

# ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL BENEFITS ASSESSMENT

## FINAL REPORT

### Haney Farmers Market

Maple Ridge, British Columbia

A collaborative project of  
British Columbia Association of Farmers' Markets  
and  
School of Environmental Planning,  
University of Northern British Columbia



BC ASSOCIATION OF  
FARMERS' MARKETS



UNIVERSITY OF  
NORTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA

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Canada



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The demand for locally produced fresh, nutritious food by local consumers has grown rapidly over the past ten years. So too has the number of farmers' markets. As the most visible and accessible component of our local food systems, farmers' markets have strengthened their role as providing unique places for local producers and local consumers to connect. Although this role of farmers' markets within local food systems is well recognised, it is important to know not only what markets contribute to local areas but also to know how much they contribute.

This final report presents the findings from the assessment completed for the Haney Farmers Market on June 16, 2012. It includes results of a province-wide assessment of BC's farmers' markets and incorporates some results from a national study of farmers' markets completed in 2008<sup>i</sup>.

The provincial project was completed by the BC Association of Farmers' Markets, in collaboration with Dr. David Connell of the University of Northern British Columbia. The purpose of the provincial study was to measure the community and economic benefits of farmers' markets across British Columbia in order to quantify the significant contributions of farmers' markets and to increase their visibility both locally and provincially. This year's project builds upon the success of a similar project completed in 2006. Six years later, by using similar methods we will be to assess changes that have taken place during this time. In total, 33 assessments were completed across the province in 2012.

Highlights of results for the Haney Farmers Market:

- **The estimated economic benefit of the Haney Farmers Market on the local economy is approximately \$1.6 million annually**
- **The estimated number of market customers on assessment day: 726 customers**
- **Over 90 market visitors participated in the study**
- **Average customer spending per visit: \$25.89**
- **Sixty-seven percent of the survey respondents visit the market either 'regularly' (almost weekly) or 'frequently' (2-3 times per month)**

The Haney Farmer's Market has been a feature of downtown Maple Ridge, BC, since 2005. It was started as a way to foster community connections, as part of an initiative to build healthy community<sup>ii</sup>.

The number of shoppers attending the Haney Farmers Market is lower when compared to other markets in BC. Average spending per customer is lower at Haney than at other markets in BC and Canada, and much lower when compared to other markets of a similar size (based on number of vendors). Nevertheless, people in Maple Ridge, including market organizers and founders, attach value to having an urban market, aside from the economic benefit.

The Haney Farmers Market has a larger proportion of customers attending the market ‘frequently’ (2-3x/month) or ‘regularly’ (almost weekly), than the average for BC markets, (although may see fewer first-time visitors<sup>iii</sup>). The largest proportion of market customers (34%) have been coming to the market for five years or more.

Market organizers were curious to know how many children of which ages are coming to the market. The Haney Farmers’ Market includes various features to appeal to children and families, such as a craft area, play area, large chess set, and live music. Knowing the ages of children attending the market could inform decisions about the sorts of activities and features to include. More than half of farmers market visitors on the day of the assessment reported they had no children (although this could reflect that their children are now adults). Of the 40 children that were reported in the survey as attending the market by their parents, grandparents, or other guardians, 11 were five years old or younger, 7 were six to eight years old, 13 were nine to twelve years old, and 9 were teenagers. Thus, there is a roughly even distribution of the ages of children attending the market.

The Haney Farmers Market takes place in downtown Maple Ridge, in Memorial Peace Park, bordered by the mall, athletic centre, and many local businesses. Most market customers (78.5%) said they would also do shopping at neighbouring businesses before or after shopping at the market, spending an average of \$25.28. There also seems to be substantial foot traffic from people passing through from the mall and athletic centre on one side to other downtown businesses on the other side of the market, and there could be more opportunity to draw these passers-by in and encourage them to shop at the market.

As part of their work to draw people to the market and build community relationships and a sense of place, Haney Market plans many special themed market days, such as Earth Day, a Father’s Day barbecue, Doggie Day, and World Food Day. On the date of the 2012 market assessment, the special event was a bike-to-the-market day, with cyclists receiving a \$5 voucher to spend at the market. A few steadfast customers did bike to the market in the rain, and their presence highlighted the need perhaps for sheltered bike racks, as customers were locking their bikes to the gazebo rather than to nearby unsheltered bike racks.

In summary, while the Haney Farmers Market may not be the most highly-attended or economically-lucrative market in BC, this market keeps a base of loyal, long-time, frequent customers and adds value with special events and family appeal.



*Photo: Debbie Schwartz*

## DESCRIPTION OF MARKET

### Haney Farmers Market

Market Website: [www.haneyfarmersmarket.org](http://www.haneyfarmersmarket.org)

<http://www.bcfarmersmarket.org/markets/marketdetails.asp?marketID=97>

A vibrant outdoor Saturday market open from Mothers Day to Halloween selling fresh farm produce and fruit, eggs, salmon, beef, lamb, pork, sausage, preserves, jams, jellies, home baking, artisanal crafts, creams, lotions, fine art and fibre art. Children's crafts, a giant chess set and lively entertainment will encourage you to stay awhile. Enjoy a Sizzlin' Smokey Dog made from beef grown locally, buns made nearby and vegetables from the growers at the market.

- Availability:** Open from Mothers Day, May 12 to October 27,  
Nov 3 and Dec 1  
Sat 9:00am to 2:00pm (rain or shine)
- # Vendors:** Approximately 60 vendors
- Location:** Memorial Peace Park, on 224th Street between Lougheed  
Highway and Dewdney Trunk Road  
Nov 3 and Dec 1 held indoors at St. Andrew's Haney United  
Church, Dewdney and 222 St.  
Maple Ridge, BC
- Contact Info:** Market Manager: Eileen Dwillies  
Phone: 604-467-7433  
Email: [hfminfo@haneyfarmersmarket.org](mailto:hfminfo@haneyfarmersmarket.org)



*Photo: Alexandra Tudose*

## RESEARCH METHOD

The assessment of individual markets in BC is organised around two sets of activities: rapid market assessment and market surveys. These are the same methods used for the BC study in 2006.

### 1) Rapid Market Assessment:

The Rapid Market Assessment (RMA) technique was developed by researchers at Oregon State University for studying farmers' markets. This method has been implemented successfully in markets throughout Oregon and Washington states. The RMA method consists of three parts: customer survey; crowd count; environmental observations. The environmental observations are optional for markets in this present study and so are not included in this report. A crowd count was not completed for this market as the market management team completed and provided their own crowd count on the day of the assessment.

