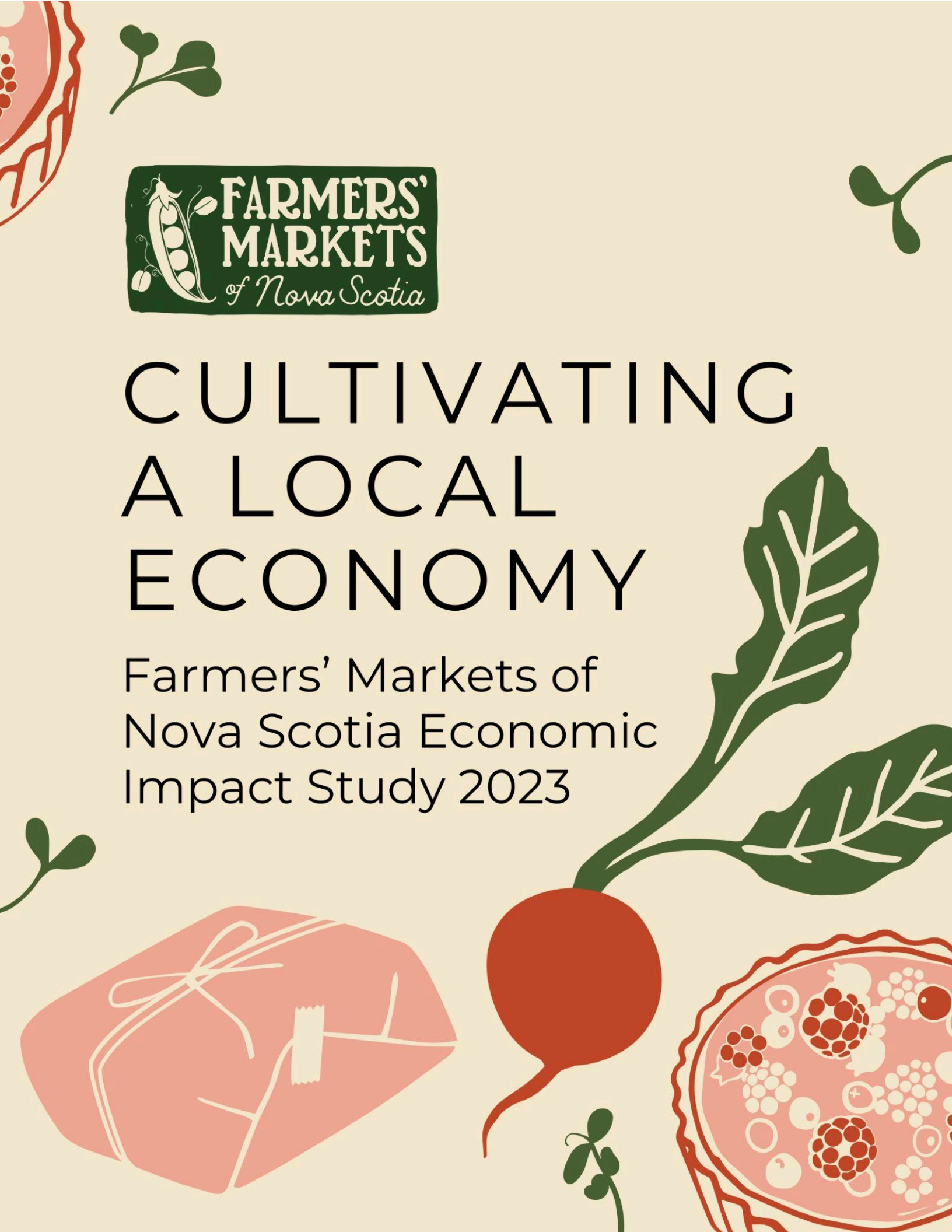
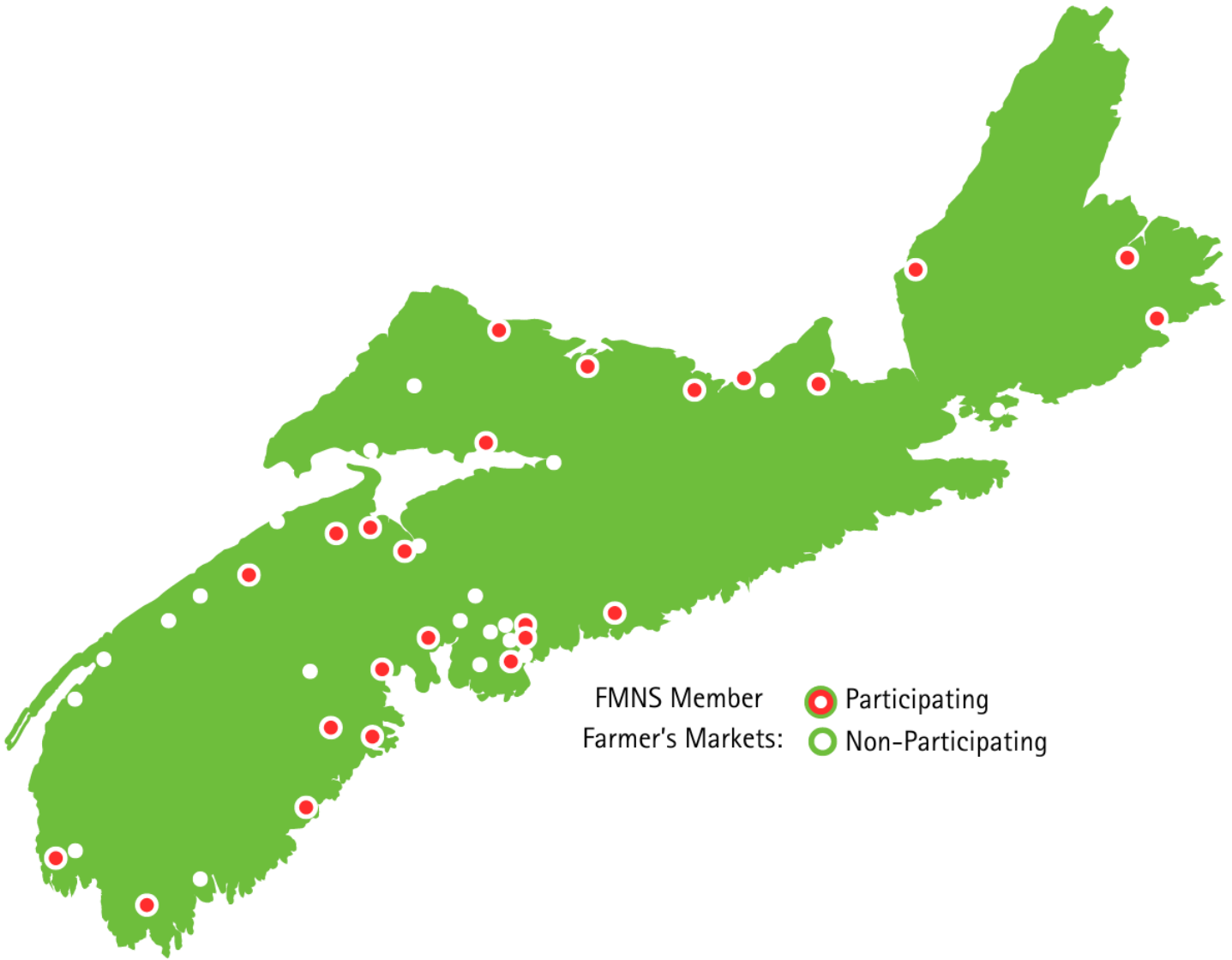




# CULTIVATING A LOCAL ECONOMY

Farmers' Markets of  
Nova Scotia Economic  
Impact Study 2023





FMNS Member ● Participating  
 Farmer's Markets: ○ Non-Participating

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 Flourish Community  
 Development Co-operative



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## About FMNS

Established in 2004, farmers' markets of Nova Scotia (FMNS) is a cooperative of certified farmers' markets within the province. As a member-based cooperative, FMNS offers support and services to Nova Scotia farmers' markets and their vendors through business development, skill building, research, advocacy and promotion. FMNS works to ensure our member markets are knowledgeable of and engaged in emerging trends.



Our non-profit cooperative advances growth and prosperity for our member farmers' markets and their vendors through training, resources, advocacy, promotion, and community. With over 40 members and growing, we're the unified voice of our region's farmers' market sector!

## Our Vision

Vibrant and diverse communities that are welcoming, economically prosperous, and food secure.

## Our Mission

Our cooperative advances growth and prosperity for our members and their communities through support, programs, advocacy, marketing, and engagement.

# Participating Markets



For more information or to contact a particular market, please visit: <http://farmersmarketsnovascotia.ca/find-a-market/>

# Acknowledgements

## Our Markets

Thank you to the 24 farmers' markets that participated in this Economic Impact Study, as well as the dedicated market managers, employees, and volunteers who gave their time and energy.

## Our Vendors

Thank you to the 392 vendors who participated in the research study and the countless more who accommodated us on research days.

## Our Shoppers

Over 2,700 market shoppers took time from their market visit to participate in this Economic Impact Study. Thank you for taking the time to help us learn, grow and ultimately offer an ever-better shopping experience.

## Our Sponsors

This project was made possible thanks to generous funding from the Nova Scotia Department of Economic Development.



# Executive Summary

## Objectives & Purpose

This report contains the results of farmers' markets of Nova Scotia's 2023 Economic Impact Study. The study was commissioned to measure the economic impact that farmers' markets have on the province, local communities, as well as vendors. Given that the last economic impact study was conducted in 2013, 2023 offered an opportunity to conduct a 10 year comparison. 24 of 44 FMNS member markets participated in the rapid market assessment component of the study, with each collecting study data on a market day between mid August and early September, 2023. We also received survey responses from 392 vendors representing 21 FMNS member markets to complement the rapid market assessment.

