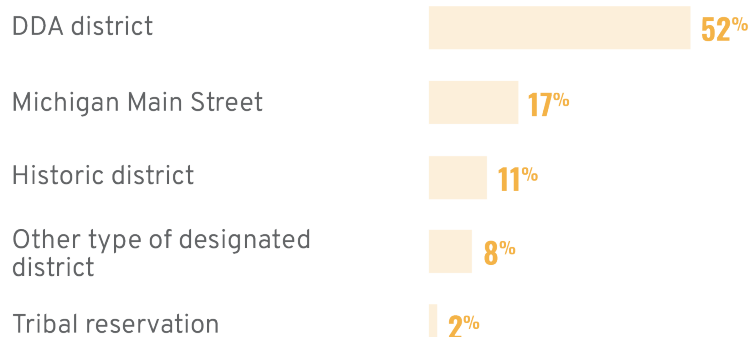
Visit www.mifma.org and click “Find a Market” to find one of Michigan’s 250+ markets near you!

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

The Census asked where markets operated in 2019. This impacts not only where and how people shop, but also how markets are situated in their communities.

Most markets (84%) are located in a downtown area, including some designated as Downtown Development Authority (DDA)¹ districts, Michigan Main Street² districts, or historic districts. The most common places for markets are in parking lots or parks. These results suggest that communities are likely to offer markets a central location, as they are integral to community and economic vitality.

Share of Markets Located in Designated Districts



PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

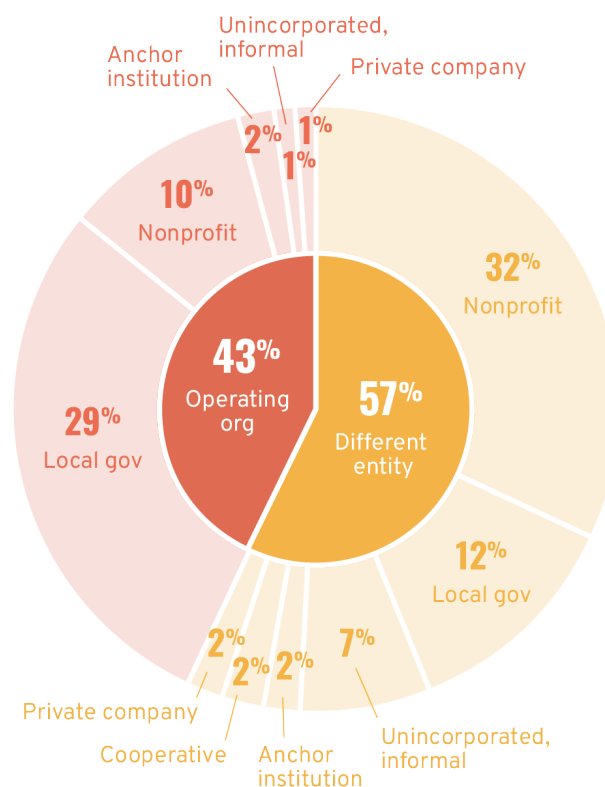
Because many farmers markets are temporary and pop-up in nature, it's important to consider the property ownership, relationships, and regulations that allow these events to happen. Notably, over half (57%) of Census markets operate on property owned by an entity other than the market itself. Local governments in particular play a large role in market location, as they own the space used by almost half (41%) of the markets in the state. This includes markets run by the municipality itself (29%) and those operated by others (12%).

The chart at right displays property ownership (in the middle ring) in relation to market ownership (in the outer ring). For any market operating on property it does not own, long-term stability hinges on permission being granted from property owners.

In most cases (63%), markets require explicit permission from the property owner to operate, and most of the time this permission is granted in a formal, written contract. However, as many as 16% of markets receive only verbal permission to operate at their locations. Two-thirds of markets (67%) did not have any fees associated with use of the property, while one-third had to pay.

Property Ownership

Middle: Property Owner is...
Outer: Market Operator is...

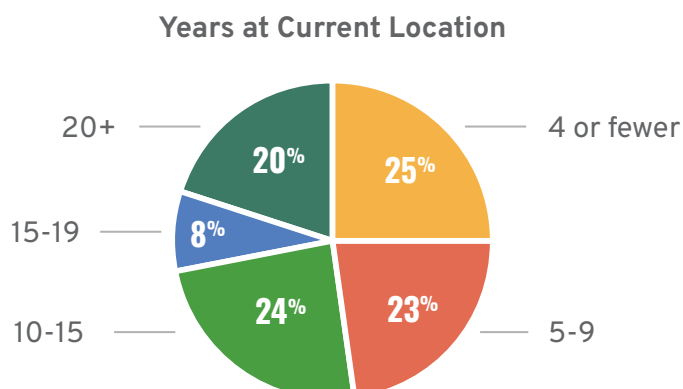


¹ To learn more about DDAs, visit <https://www.michiganbusiness.org/49478e/globalassets/documents/reports/fact-sheets/downtowndevelopmentauthority.pdf>

² To learn more about Michigan Main Street, visit <https://www.miplace.org/programs/michigan-main-street/>

LONGEVITY

Half of markets (48%) have been in their current locations for less than a decade.