- a) Flip-chart survey: The flip-chart survey method engaged consumers in friendly interaction through multiple-choice questions posted in large print on flip charts. This approach has a high response rate, thereby increasing validity and accuracy.

The set of questions used for the survey (Box 1) were developed in two parts. The first four questions were developed by the research team and will be asked at all farmers' markets participating in the project. Asking the same questions at all markets is necessary to complete the provincial analysis. Each participating market developed the fifth question to collect data that are relevant to making effective changes and improvements to the local market.

#### Box 1. Flip-chart survey questions

1. How often do you come to this farmers' market?
2. When did you start shopping at this market?
3. How much have you spent, or do you plan to spend, at the market today?
4. If you plan to do additional shopping or eating while in this area of town today, how much do you plan to spend?
5. Do you bring your children to the market, and if so, what are their ages?

## 2) Market surveys

The analysis of community benefits of farmers' markets involves more detailed surveys of market customers and local businesses.

- a) Customer surveys. A small sample of customers was asked to participate in a short interview. People were asked about where they shop, factors they consider when buying food, how long they spend at the market, and how they spend their time when at the market. Customers were also asked if they shop at other businesses on the same day that they visit the farmers' market. The small sample size means that the results cannot be generalised to all market customers. Nevertheless, the information collected expands upon the flip-chart survey information and lends further insights to market customers and the relation between the market and neighbouring businesses. Some of the customer survey data will be aggregated at the provincial level.
- b) Business surveys. Businesses located near the farmers' market were surveyed to assess the influence of the market on neighbouring businesses and to explore the nature of the relationship. The information collected from these surveys is specific to each local market and will lend insight to how relations might be further developed. The business information will also help to understand the relation between farmers' markets and businesses generally. Surveys were not completed at farmers' markets that did not have other businesses located nearby.

Together, the market assessment and the more detailed market surveys improve our understanding of what makes the Haney Farmers Market successful and how it contributes to the local area, in terms of both its economic and social benefits.

## RESULTS

This section reviews the results of the rapid market assessment, including the crowd count estimates and flip-chart surveys. The results for the one-on-one customer interviews and business interviews follow

### Rapid Market Assessment

The weather on the day of the assessment was cold with heavy rain. There were approximately 43 vendors present.

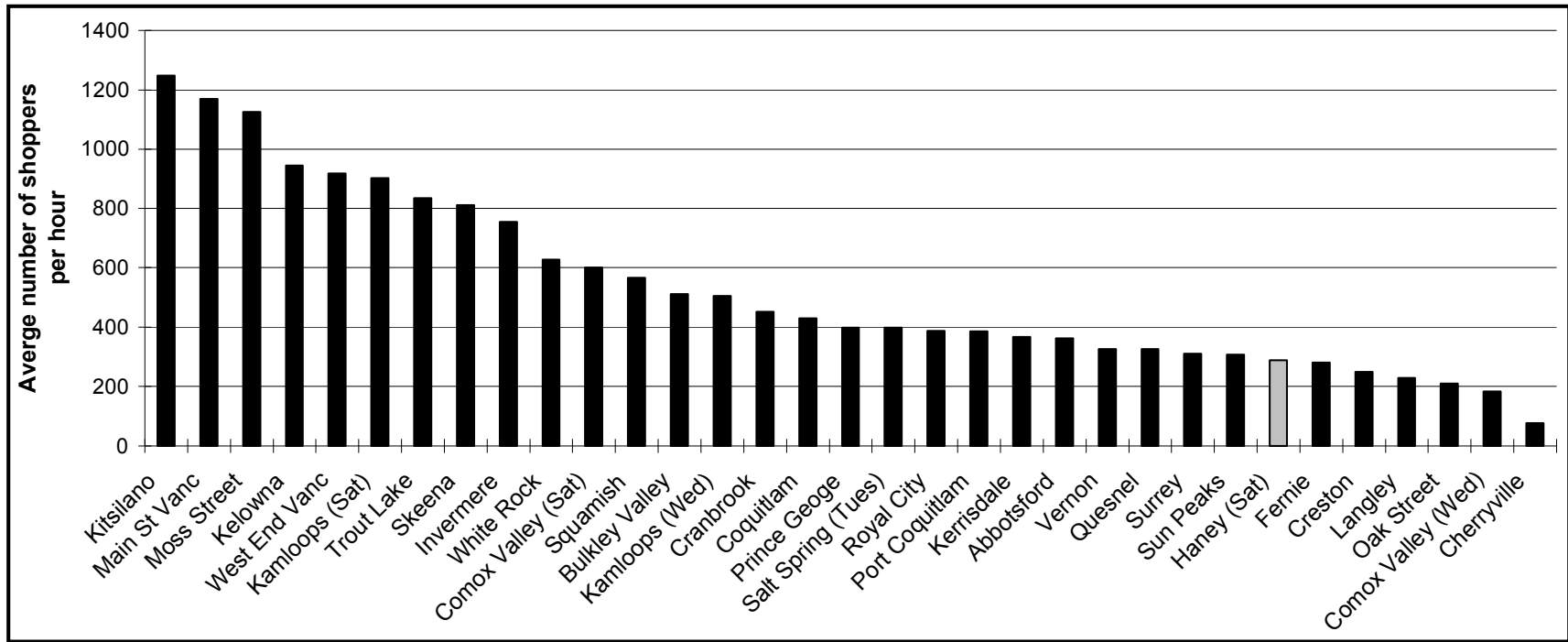
#### *Crowd count*

The total estimated number of people attending the Haney Farmers Market on June 16, 2012 was 726.

When asked, vendors at the market said market attendance was significantly slower for that time in the season, as compared with past years. Vendors and the market manager estimated that the market was approximately 60% slower than normal for this time of year due to extreme weather conditions, which included cold temperatures and heavy rain. For the analyses completed in this report, the estimated crowd count was revised to account for the lower-than-normal conditions on the day of the assessment.

As shown in Chart 1, the number of shoppers attending the Haney Farmers Market is lower when compared to other markets that we assessed in BC. The data are based on the average number of shoppers attending a market on an hourly basis (not on the total number of shoppers).