Market patrons were also asked to participate in a brief intercept survey, with volunteers or staff recording their responses. Information gathered was aggregated and analyzed to obtain a "one-day snapshot" of activity within the sector, as well as provide data to compare with the baseline measurements from 2013. The data from vendor surveys were also aggregated and analyzed to determine a snapshot of vendor demographics, sales, employment, and general business information to contribute to a more comprehensive economic impact study.

## Key Findings from Rapid Market Assessment (RMA)

**Attendance:** The study indicates an average attendance of 1,090 patrons at participating markets resulting in an estimated total attendance of 39,242 patrons for all 44 farmers' markets in Nova Scotia on one market day, or 1,481,985 patrons each year.

**Shopping Group Size:** The average shopping group size was 2.6 people, with minimal variations across large, medium, and small markets.

**Visitor Origin:** A majority of participants (41%) were local to their market's community, 27% from nearby communities, 13% from HRM, 7% from other NS communities, and 12% from outside the province. This emphasizes the role farmers' markets play in redistributing money from urban to rural areas and contributing to the provincial economy.

**Customer Spending Habits:** The average market customer spent \$16.67 per visit, with large and medium markets having slightly higher average purchase values. The average spending per shopping group was \$41.96, suggesting room for markets to

capture a larger share of customer spending when compared with average household spending on food.

**Economic Impact:** The combined per capita economic impact of a market visit is estimated at \$29.04 (i.e. spending at the market and at other local businesses on market day), with an overall daily economic impact of \$31,654 per market, on average.

**Annual Economic Impact:** Extrapolating the daily impact across the 44 FMNS member farmers' markets suggests an annual sector impact of \$43,356,359. The direct economic impact (i.e. the money spent at markets) accounts for over half (58.9%) of the total economic impact.

## 2013 and 2023 Comparison

Data Comparison	2023	2013 (Inflation Adjusted <sup>1</sup> )
Average Attendance	1,090	1,373
Average Group Size	2.6	1.9
Average Spending per Group at Market	\$41.96	\$43.46
Average Total Economic Impact (Per Capita)	\$29.04	\$40.44
One-day economic impact <u>per market</u>	\$31,654	\$55,520
Sector-Wide Data	(Weighted Averages)	(Non-weighted Averages)
Market Day <u>Total</u> Economic Impact of Sector	\$1,148,302	\$2,387,340
Annual <u>Total</u> Economic Impact of Sector	\$43,356,358.53	Data not available

As the table above highlights, 2023 saw a 48% decrease in the Market Day Economic Impact of the sector, compared to 2013. However, the following factors must be considered in order to fully understand the dynamics at play that have contributed to this retrenchment:

- Differences in methodology between the 2013 and 2023 studies may impact data comparison, influenced by factors such as: limited time for preparation in 2023 compared to 2013, changes in survey methods, alterations in survey questions, and calculations based on weighted averages in 2023.

<sup>1</sup> Based on 26.88% total inflation from 2013 to 2023, per <https://www.bankofcanada.ca/rates/related/inflation-calculator/>

- The 2023 landscape, shaped by post-COVID restrictions and economic challenges, differs significantly from 2013.
- Nova Scotia had a 10.5% increase in food inflation from 2022 to 2023, slightly higher than the national average of 10.3%, the highest rate of food inflation in 40 years<sup>2</sup>.
- Inflation, especially in housing costs, has forced individuals to prioritize spending on non-discretionary items, limiting their disposable income for food<sup>3</sup>.
- Increased housing costs, and changes in consumer behaviour, such as an increase in convenience food purchasing and online food services, have all impacted spending patterns.

These contextual shifts highlight the need for a nuanced interpretation of economic data and recognition of the evolving market dynamics over the decade. It also represents a tremendous opportunity for growth in the sector from increasing the “basket” size of farmers' market shoppers—that is, by encouraging farmers' market shoppers to purchase more products per market visit.

It should be noted that comparatively, Nova Scotia's farmers' market sector is having a similar economic impact as its closest industry comparable in British Columbia. The total economic impact of the British Columbia Association of Farmers' Markets' member farmers' markets on the British Columbia economy was \$232.9 million in 2023<sup>4</sup>, whereas the total economic impact of FMNS' member farmers' markets on the Nova Scotia economy was \$43.4 million. Adjusted for population, FMNS' member farmers' markets are performing similarly to those in British Columbia, with FMNS' member farmers' markets generating \$40.58 per person per year, versus \$41.52 per person per year in British Columbia.

## Key Findings from Vendor Analysis

Farmers' markets foster a supportive environment for local businesses and entrepreneurs. Serving as economic drivers of local entrepreneurship, these markets contribute significantly to job creation and livelihoods, supplementing income for vendors, and creating employment opportunities as businesses grow. Farmers' markets act as incubators, catalyzing the establishment and growth of small businesses by offering exposure, customer interaction, and a low barrier to entry.

<sup>2</sup>Canada's Food Price Report 2023. Retrieved from [https://cdn.dal.ca/content/dam/dalhousie/pdf/sites/agri-food/Canada's%20Food%20Price%20Report%202023\\_Digital.pdf](https://cdn.dal.ca/content/dam/dalhousie/pdf/sites/agri-food/Canada's%20Food%20Price%20Report%202023_Digital.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Ibid

<sup>4</sup> 2023 BC Farmers' Market Economic Impact Study. Retrieved from <https://bcfarmersmarket.org/for-markets-vendors/2023-bc-farmers-market-economic-impact-study/>

They play a crucial role in supporting women and immigrant entrepreneurs, with over two-thirds of vendors being women, and 12% being immigrants. Farmers' markets organically build entrepreneurial capacity by providing an approachable incubation platform, thereby contributing to the inclusive business ecosystem. Farmers' markets circulate money within the community, fostering economic resilience, and promoting community engagement and networking, enhancing both the economic and cultural richness of the community.

## Recommendations

This report outlines key recommendations for Farmers' Markets of Nova Scotia (FMNS) to address current challenges and elevate its impact. To enhance marketing efforts, FMNS proposes investing in marketing that emphasizes the local market's benefits, and counter the impact of inflation, by reinforcing the importance of "buying local" for community resilience. To broaden their customer base, FMNS suggests expanding programs like the *Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program*, which not only reduces barriers for low-income community members but also introduces new customers to the market. Engaging children and families through educational initiatives and partnerships with schools could foster a sense of community ownership and further market values.

Furthermore, FMNS can enhance support for new businesses through mentorship initiatives and accessible resources, like the *Market Manager's Handbook* and *Vendor Guidebook*. Collaborating with non-profit organizations, particularly those supporting marginalized entrepreneurs, and launching the *Taking Root Program* can reduce barriers for underrepresented business owners. Lastly, enhance contribution to a stronger local food movement by advocating for support across the province, establishing itself as a leader, and collaborating with organizations to strengthen the local food system. Sharing the economic benefits of farmers' markets with stakeholders is suggested to inform and draw attention to the advantages of supporting a resilient local food system. Collectively, these recommendations position FMNS as a crucial contributor to community well-being and economic development.

## Next Steps

A 10-year comparison highlights the need for more frequent economic impact reports due to the rapid and lasting effects of global factors on farmers' markets. Future reports should include induced economic impact, qualitative customer data,

social return on investment and data on out-of-province tourists for a comprehensive analysis.

## Introduction

This study was undertaken by Farmers' Markets of Nova Scotia (FMNS) to measure the economic impact that farmers' markets have on their communities, as well as to gather relevant customer and vendor data to help markets make informed operational decisions. FMNS is looking to build upon the analysis done in 2013 by comparing the community financial impact from 2013 to 2023. In addition, FMNS seeks to have a better understanding of:

1. The direct financial impact on vendors and the operating organization;
2. The demographic and psychographic profile of vendors and customers; and
3. The social and environmental impact of the markets.

As was the case in 2013, this study will focus on those public markets that are members of Farmers' Markets of Nova Scotia.

# Methodology

## Rapid Market Assessment

Our approach was based on the Rapid Market Assessment (RMA) methodology developed by Oregon State University’s Larry Lev and Garry Stephenson. This is the same methodology that was used in the 2013 FMNS Economic Impact Report, allowing us to compare and contrast two snapshots in time. The RMA is a simple, low-cost method that allows markets to gather valuable information without requiring large investments of money or time from market staff, vendors or patrons.

Data collection took place from the start of August to mid-September, 2023. Each participating farmers' market completed all components of the study within one market day as dictated in the provided handout. A copy of this handout can be found in Appendix A. An training webinar was available both live and recorded for market managers and organizers. This training equipped market personnel with the necessary tools and knowledge to train their teams on how to engage patrons, administer surveys, take attendance and gather the other required information. It also allowed them to ask clarifying questions to ensure everyone was on the same page and feeling prepared for the data collection process.

The Rapid Market Assessment consists of two main components:

1. **Attendance:** Attendance of arriving customers was taken every hour for 10 min during the duration of the market. Each 10-minute count was multiplied by 6 to get an average attendance for every hour the market was open
2. **Patron Surveys:** Market staff intercept shoppers and gather individual responses to 4 key questions about their market behaviour (spending at the market, non-market grocery spending, group size, distance from home).

The table below outlines the information collected and the method by which it was obtained. For more details on how the data was collected see Appendices A and B. The results from this assessment will be discussed later in the report (see p.12), and details of the calculations used to arrive at these results can be found in Appendix D.