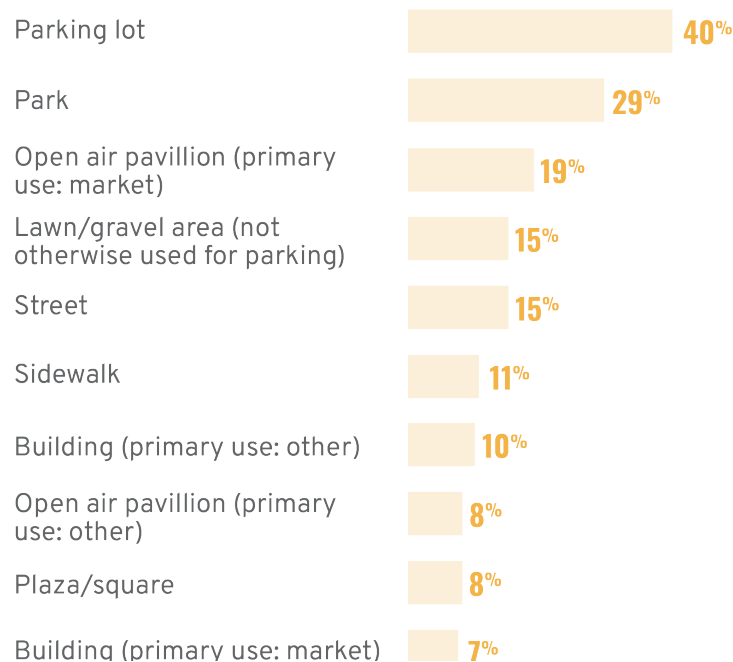


What Infrastructure do Michigan Markets Have?

BACKGROUND

Most Michigan farmers markets take place outside – in parking lots, in parks, on lawns, in streets and on sidewalks, or in open air pavilions. These types of locations may not have the amenities markets need to be fully accessible to customers and vendors, whether restrooms, water, electricity, shade, seating, or parking (bike or car). Still, many markets figure out (at least temporary) ways to meet these needs to maximize the safety, comfort, and convenience for their customers and vendors. Additionally, certain infrastructure is crucial for market staff and vendors to ensure food safety (e.g., hand washing, ware washing); that certain vendors, such as those needing to power freezers for perishables, can be accommodated; and that programming, such as cooking demos, can safely occur. Yet, these come with either up front capital investments, or ongoing operating costs, particularly for the temporary facilities such as porta potty rental.

Markets Are Located in a...



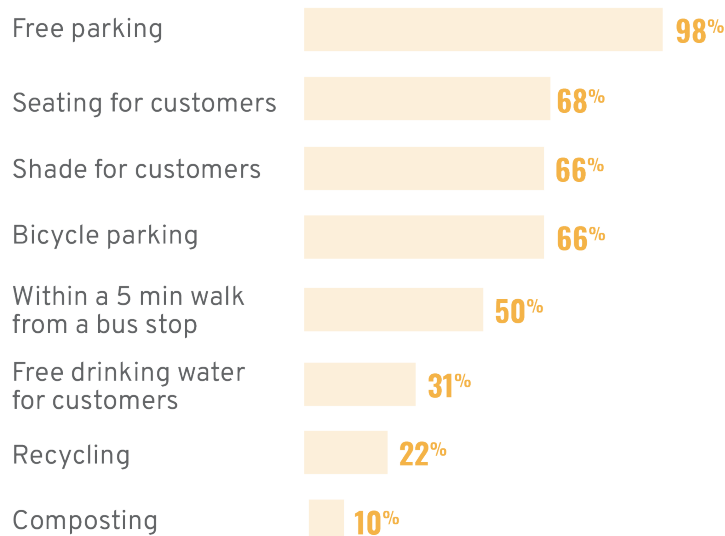
RESTROOM ACCESS

Around 60% of markets have permanent restrooms for staff, customers, and vendors. Another 20% have temporary facilities available. Where temporary facilities are available, they most commonly have hand sanitizer only and do not have access to soap and water.

WATER & ELECTRICITY

Around 50% of market locations have electricity, though it is often available to only a limited number of vendors. Nearly one third (29%) of market locations do not offer access to water for their vendors.

Share of Markets with Other Amenities



Getting to Market

Customers Who Arrive by...