Chart 2. Number of shoppers at BC farmers' markets (average hourly crowd at peak of season)





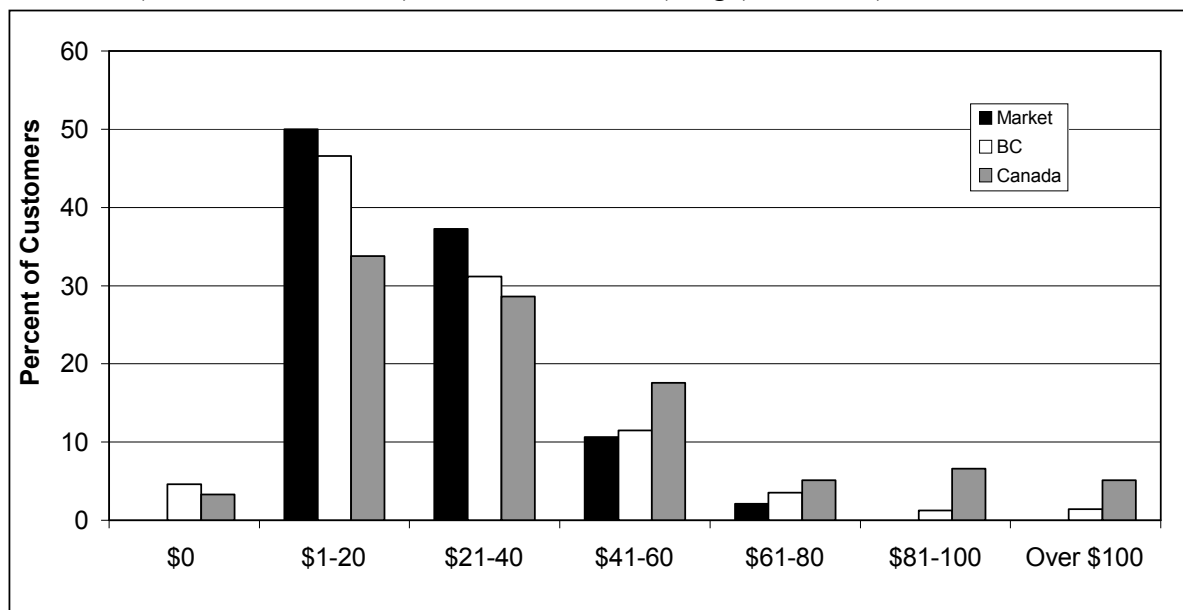
*Flip-chart survey*

Approximately 96 people responded to the dot survey, which is about 13% of the estimated crowd count. The following five charts show the results for each of the flip chart survey questions.

**Question 1. How much have you spent, or do you plan to spend, at the market today?**

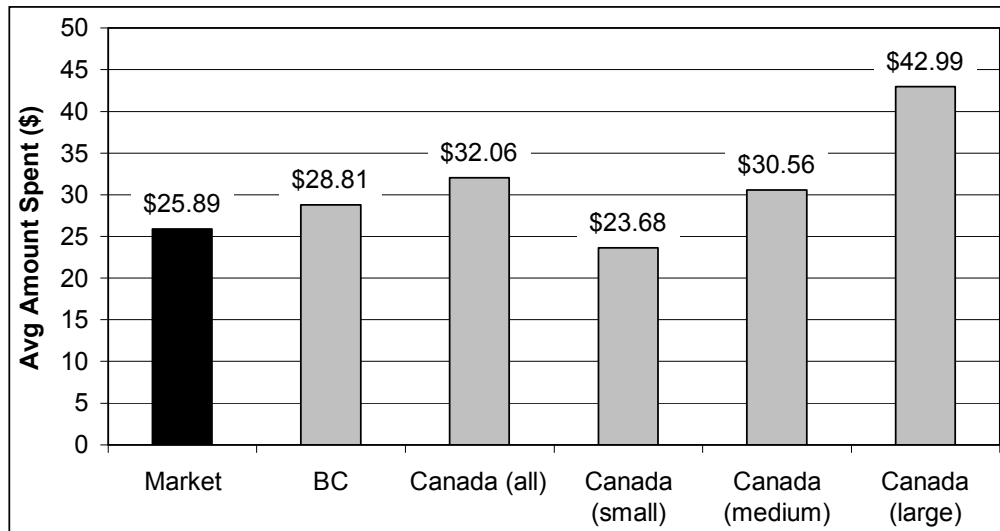
Overall, respondents spent an average<sup>iv</sup> of \$25.89 each on the day of the assessment. As shown in Chart 2, half of customers surveyed (50%) said they would spend over \$20 at the market that day.

Chart 2. How much have you spent, or do you plan to spend, at the market today? (Market: n=94; BC (all assessed markets): n=9,819; Canada (Large): n=1,013)



The results shown in Chart 3 (next page) illustrate how the Haney Farmers Market compares to the average amount spent by customers at all BC markets and at small (<20 vendors), medium (20-39 vendors), and large farmers' markets (40+ vendors) in Canada. As a large market, Haney Farmers Market sees customers spending less on average than customers at other BC markets, and substantially less than customers at other large markets nationally. Average spending at the Haney Market is more on par with the spending seen at a small farmers' market.

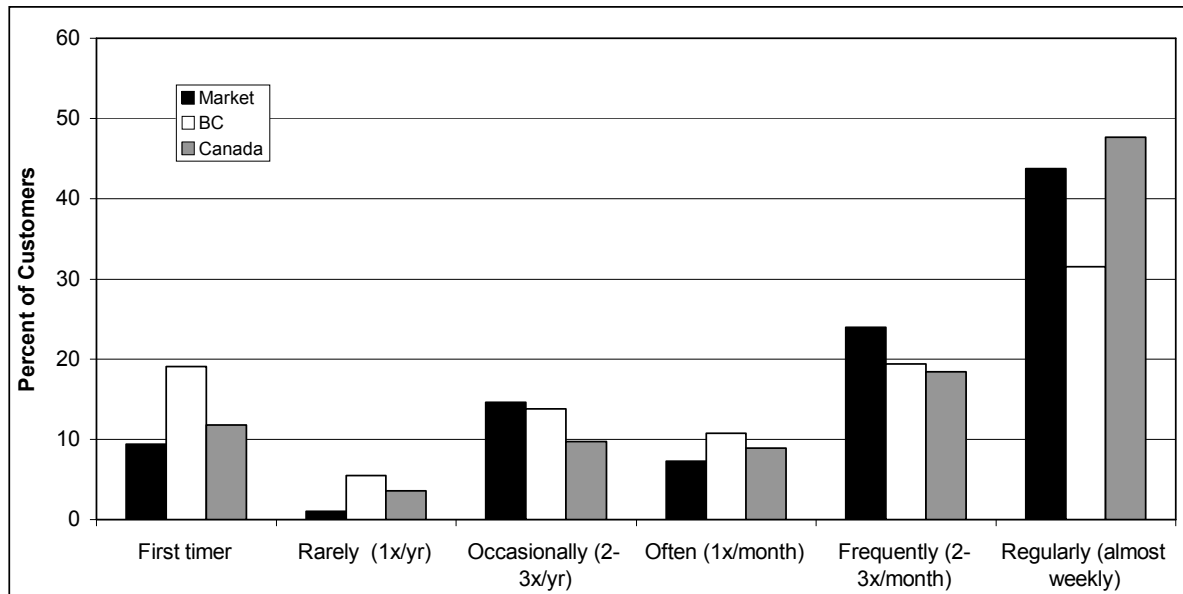
Chart 3. Average amount spent by market shoppers  
(Market: n=94; BC: n=9,819; Canada: n=3,167)



**Question 2. How often do you come to this farmers' market?**

As shown in Chart 4 (next page), the Haney Farmers Market has a high percentage (67.8%) of frequent and regular shoppers at the market. Almost half of customers (43.8%) shop regularly at the market. First-time visitors to the market accounted for 9.4% of respondents. The proportion of customers in each category of visit frequency is similar to the patterns seen provincially and at large markets nationally. The Haney Market has fewer first-time customers than the average in BC, but more customers that attend 'frequently' or 'regularly' than average in BC. Haney has a slightly smaller proportion of customers attending 'regularly' than is average for a large market in Canada.