Attendance Count	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Markets counted the number of patrons arriving through all entrances for ten minutes every hour.</li><li>• This number was multiplied by 6 to obtain a per-hour figure. These results were then summed to give the total number of patrons for the day according to the length of the market.</li></ul>
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Group Size	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Survey participants were asked how many people they were shopping with, which is referred to as their “shopping group”.</li> </ul>
Spending at the Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants were asked how much money they had spent (or planned to spend) at the market on that day.</li> <li>Response choices were given in \$10 increments, from \$0 to \$110+.</li> <li>Responses per choice were multiplied by the dollar value of the choice and totaled to obtain the grand total spent at the market on that day.</li> </ul>
Spending at other businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Similar to above, participants were asked how much money they had spent (or planned to spend) at businesses in the surrounding area as part of their trip to the market.</li> <li>Response choices were again given in \$10 increments, from \$0 to \$110+.</li> <li>An example of this would be a customer who travels from another neighbourhood, town or city to attend a market, filling their car up at a gas station, stopping in at a nearby store and/or restaurant to make a purchase. This information shows us the role markets play in attracting consumers to a community for their diverse shopping needs.</li> <li>Responses per choice were multiplied by the dollar value of the choice and totaled to obtain the grand total spent at surrounding businesses by market patrons on the day of the market.</li> </ul>
Where are you Visiting From?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Survey participants were asked where they were visiting from. Options were: Town/Community of Market, Adjacent Community, HRM, Other NS Community and Out of Province.</li> <li>This information tells us how much money is being brought into the community and province by people visiting the market from further away.</li> </ul>

## Vendor Survey

A valuable addition to this iteration of the economic impact study has been the inclusion of gathering self-reported data from market vendors. While we have no previous data from 2013 with which to compare, the vendor research will provide a reference point for future studies in an effort to more accurately understand the farmers' market sector. The vendor survey consisted of 17 questions (see Appendix C) that included: vendor demographics, employment, weekly business sales, and qualitative data on the overall economic impact for vendors. Surveys were sent to market managers and included a handout (See Appendix C) explaining the purpose

of the survey and instructions on how to administer them. Data was collected from the start of November (2023) until mid-January (2024). We received back a total of 392 surveys from vendors representing over 21 farmers' markets.

## Limitations of this Research

<b>Limitation</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
Attendance accuracy	Approach to patron counting was inconsistent from market to market, with some markets opting to use their pre-existing methods, which was allowed if the method of counting went above the required method (automated counters, etc.)
Volunteer capacity	Required for patron surveys and more challenging to secure for some markets (typically smaller ones) than others.
Patron willingness to participate	Challenging to encourage patrons to take the time and energy to participate. Not all markets were able to offer an incentive for participation.
Spending scale	Fails to accurately account for total spends exceeding \$110.
Accessibility	Language barriers may have reduced immigrant vendor participation. The timing of the survey collection was also a barrier for vendors no longer in season.
Self-reported Data	Vendor sales and customer spending may not always be accurate due to self-reporting.
Lack of 2013 Vendor Data	Unable to compare vendor data to 2013 and draw additional conclusions from comparisons.
Timing of Data Collection	Conducted RMA slightly out of peak tourist season and with little notice to market managers. Vendor surveys were administered out of season for many markets, making it more difficult to connect with them.

## Rapid Market Assessment Findings

The findings of the first part of the Economic Impact Study, the Rapid Market Assessment (RMA), are highlighted here. A comparison of the results of the Rapid Market Assessment in 2013 and 2023 can be found at the end of this section.

### Market Size

For the purpose of aggregating and extrapolating data, the markets were grouped into the following sizes, based on the average number of vendors present on Market day:

- Small = <20 vendors
- Medium = 20-39 vendors
- Large = >40 vendors

### Who Showed Up?

#### Attendance

The average attendance at participating markets on the day of the study was 1,090 patrons per market. Markets with greater than 40 vendors (categorized as large markets for the purpose of this study) attracted an average of 2,117 patrons, while medium markets (20-30 vendors) averaged 815 and small Markets (<20 vendors) averaged 268 patrons. Figure 1 on the following page shows average attendance by market size, while Figures 2, 3 and 4 show the daily attendance by market. When extrapolated using the average attendance per Market size, we can extrapolate the data to calculate an estimated total attendance of 39,242 patrons for all 44 farmers' markets of Nova Scotia per one market day, or 1,481,985 patrons each year.

**Average Attendance by Market Size**

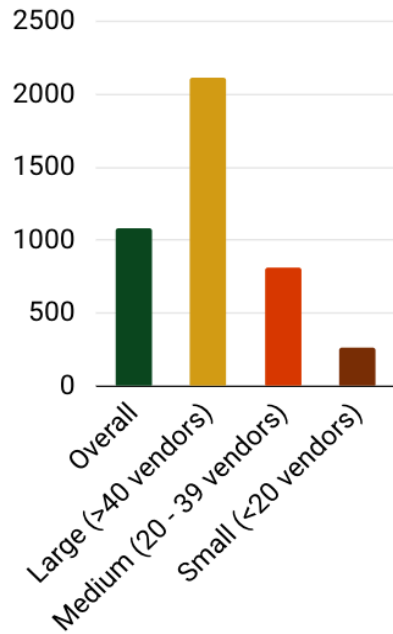


Figure 1

**Average Attendance by Market (Large >40 Vendors)**

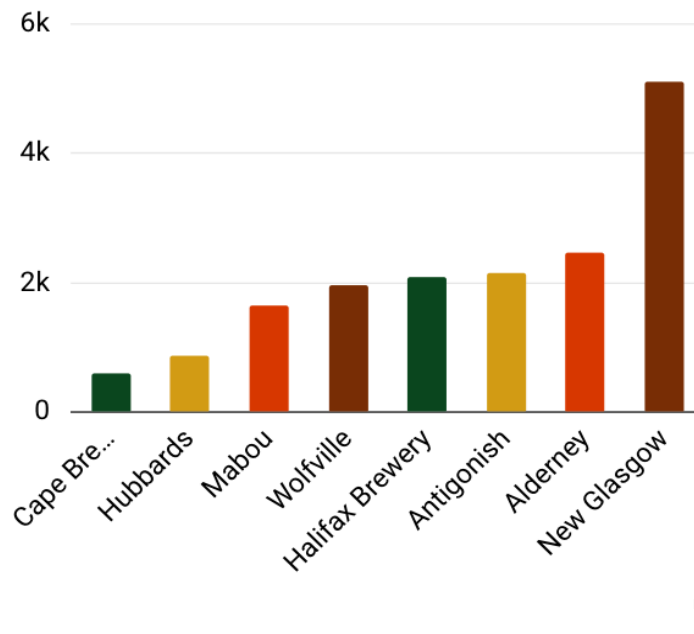


Figure 2

**Attendance by Market (Medium 20-39 Vendors)**  
n = 7,339

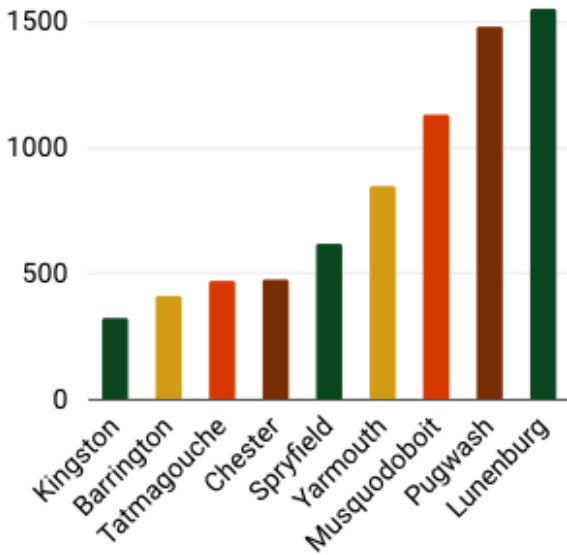


Figure 3

**Attendance by Market (Small <20 Vendors)**  
n = 1,874

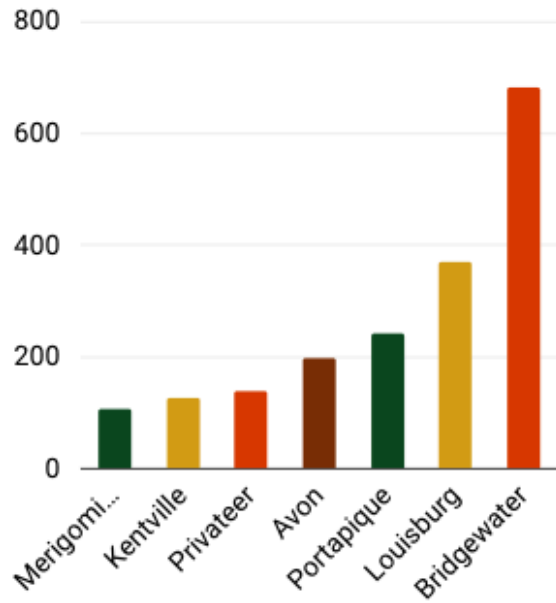


Figure 4

## Shopping Group Size

The term “shopping group” refers to a group of people attending and shopping together at the market. A shopping group may also be an individual. For the purposes of this study, respondents were asked how many adults were in their shopping group – children were not counted. As illustrated in Figure 5, the average shopping group was 2.6. The size of the market had very little effect on this number with large, medium and small markets averaging similar results of 2.7, 2.5 and 2.6 respectively.

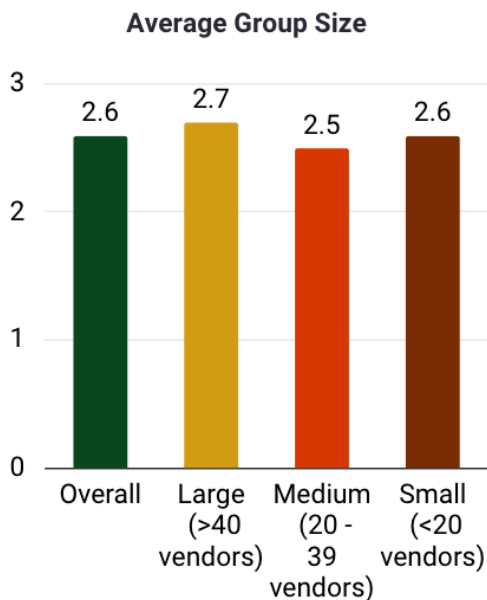


Figure 5

## Where Are They Visiting From?

The majority of participants indicated that they reside in the same community as the market they were visiting (41%) or from a nearby adjacent community (27%). There was a considerable number of people travelling from HRM (13%), and 7% from other communities in NS. A significant 12% of customers travelled from outside of the province. This data speaks to the role farmers' markets play in the reallocation of money from urban centres to rural areas, as well as contributing to the flow of money into the province.

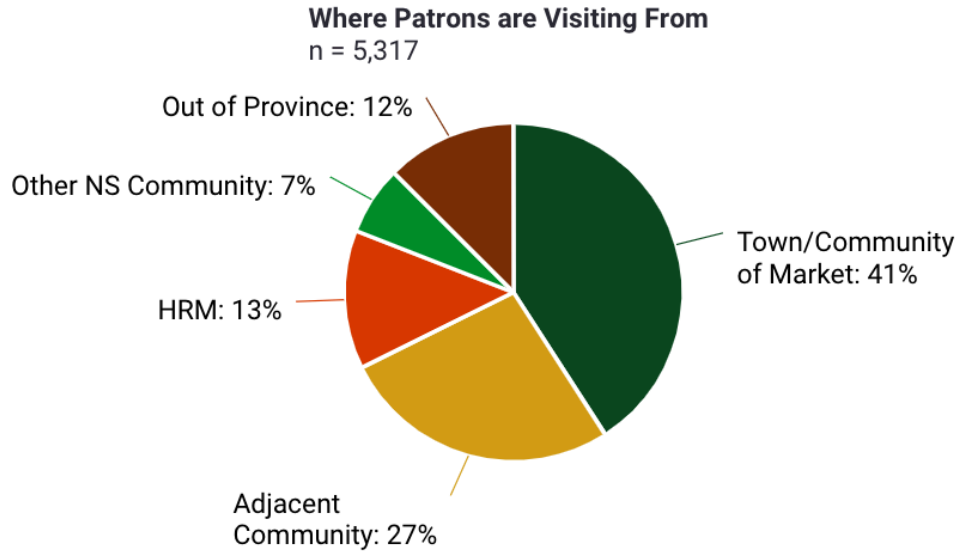


Figure 6

## So What?

Over two thirds of market-goers live in close proximity to their market. This suggests that a majority of Nova Scotians have access to locally produced food and goods, without the need to travel long distances. 12% of customers were visiting from out of province. While this may seem like a small percentage, it equates to \$5.2 million dollars coming into the province every year. Therefore, not only do markets help to recirculate money into the local economy, they also bring money into local circulation.

# Hey Big Spender!

## Customer Spending Habits

The average market customer in the study spent \$16.67 at the market per visit. Given that the average FMNS market was found to welcome 1,090 shoppers per day, each spending an average of \$16.67, the result is \$18,170 from just one market on one day. As illustrated in Figure 7, customers at large and medium markets averaged slightly more per visit (\$17.31 and \$18.24) than the overall average, while those shopping at small markets spent, on average, less (\$13.90). The average amount spent by a shopping group, Figure 8, was \$41.96, with the average group size being 2.6 people as explained above. Again, large (\$47.08) and medium (\$45.60) average slightly more spending per group visit, while groups shopping at small markets averaged slightly less (\$36.14). Figure 9 provides a breakdown of shopping group spending by market while Figure 10 illustrates customer spending by market.

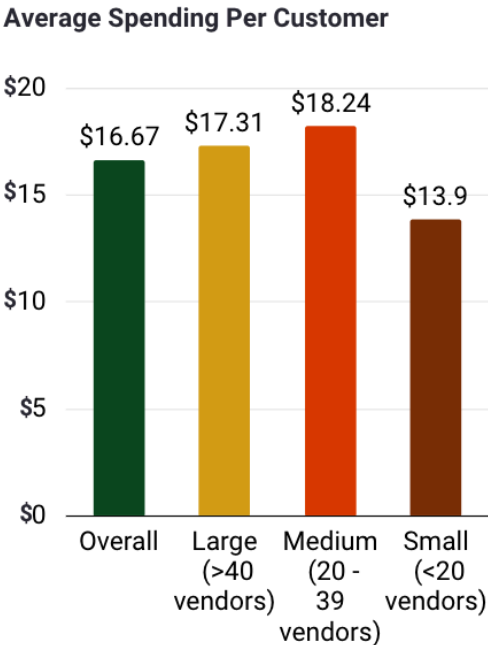


Figure 7

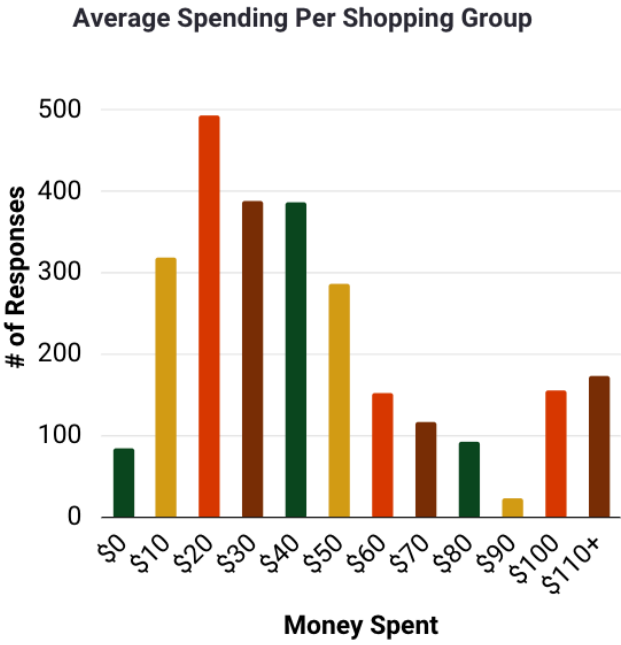


Figure 8

Average Spending Per Group by Market

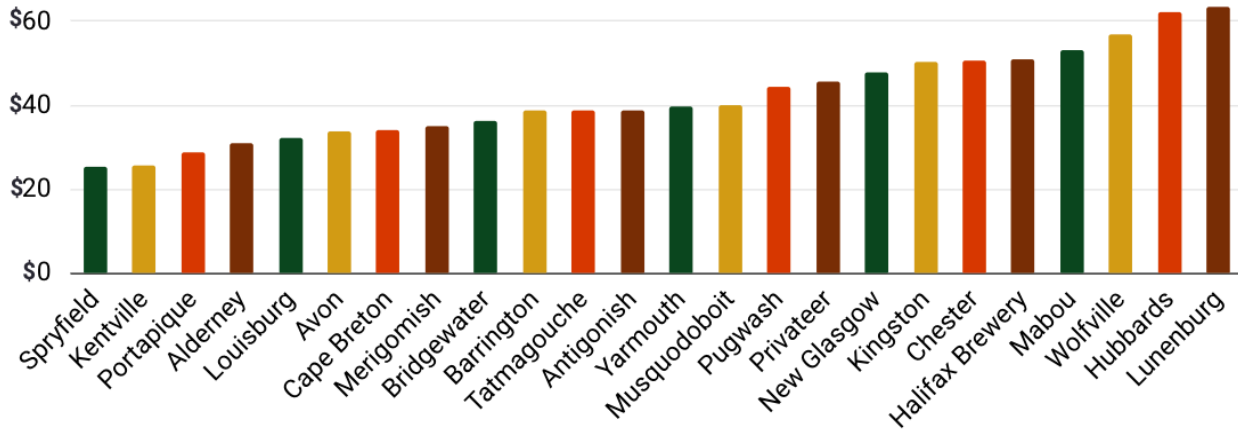


Figure 9

Average Spending Per Person by Market

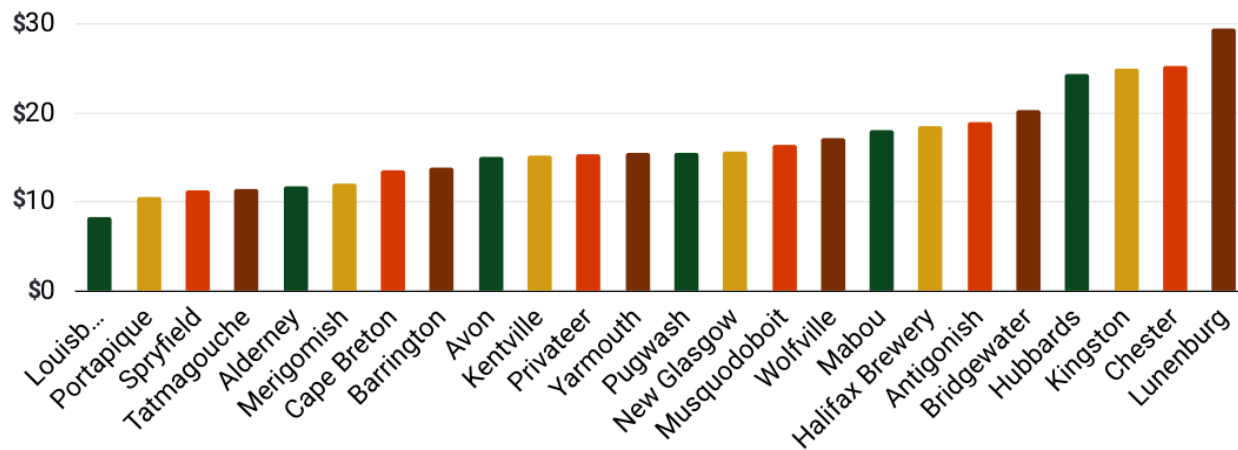


Figure 10  
190.2875 41.96

## Household Spending on Food

According to Canada’s Food Price Report 2023, a Canadian household of four spent \$15,222.80 on food annually, or \$292.75 weekly in 2022<sup>5</sup>. We calculated the per capita average food spending from the national average food spending for a household of 4 and multiplied the per capita figure by 2.6 (shopping group size) for a quick comparison. We can then easily equate ‘household’ to ‘shopping group’, and can see that the average shopping group spent 22.1% of their weekly \$190.29 food budget at the market on the week of the study. The report predicts a further 5-7% increase in