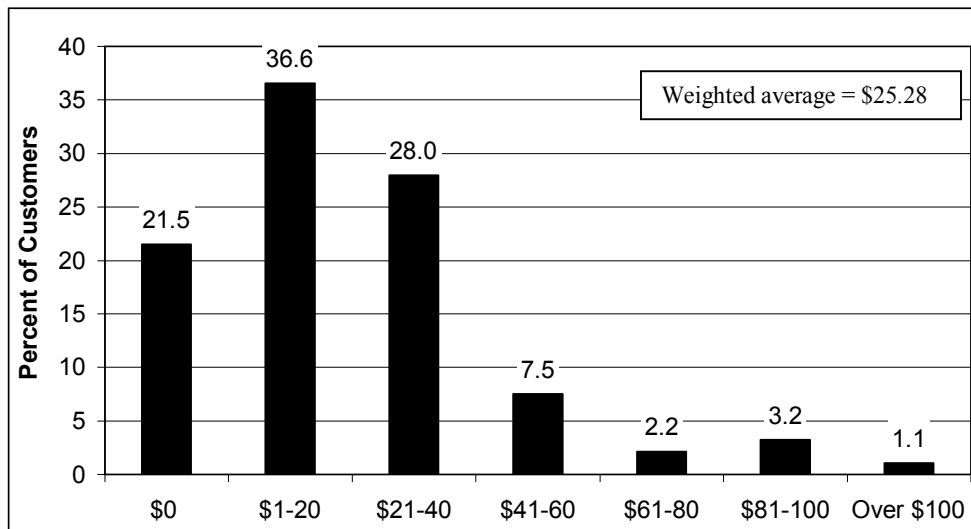
Chart 4. How often do you come to this market?  
(Market: n=96; BC: n=9,874; Canada (Large): n=1,013)



**Question 3. If you plan to do additional shopping or eating while in this area of town today, how much do you plan to spend?**

Chart 5 shows the range of additional spending by market customers, with 78.5% of respondents saying they would do additional shopping at neighbouring businesses that day. Over 40% said they would spend more than \$20.<sup>v</sup> The average amount spent per customer at neighbouring businesses was \$25.28. Given the variability among markets, no comparison is made with BC or national results.

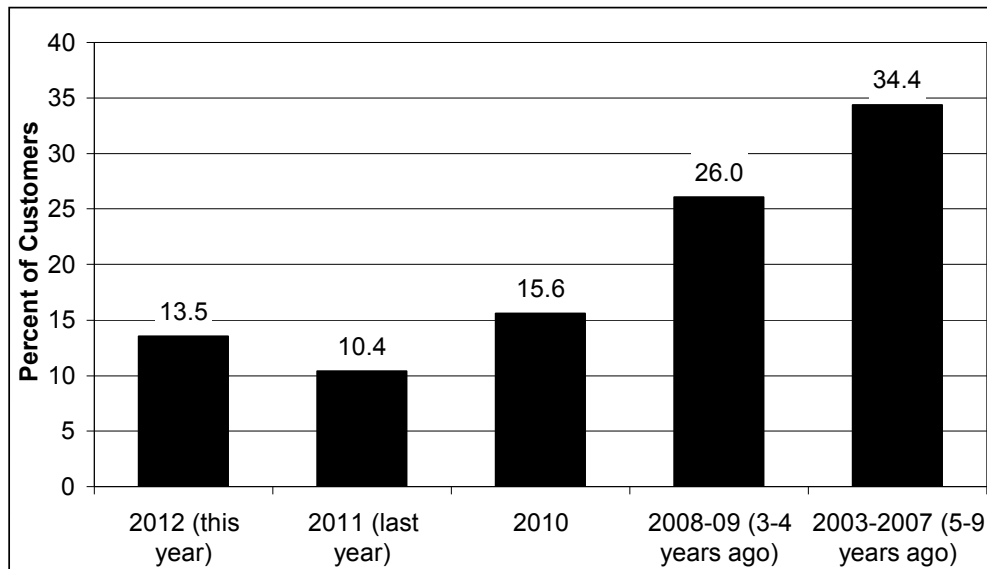
Chart 5. If you plan to do additional shopping or eating while in this area of town today, how much do you plan to spend? (n=93)



**Question 4. When did you start shopping at this farmers' market?**

As shown in Chart 6, your market has a good portion of long-time, loyal customers. Over half of all customers surveyed (60.4%) have been coming to this market for three years or more, and 34.4% of all respondents have been coming to this market for more than five years. In addition to the long-time regulars, there were also 13.5% of respondents who were first-time visitors to this market.

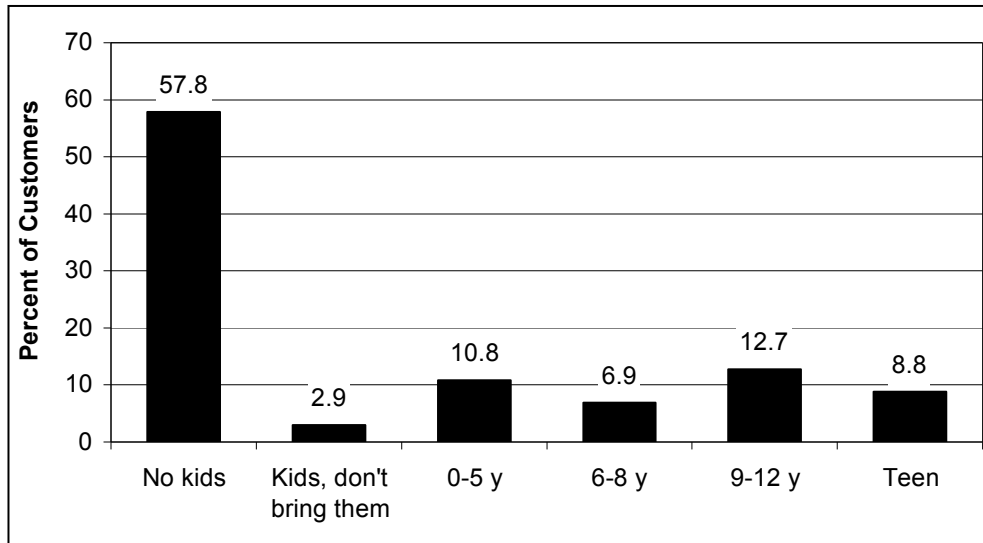
Chart 6. When did you start shopping at this farmers' market? (n=96)