<sup>5</sup>Canada’s Food Price Report 2023. Retrieved from [https://cdn.dal.ca/content/dam/dalhousie/pdf/sites/agri-food/Canada's%20Food%20Price%20Report%202023\\_Digital.pdf](https://cdn.dal.ca/content/dam/dalhousie/pdf/sites/agri-food/Canada's%20Food%20Price%20Report%202023_Digital.pdf)

food inflation for 2023, resulting in a predicted annual food expenditure of \$16,288, or \$313.24 weekly, for a household of four in 2023. If we use the same equation as above for this prediction, the weekly food budget would equate to \$203.61 (for 2.6 people) and the percentage spent at the market by the average shopping group would drop slightly to 20.6%. Therefore, there is considerable room for Nova Scotia's farmers' market sector to capture a larger share of customer spending, especially since not all market purchases are food products.

Nova Scotia had a 10.5% increase in food price inflation from 2022 to 2023, slightly higher than the national average of 10.3%, which represents the highest rate of food inflation over the past 40 years<sup>6</sup>. According to Canada's Food Price Report 2023, Canadian food spending decisions were greatly motivated by attempts to save money, using strategies such as coupons and bulk discounts to reduce their food costs. These significant changes in food costs correspond with the findings from the 2023 Report from Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives – according to their report, the province has seen the most significant increases in required living wage rates between 2022 and 2023, with an average increase of 14% throughout Nova Scotia<sup>7</sup>.

## So What?

Nova Scotians are living in a difficult time, with increasing inflation and cost of living having people cutting costs wherever they can. This can have a significant impact on the farmers' market sector, as consumers are leaving the grocery store with less money to spend at their local farmers' market, or preferentially choosing to shop at big box stores under the impression that food prices might be cheaper there.

The common perception that “local food is an expensive luxury” and “farmers' markets cost more than grocery stores” also contributes to the current environment. Dr. Phoebe Stephens from Dalhousie, a researcher who has been working with FMNS, has found preliminary data to suggest farmers' market prices are lower than consumer perceptions, and in many instances, are increasing at a lower rate than the cost increase for products in supermarkets. Therefore, there is significant potential for increasing basket size in the future. While there is considerable room for Nova Scotia's farmers' market sector to take up more of Nova Scotians' weekly food budgets, 20-22% is not an insignificant percentage, especially given the current challenging economic landscape. This could point to farmers' markets ability to remain resilient and retain customer support even during the most difficult of times.

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid

<sup>7</sup> Saulnier, C. (September 2023). Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. Living wages in Nova Scotia 2023 update: Working for a living, not living to work. Retrieved from [https://policvalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/Nova%20Scotia%20Office/2023/09/FinalLivingWagesinNovaScotia2023\\_0.pdf](https://policvalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/Nova%20Scotia%20Office/2023/09/FinalLivingWagesinNovaScotia2023_0.pdf)

# Making an Impact

## The Economic Impact of Farmers' Markets

Farmers' markets in Nova Scotia play a crucial role in bolstering the local economy, while also providing fresh, local food and providing an important community gathering space. They boost the local economy by fostering business incubation, job creation, and ensure the circulation of money stays within the local community. Additionally, these markets attract shoppers to the area, benefiting surrounding businesses. To accurately assess their economic impact, it is essential to analyze the spending patterns of market customers both at the market and at neighbouring establishments during their visit.

“Direct economic impact” is defined as customer spending at the market (Figure 11), while “indirect economic impact” is defined as market shopper spending at surrounding businesses (Figure 12). By combining direct and indirect spending, the total per capita economic impact of a farmers' market on its community can be determined, on average as \$29.04 per market shopper, per market visit. Figure 13 illustrates both the provincial average (\$29.04), termed “overall”, and the average dollar amount broken down by market size (large \$28.81, medium \$32.68 and small \$24.47 ). The dollar amount can then be multiplied by the average market attendance (1,090), resulting in a one-day average total economic impact of \$31,654 per market per day.

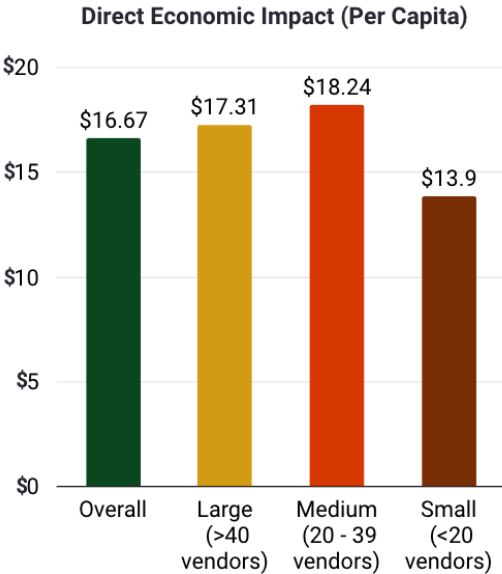


Figure 11

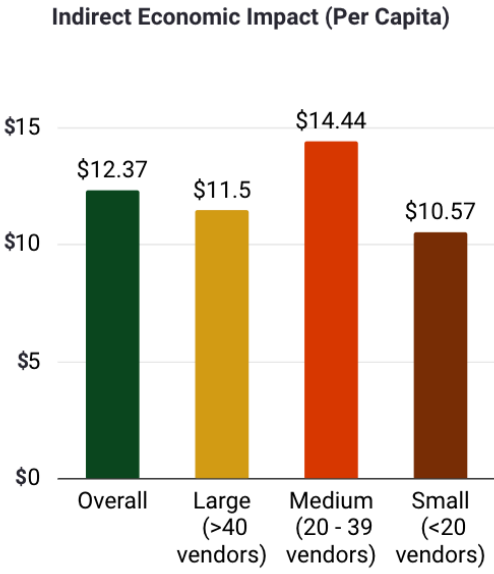


Figure 12

The total economic daily impact per large, medium, and small markets are \$60,991, \$26,634, and \$6,558 per market day respectively. With 44 FMNS farmers' markets (11 large, 13 medium and 20 small) across the province, the sector could be said to have a market day economic impact of \$1,148,302. These numbers could be further extrapolated

by multiplying the daily economic impact of each large, medium and small markets by the number of days a year the markets of that corresponding size are open. When these three numbers are combined, an annual impact of \$43,356,359 can be determined for the entire FMNS sector.

These same calculations can be done to determine the direct (\$25,532,097) and indirect (\$17,824,262) annual economic impact of the sector. The direct economic impact accounts for over half (58.9%) of the overall economic impact of the sector.

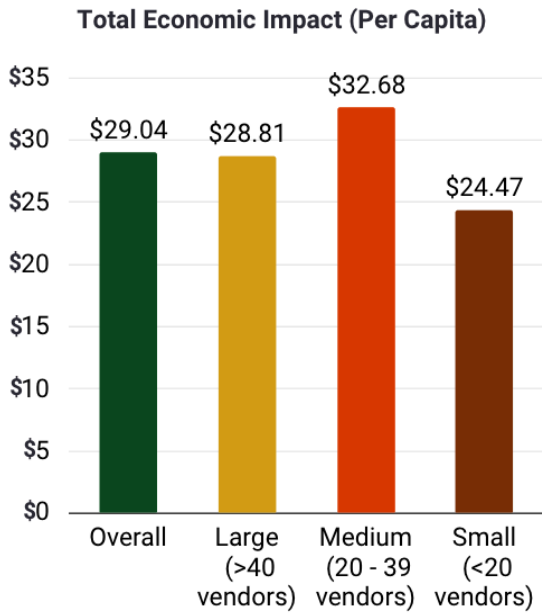


Figure 13

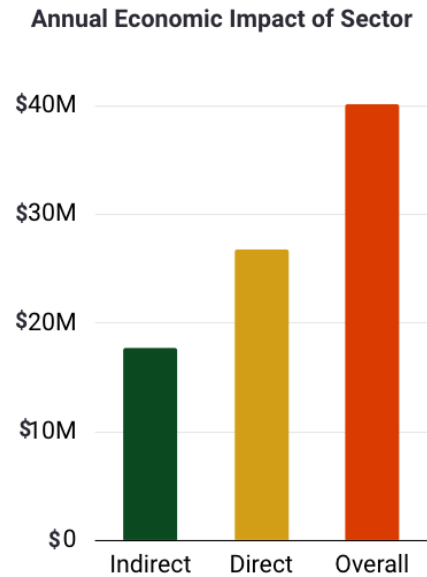


Figure 14

Average Spending At Surrounding Businesses By Market Customers Per Market

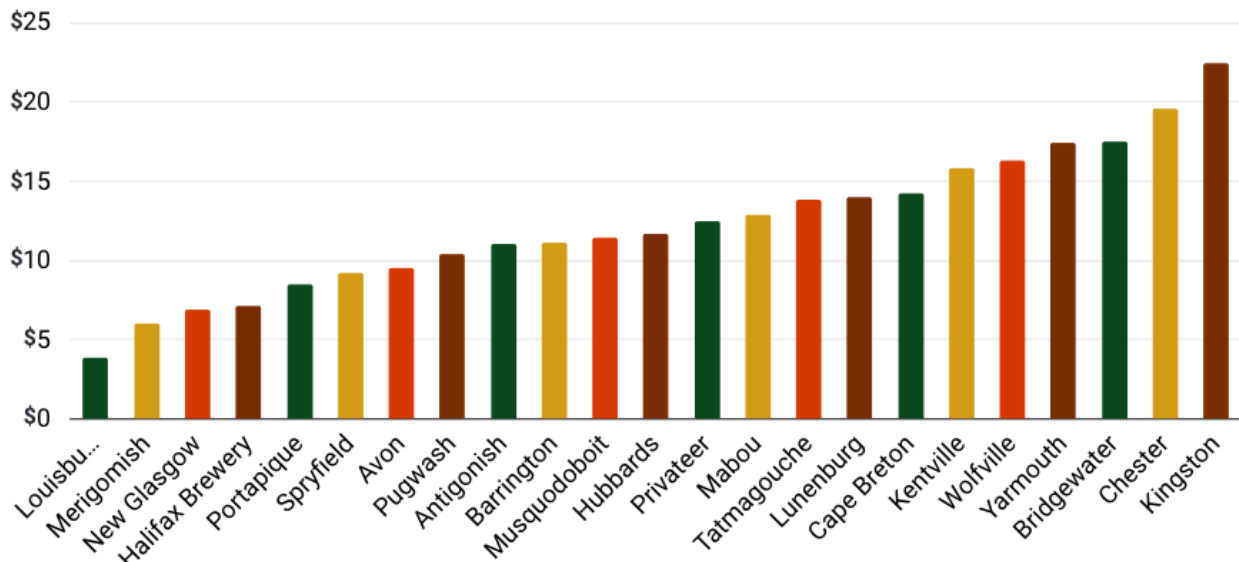


Figure 15

## What Has Changed in 10 years?

### Data Comparison Table 2023 & 2013

Data Comparison	2023	2013 (Inflation Adjusted <sup>8</sup> )
<b>Attendance</b>		
# of FMNS Markets participating in study	24	21
Total Attendance	26,160 patrons	28,833 patrons
Average Attendance	1,090	1,373
Average Attendance Large Markets	2,117	2,435
Average Attendance Medium Markets	815	587
Average Attendance Small Markets	268	562
<b>Group Size</b>		
Average Overall	2.6	1.9
<b>Spending per Group at Market</b>		
Average Overall	\$41.96	\$43.46
Weekly grocery budget spent at the market by average shopping group	22.1% (2022 data)	23%

<sup>8</sup> Based on 26.88% total inflation from 2013 to 2023, per <https://www.bankofcanada.ca/rates/related/inflation-calculator/>

Data Comparison	2023	2013 (Inflation Adjusted <sup>8</sup> )
	20.6% (predicted 2023 data)	
Indirect Economic Impact Spending per person at surrounding businesses		
Overall Average	\$12.37	\$19.50
One-day <u>indirect</u> economic impact per market	\$13,483	\$26,783
Direct Economic Impact Spending per Person at Market		
Overall Average	\$16.67	\$21.29
One-day <u>direct</u> economic impact per market	\$18,170	Data not available
Total Economic Impact (Per Capita)		
Average Overall <u>per person</u>	\$29.04	\$40.44
One-day economic impact <u>per market</u>	\$31,654	\$55,520
Sector-Wide Data	(Weighted Averages)	(Non-weighted Averages)
Total # of Markets in Sector	44 (FMNS Members)	43 (21 FMNS member markets and 22 non-member markets)
Annual attendance of sector	1,481,985	Data not available
Market day <u>indirect</u> economic impact of sector	\$477,448	Data not available
Annual <u>indirect</u> economic impact of sector	\$17,824,262	Data not available
Market day <u>direct</u> economic impact of sector	\$670,855	Data not available
Annual <u>direct</u> economic impact of sector	\$25,532,097 (58.9% of overall economic annual impact)	Data not available
Market Day <u>Total</u> Economic Impact of Sector	\$1,148,302 (48% decrease)	\$2,387,340
Annual <u>Total</u> Economic Impact of Sector	\$43,356,358.53	Data not available-

## Differences Between Studies

### Survey Methodology

There are some inconsistencies in the methodology between the 2013 and 2023 study, which may have impacted some differences when comparing data across studies. There was less time to prepare markets for data collection, which impacted

the methods we used to collect the data. Since we did not have time to prepare the dot surveys used in 2013, we decided to use intercept surveys which were easier for markets to deliver. The use of dot surveys may result in a positivity bias, therefore having a potentially beneficial effect on the spending amounts being recorded compared to the results from the intercept surveys used in 2023, something that would not be present in an intercept survey.

## Survey Timing

Attendance count could be lower this year, because the assessments took place in August & September as opposed to July and August (more closely aligning with peak market and tourism season in 2013) and markets had limited time to decide when they could conduct the assessment. In 2013 for instance Markets had more notice and time to conduct the assessment and therefore could choose to skip a rainy day and instead conduct on a sunny day.

## Impact of Halifax Seaport Market

In 2013, the Halifax Seaport farmers' market had just opened and as a result was attracting an exceptionally large number of visitors, which would have greatly increased attendance numbers in 2013. The Seaport Market is one of the largest Markets and attracts some of the most affluent customers, as it is based in Halifax affluent south end, and tourists coming off the cruise ships. Therefore, not having the Seaport Market participate in this year's study could have resulted in a depressive effect on attendance and both indirect and direct spending.

## Inclusion of Children in Shopping Group

In 2013, participants were asked how many “adults” were part of their shopping group, which was not specified this year. This may have had a depressive effect on the overall economic impact per person, as children typically do not spend money of their own at the market. However, children influence shopping choices and quantities purchased, for instance asking for a treat, or having lunch, and ultimately consuming the goods purchased at the market. Including children in the shopping group also allowed us to more accurately equate ‘household’ to ‘shopping group’ and therefore a more accurate percentage of weekly budgets spent at the market.

## Extrapolation Method

The method of calculating the economic impact of the sector-wide market day also differed between studies, with market sizes being taken into consideration when extrapolating data. This results in a more accurate extrapolation, however given the larger percentage of small markets, it may have a depressive effect on the results when compared to 2013 where they did not use market size in their calculation.

## A Different Landscape

2023 is a very different landscape than 2013. Shopping behaviour has changed significantly since the COVID-19 pandemic, and we are now living in times of financial turmoil, with household income failing to keep pace with rapidly inflating costs of living. With the increase in housing costs, more people rely on their 'discretionary budgets' such as food, to cover the cost of housing<sup>1</sup>. Cost of food is the second highest category of inflation after housing<sup>1</sup>, resulting in people having to spend more at "big box" supermarkets (Superstore, Sobeys) and discount stores (e.g. Walmart, CostCo), and therefore have less money to spend at their local farmers' market.

The consumer trend of convenience food purchasing increased drastically as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. With restaurants closed for in-house eating, the use of companies such as Uber Eats and Skip the Dishes have become a lot more prominent. So too has food boxes such as Hello Fresh, with food being delivered right to people's homes.

The 'Buy Local' culture that also arose during the pandemic has resulted in people spreading their "local" money around to more places, which may result in less "local" money being spent at the market. Money is also being spread across more markets, with 44 FMNS member markets and at least 20 non-member markets in 2023 compared to a total of 21 FMNS member markets and 22 non-member markets in 2013. Therefore, farmers' markets have increased competition.

It should be noted that comparatively, Nova Scotia's farmers' market sector is having a similar economic impact as its closest industry comparable in British Columbia. The total economic impact of the British Columbia Association of Farmers' Markets' member farmers' markets on the British Columbia economy was \$232.9 million in 2023<sup>9</sup>, whereas the total economic impact of FMNS' member farmers' markets on the Nova Scotia economy was \$43,4 million. Adjusted for population, FMNS' member farmers' markets are performing similarly to those in British Columbia, with FMNS' member farmers' markets generating \$40.58 per person per year, versus \$41.52 per person per year in British Columbia.

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<sup>9</sup> 2023 BC Farmers' Market Economic Impact Study. Retrieved from <https://bcfarmersmarket.org/for-markets-vendors/2023-bc-farmers-market-economic-impact-study/>

## The 2023 Vendor Survey

In addition to the rapid market assessment, FMNS conducted a vendor survey to gain a better sense of their member markets' vendors. Highlights of this survey follow.

### Sales Experience

When asked how many years of experience they have in selling their current product at their farmers' market, "over 50% of vendors have been selling their goods for 4 years or more and 45% have been selling for less than 3 years. About one fifth of vendors are in their first year of selling their product at the market.