**Question 5. Do you bring your children to the market, and if so, what are their ages?**

As shown in Chart 7 (next page), over half (57.8%) of market visitors are not accompanied by children. There is a fairly equal distribution of children's ages, for those who attended the market with children. Only 2.9% of market visitors have children, but don't bring their children to the market.

Chart 7. Do you bring your children to the market, and if so, what are their ages? (n=102)



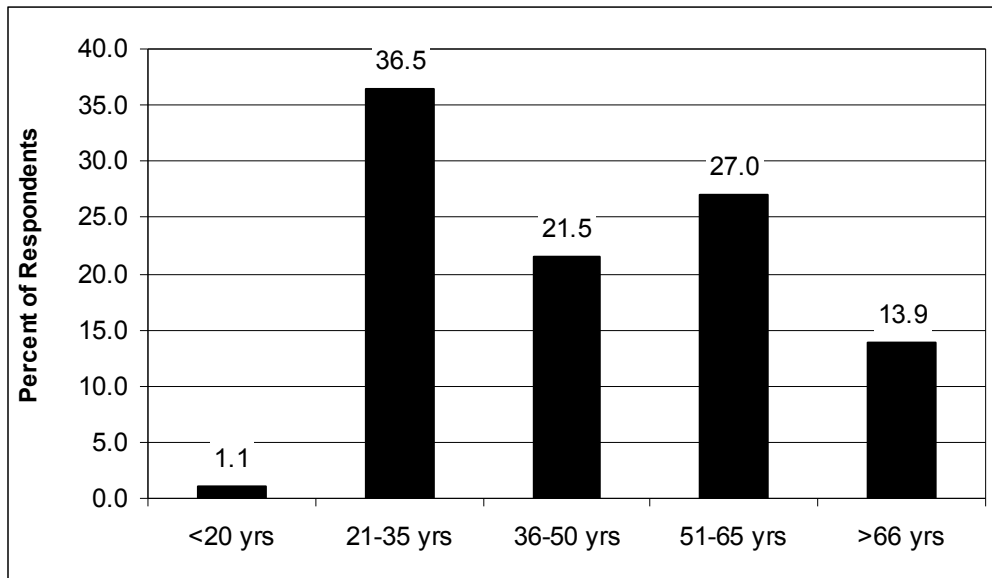
### Market surveys

#### *Customer Survey*

We conducted interviews with 291 customers at 33 markets in BC. The following charts show results of all the customers surveyed across the province. When interpreting the results of these surveys, it should be noted that the people who agreed to participate in the one-on-one interviews over-represent regular shoppers, as these people are also the ones who are more likely to participate in such market surveys. The over-representation of regular shoppers is evident when we compared the customer survey results (291 responses) against the results gathered from the flip chart surveys (9,819 responses). The flip chart surveys show a wider representation of market shoppers.

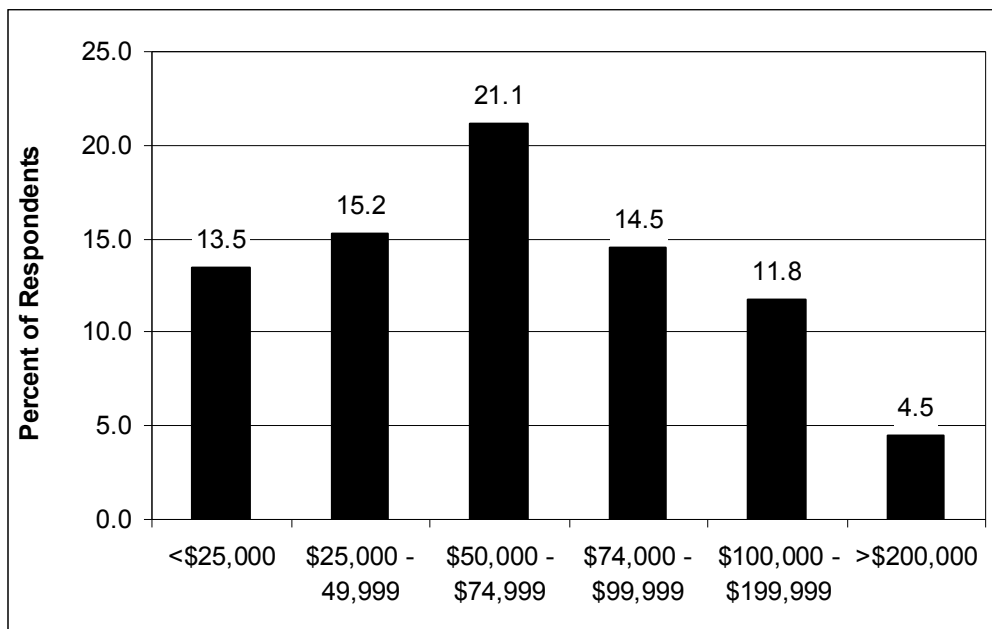
The results in Chart 8 show the age range of farmers' market customers in BC.