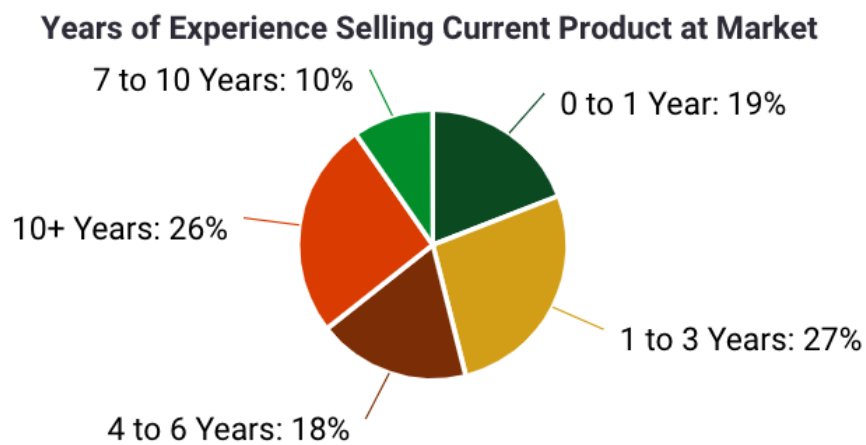


Figure 16

## Average Weekly Sales

### Vendor Owner Average Weekly Sales (from one market)

n = 351

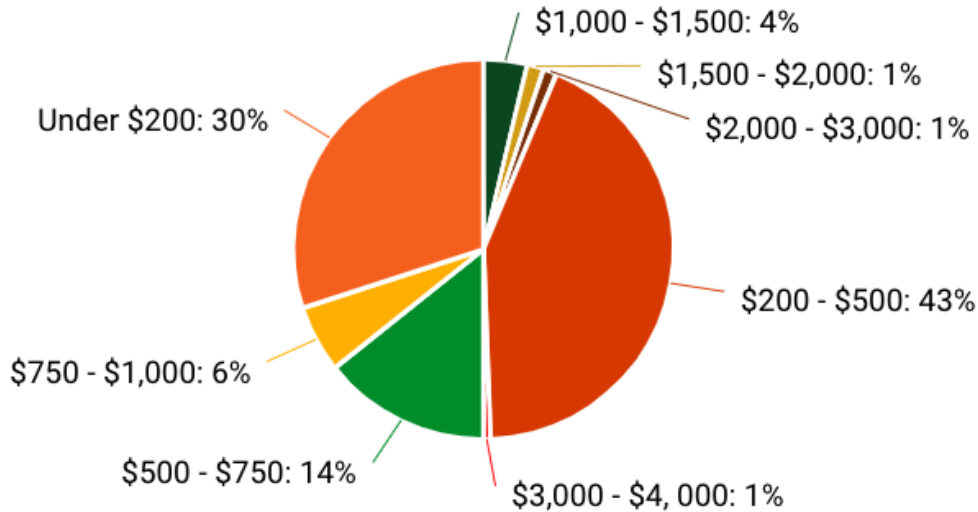


Figure 17

The majority of vendor owners (43%) reported an estimated average weekly sales of \$200-\$500 followed by 30% reporting under \$300 per week. 14% of vendor owners earned an average weekly sale of \$500-\$750, 6% \$750-\$1,000, 4% \$1,000-\$1,500, 2% \$1,500-\$3,000 and less than 1% earned over \$4,000 per week. Note, that these numbers are based on their weekly sales from one market, and therefore does not represent the total weekly sales for vendors who sell at more than one market.

## Employment

The 392 vendors who filled out the survey employ a collective total of 536 employees<sup>10</sup>, including 158 full-time, year round employees, 76 full-time, seasonal employees, 156 part-time, year-round employees and 146 part-time seasonal employees. This translates to a total of 1,513 employees employed by all 44 FMNS markets<sup>11</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> Note these numbers include only those employed by vendor owners not the owners themselves.

<sup>11</sup> This is not based on the total number of vendors that sell at FMNS, but rather based on the average number of vendors present at each market weekly (see Appendix C for calculations).



Figure 18

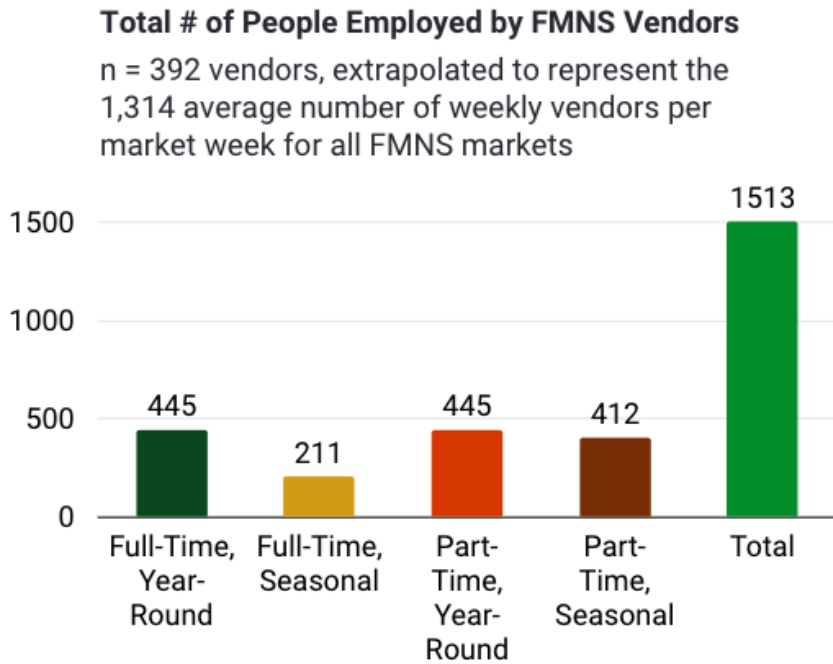


Figure 19

## Gender

Over two-thirds of vendor owners were women (71%), followed by 26% men, 3% equal ownership (man & woman) and less than 1% non-binary. Other vendors (employees, specialty contractors and volunteers) were evenly split between women and men at 45% and 10% for non-binary folks.