Chart 8. Age of respondents (BC: n=274)



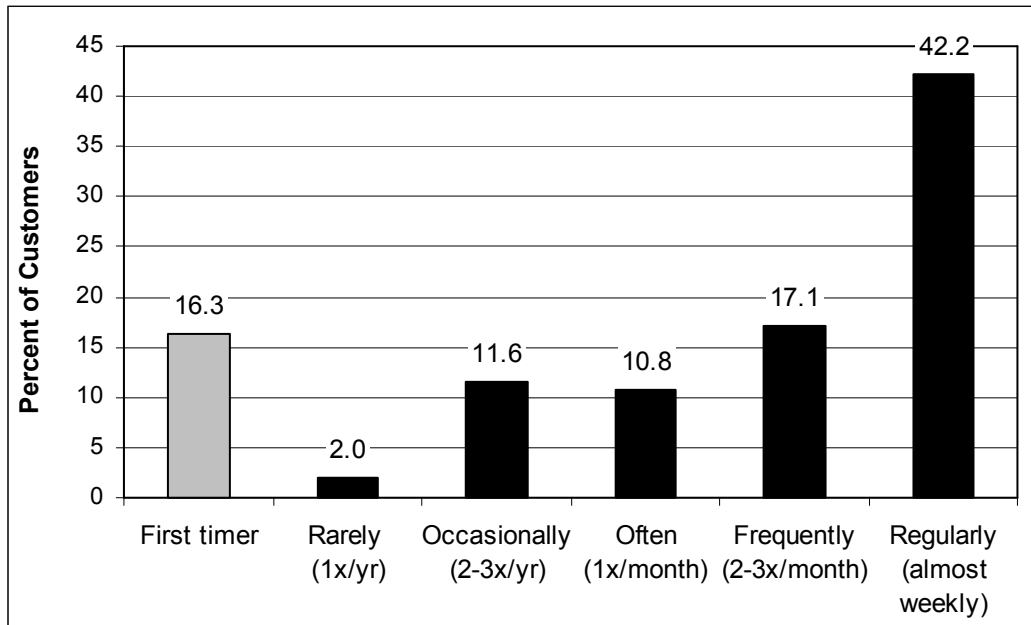
The household income of shoppers at farmers' markets in BC is shown in Chart 9. The results show that people from households with a range of incomes shop at BC's markets.

Chart 9. Household income (BC: n=233)



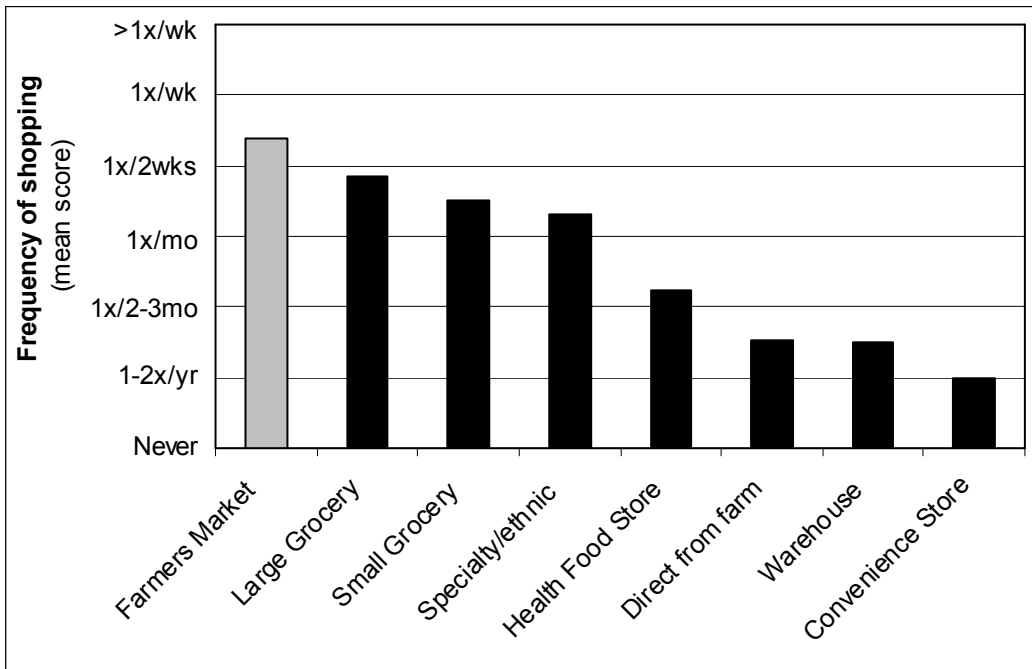
Over 40% of customers surveyed in BC shop at the market regularly (almost weekly), with an additional 17% shopping at least two to three times per month (Chart 10). Together, these results indicate that almost six of ten shoppers can be considered among the core group of market shoppers at BC markets, although, as noted, the results do over-represent regular shoppers. The actual results are likely to be lower but still significant.

Chart 10. Frequency of shopping at farmers' markets (BC: n=251)



We also asked shoppers where and how often they buy groceries at other food retail outlets during the outdoor market season. The people surveyed indicated that they shop more often at the farmers' market than at other food retail outlets (Chart 11, next page).

Chart 11. Where shoppers shop during the outdoor market season (BC: n=290)  
Note: a higher bar means shopping more often at the corresponding store.



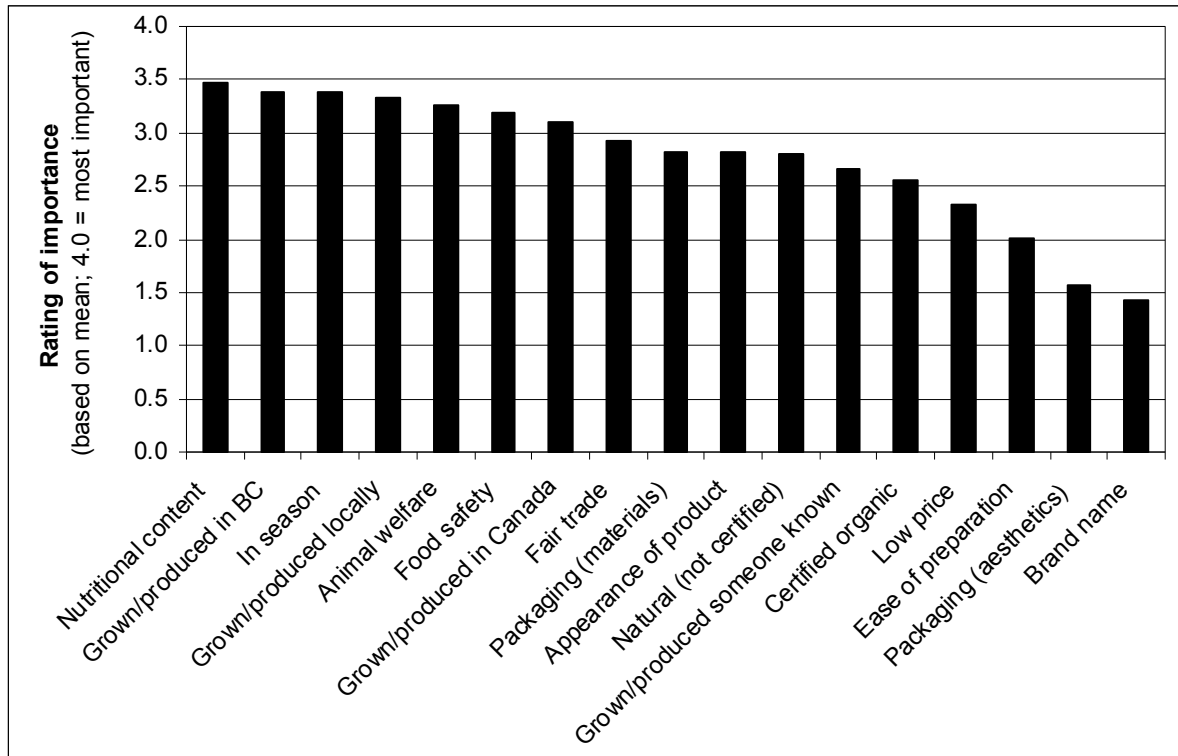
Part of the answer to explain the shopping pattern of market customers is evident in Chart 12 (next page), which shows the relative importance of factors customers consider when buying food. During the farmers' market season the five most important factors to market customers are:

- Nutritional content
- Grown/produced in BC
- In season
- Grown/produced locally
- Animal welfare

Brand name, low price, and certified organic are among the lowest rated factors that influence food purchasing decisions.



Chart 12. Factors people consider when buying food: BC (n=289)



We also asked customers how long they spend at the market (Chart 13, next page) and how much of that time they spend talking with vendors and friends (Chart 14, next page). The results for all BC shoppers surveyed highlight the important social aspect of farmers’ markets. Almost 70% of all respondents said that they spend over 30 minutes at the market, and over half (53.8%) of all respondents said they spend at least half their time at the market socialising with others.

Chart 13. Amount of time customers spend at the market (BC: n=290)

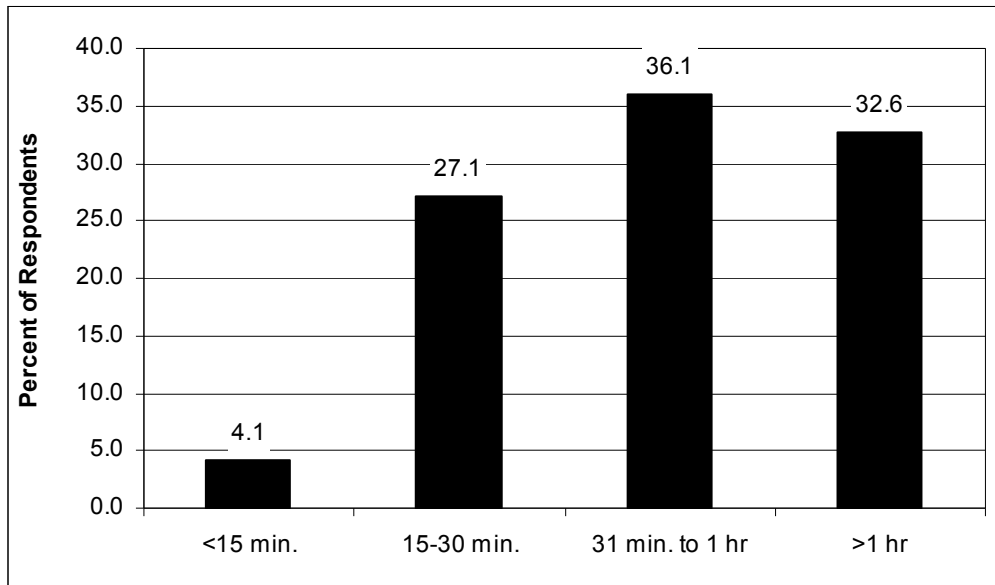
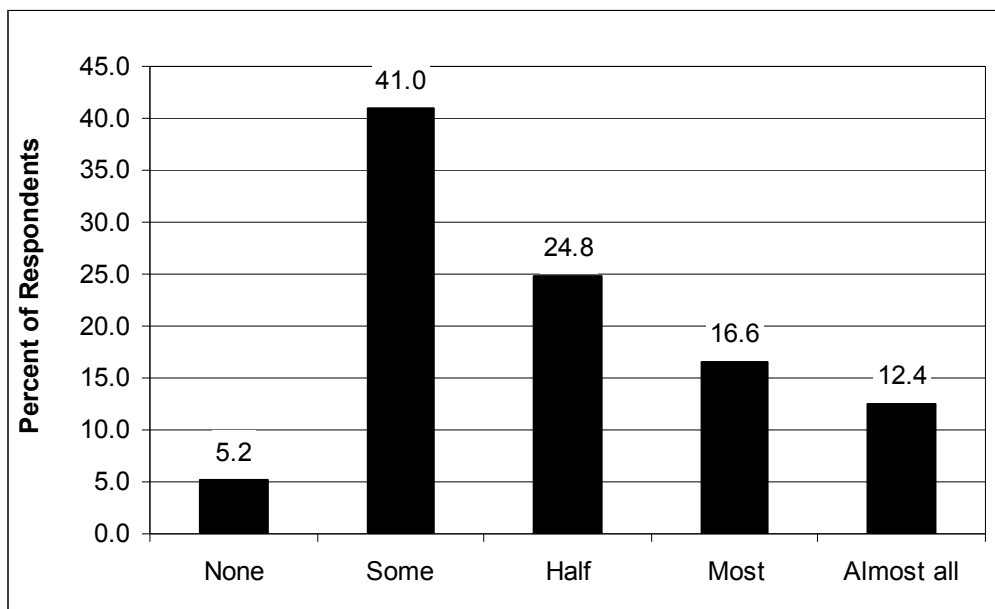


Chart 14. Time spent talking with others at the market (BC: n=290)



The results of the above two questions are combined in Table 1 (next page). The shaded boxes highlight those people who spend at least half an hour at the market *and* at least half of that time talking with vendors, friends, and acquaintances. Altogether, these people represent 45% of the shoppers surveyed at BC's farmers' markets.

Table 1. Time spent at market talking with others (percentage) (BC: n=290)

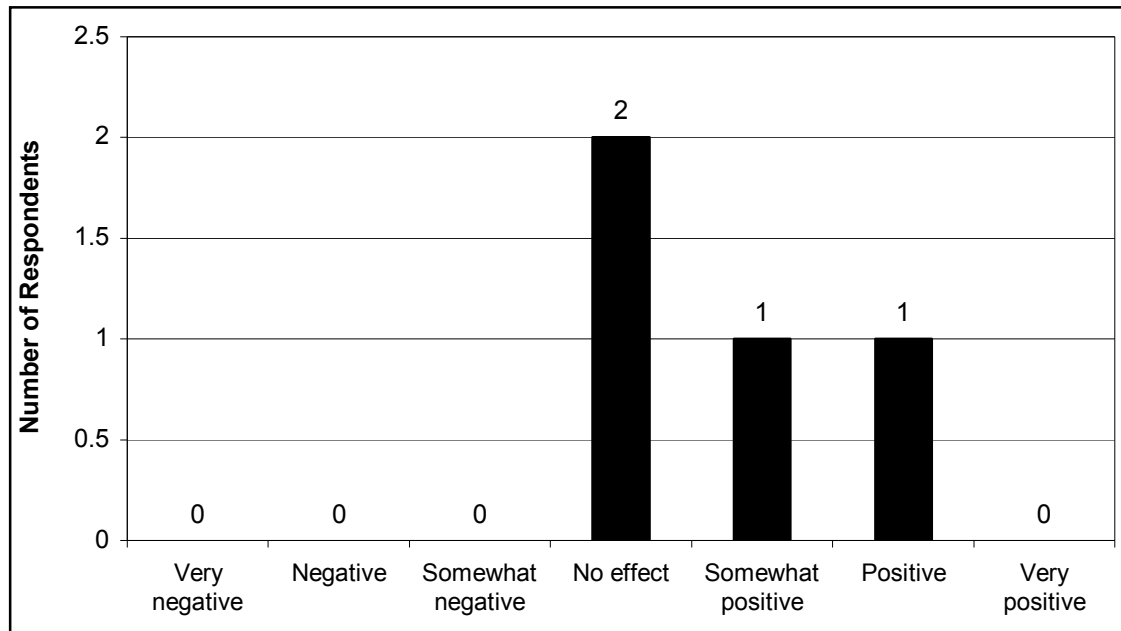
		How time spent					Total
		None	Some	Half	Most	Almost all	
Time spent at market	<15 min.	1	2	0	0	0	4
	15-30 min.	2	17	5	3	0	27
	31 min. to 1 hr	1	16	11	5	4	36
	>1 hr	1	7	9	9	8	33
<b>Total</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>

*Business survey*

There were several businesses located within visible range of the Haney Farmers Market, including fitness studios, salons and aestheticians, restaurants, children’s shops, a used bookstore, and convenience store. Based on availability of businesses for interviews, and whether they are open on market days, we conducted surveys with four neighbouring businesses (Chart 15).

The two businesses that reported impacts from the market said that the market is good for getting people downtown. While they noticed an increase in foot traffic on market days, the businesses did not report any sales increase during the market season.

Chart 15. Effect of market on neighbouring businesses (n=4)



## Economic Benefits

The information collected in this assessment enables us to measure the economic benefits of the Haney Farmers Market.

To measure the economic benefits of farmers' markets means to measure the ripple effect of people spending dollars at the market: if I spend \$1 at the market then how does this dollar benefit the local economy? The ripple effect includes both the profit to the market vendor and the monies the vendor spent on inputs to get to the market (e.g., seeds, feed, ingredients, etc.).

Economic benefits, which can include direct, indirect, and some induced effects, are measured in terms of revenue (\$), output (\$), and employment (jobs). In this study we measure only revenues. We chose to calculate revenue benefits using a multiplier of 1.5<sup>vi</sup>. This multiplier means that for every dollar spent at the market, another \$0.50 is spent in the local economy. Compared to some other studies of farmers' markets, this multiplier is conservative.

The annual economic benefit is calculated by multiplying direct annual sales by the multiplier (1.5). Direct annual sales are calculated as follows:

$$\text{Average expenditure by customer} \times \text{Number of spending customers per session}^{\text{vii}} \times \text{Number of sessions per year}^{\text{viii}} \times \text{Seasonal factor}^{\text{ix}}$$

For the Haney Farmers Market, seasonally adjusted annual direct sales are:

$$\$25.89 \text{ per customer visit} \times 1,440 \text{ spending customers} \times 30 \text{ (adjusted) sessions} = \$1,041,000$$

Using a multiplier of 1.5, the annual economic benefit is approximately:

### **Annual economic benefit (2012): \$1.6 million**

This calculation means that the Haney Farmers Market contributes an estimated \$1.6 million to the local economy each year. These monies benefit not only market vendors but also the local businesses that supply these vendors.

The total estimated annual economic benefit for all farmers' markets in BC is **\$170.5 million**.

We can also assess the 'spillover' effect that the Haney Farmers Market has on its neighbouring businesses. Based on survey results, we can estimate the benefits of market customers spending additional dollars at local businesses on the day of the market. Using the same formula as above, the annual economic benefit of additional spending at other neighbouring businesses is over **\$1.1 million**.

**Appendix: Seasonal activity chart for Haney Farmers Market**



## Acknowledgements

The BC Association of Farmers' Markets and the project team would like to thank the Haney Farmers Market for participating in this assessment and for providing a team of volunteers to help conduct the assessment. Financial and in-kind support is provided by participating farmers' markets. The BCAFM wishes to acknowledge the financial assistance of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and the Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC for making this study possible. We would also like to acknowledge the Vancity Community Foundation's contribution to the study.

## End notes

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<sup>i</sup> Source: Experience Renewal Solutions and David J. Connell (2009). National Farmers' Market Impact Study 2009 Report. Prepared for Farmers' Markets Canada.

<sup>ii</sup> Our History, Haney Farmers Market, <http://www.haneyfarmersmarket.org/index.php/history.html>

<sup>iii</sup> This was based on a survey conducted on a cold and rainy day, perhaps keeping away people who would be first time visitors had the weather been nicer.

<sup>iv</sup> The average spent per customer is weighted by category based on results of a national study of farmers' markets completed in 2008.

<sup>v</sup> The average spent at nearby businesses is weighted by category based on results of a national study of farmers markets completed in 2008.

<sup>vi</sup> The number used for multipliers for farmers' markets varies, ranging from 1.21 to 3.0. A multiplier of 2.0 is commonly used for convenience. We chose to use a multiplier of 1.5 as this appears to be more accurate based on studies by Hughes, Brown, Miller, and McConnell (2008) and Otto and Varner (2005). We used a multiplier of 2.0 in the 2006 study; the results from the 2006 study that are cited in this report have been revised based on a 1.5 multiplier.

<sup>vii</sup> This is based on the estimated crowd count. However, not all people attending the market are included in the calculation. Some people may not spend any money while other people included in the crown count are members of the same household and should not be double-counted. Based on results of the national study of farmers' markets in Canada in 2008, we estimate that 75 per cent of the crowd count is considered a paying customer.

<sup>viii</sup> Includes special days, if any, such as 'Christmas markets'.

<sup>ix</sup> The seasonal factor accounts for varying sales/crowd levels during the season. For the outdoor season, markets generally start off slow and peak for a number of weeks during the summer and then decline. The seasonal factor is calculated for each market based on data collected from the market's manager and long-time vendors. A seasonal activity chart for your market is included in the Appendix.