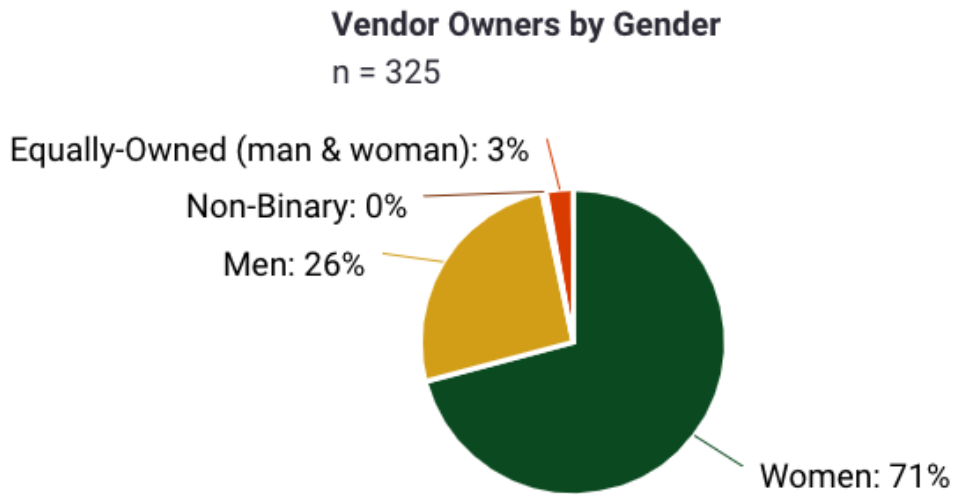


Figure 20

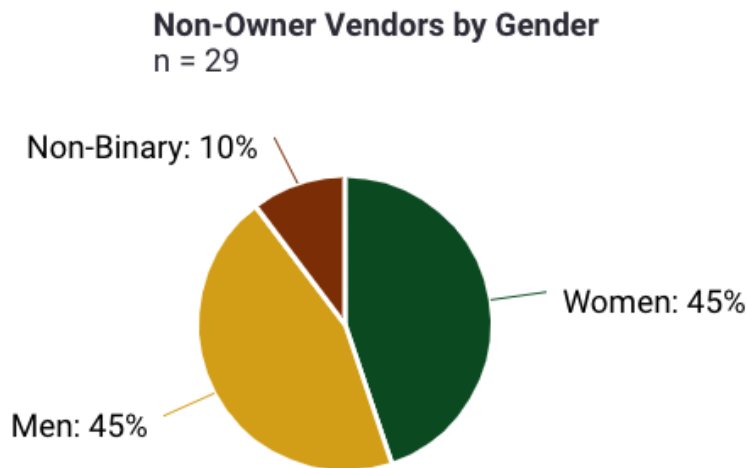


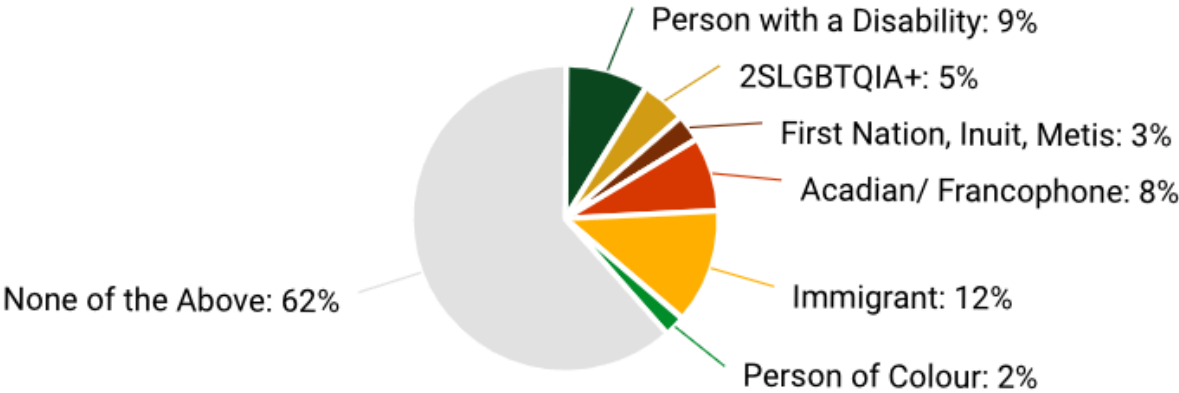
Figure 21

# Diversity

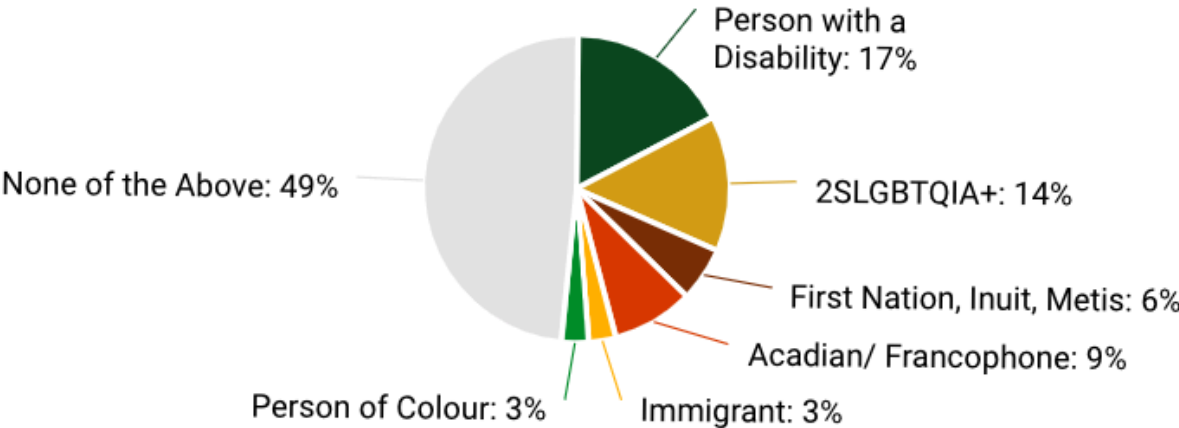
The largest diversity category identified by vendor owners was immigrants (12%), 80% of whom have lived in Canada for 3+ years, followed by persons with a disability (9%), Acadian/Francophone, 2SLGBTQIA+ (5%), First Nation, Inuit or Metis (3%) and finally persons of colour (2%). 62% of respondents did not identify with any of the above categories.

Non-owner vendors (employees, specialty contractors and volunteers) had a much larger representation of people with a disability (17%) and those belonging to the 2SLGBTQIA community (14%). 9% of non-vendor owners identified as Acadian/Francophone, a combined 6% for persons of colour and First Nation, Inuit or Metis, and 3% immigrants. 46% of the 34 non-vendor owners did not identify with any of the above.

**Diversity of Vendor Owners**



**Diversity of Vendor Non-Owners**



Figures 22 & 23

### Immigrant Vendor Owners: Number of Years in Canada

n = 45

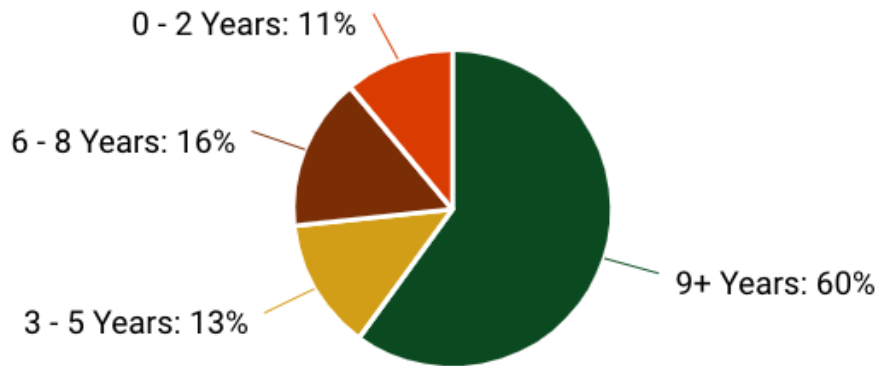


Figure 24

## Economic Impact – In Their Own Words

The economic impact of market vendor participation varies widely among respondents, reflecting a range of experiences. Some participants highlight the market's critical role in their financial well-being, with one participant stating, "This is my 'home' market and is essential to my livelihood, so this market's success means my success and, should it fail, the consequences would be disastrous for my business." This illustrates the markets' significance as a lifeline for certain business owners, directly impacting their economic stability. On the other end of the spectrum, some vendors have been noticing a reduction or stagnation in sales over the past few years.

Vendors have highlighted the positive impact of market participation on their sales and revenue. Some respondents attribute a substantial portion of their income to the market, with one participant noting, "About 50% of all revenue," comes from their market sales, and another emphasizes that without the farmers' market, "for the past 2 years [their] family would not have had an income". Indeed, many vendors expressed their dependence on their market as their sole source of income. Another respondent stated their market revenue "is funding [their] kids' university education". For other vendors, the market provides an important supplement to their main source of income.

Other comments collectively highlight the positive impact of market participation for vendors, not only as a reliable source of income but also as a platform for expanding customer bases and fostering business stability. The market is recognized

for providing exposure to new customers, as one vendor noted, the market has been "great exposure to new clientele...we have had the opportunity to gain more return clients."

Several respondents acknowledged the impact of inflation on their sales within the context of participating in markets. One participant noted, selling at the market has had a "minimal impact, as disposable income is much less this year." Another vendor noted that while their sales are steady, "there has really been no increase in sales over the last 5 years", aligning with self-reported stagnation of market spending. These highlight the direct correlation between consumers' reduced disposable income due to inflation over the last few years and the observed impact on sales. However, certain markets may experience steadier sales, possibly due to the size and location of the market. One respondent notes, "sales from the Brewery [Market] are the most consistent and stable from any other market we attend." The Brewery Market is a large market in Halifax and attracts some of the most affluent customers, and therefore it makes sense that vendors experience more stability at this market. These responses collectively underscore the nuanced ways in which inflation influences spending and subsequently shapes the sales dynamics for businesses participating in markets.

Positive narratives emerge as participants credit the market for providing essential support in launching and sustaining their businesses. Many vendors indicated that the market was responsible for launching their business, expanding and connecting directly with their customer base and marketing their brand. For instance, one entrepreneur shares, they were "able to quit [their] full-time job 7 years ago and focus on [their] business more." Another respondent stated, the farmers' market "launched a business [they] didn't even know [they] had." The market was recognized not only as a platform for sales but also as a catalyst for business development, enabling individuals to transition from part-time to full-time entrepreneurship.

Vendor responses underscored the markets' social impact. Some participants emphasized the market's contribution to community engagement and networking. One respondent said they feel "a closer connection with the community", while another emphasized the importance of being "able to support an amazing community and spend more time with local businesses". Overall, these insights illustrate that market participation goes beyond mere sales figures, playing a pivotal role in building a community's social and cultural capital, in addition to enhancing financial and human capital.

These themes highlight the multifaceted role of markets in supporting livelihoods, fostering community connections, and serving as crucial platforms for business

growth and economic stability. For a comprehensive look at all responses from vendors, see appendix E.

## So What?

Farmers' Markets have diverse and substantial economic and social impacts, ranging from direct financial contributions, to fostering a supportive environment for local businesses and entrepreneurs. These markets play a crucial role in creating a stable and supportive environment for vendors to develop and grow their businesses. farmers' markets are well situated to be the economic drivers of local entrepreneurship.

### Job Creation and Livelihoods

Farmers' markets serve as a significant source of income for many vendors, providing jobs and supporting livelihoods for local entrepreneurs and artisans. Vendor sales can help supplement income, this especially seems to be true for seniors who are retired. Therefore farmers' markets contribute to economic stability by mitigating the risks associated with relying on a single source of income. In addition to supporting the livelihoods of business owners, markets create jobs as vendors grow and require additional capacity to meet the demands of their swelling customer base.

### Markets as Incubators

Farmers' markets play a crucial role in incubating and launching small businesses. Numerous vendors highlighted how the market was the starting point for businesses, providing a platform for growth through product testing and market validation. The farmers' market is the safest place to fail fast and pivot. The market has served as a catalyst for the establishment and growth of various businesses, providing a platform for exposure, customer interaction, and the initial steps toward success. They allow vendors to test and refine their products, connect with customers, and receive immediate feedback. This is especially helpful for emerging entrepreneurs who do not have access to traditional retail spaces. The market also offers a low barrier to entry and therefore can be an especially inclusive place for newcomers to get their businesses up and running. This is confirmed as over 12% of vendors are immigrants, with over 24% of immigrant vendors having lived in Canada for 5 or less years, suggesting the farmers' market has provided them a place to launch their business during a difficult time of transition.

### Supporting Women in Business

The farmers' markets have also demonstrated to be especially important for women entrepreneurs. Over two-thirds (71%) of vendors are women, an unusually high percentage, given that only 17.5% of for-profit businesses in Canada in 2021 were

majority women-owned<sup>12</sup>. This is significant, with women entrepreneurs contributing approximately \$150 billion to the Canadian economy in 2019<sup>13</sup>.

## Local Economic Circulation

By encouraging the "buy local" mentality, farmers' markets contribute to circulating money within the community, supporting local economies and fostering economic resilience. The direct economic impact experienced by vendors, as well as their employees, ensures the recirculation of money in the local economy.

## Community Engagement and Networking

Farmers' markets facilitate community engagement and networking, fostering connections between vendors and customers. This not only builds a sense of community but also supports local economic ecosystems. Beyond economic factors, farmers' markets also contribute to the cultural and social richness of a community. The sense of community created by farmers' markets is an asset to both customers and vendors alike.

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<sup>12</sup> CANADIAN SME Business Magazine. (2023 March). Breaking Barriers: Making Entrepreneurship Accessible to Women in Canada. <https://canadiansme.ca/breaking-barriers-making-entrepreneurship-accessible-to-women-in-canada/>

<sup>13</sup> Ibid

## Recommendations for FMNS

The insights gained through this research leads to a number of recommendations for how FMNS might further enhance the economic and social impact of its member markets.

### Enhance Marketing Efforts

FMNS should invest in marketing strategies to increase awareness of member markets within their communities, focusing on the benefits for individuals and their community. Leverage social media and other digital platforms to promote vendors and attract a wider audience. FMNS' current and aspired marketing and promotions efforts, are already being created with a new wave of farmers' market shoppers in mind. Proposed marketing efforts in 2024 include celebrating the 20th year anniversary of the FMNS Cooperative, including the production and distribution of 50,000 printed NS farmers' market maps.

FMNS has an opportunity to do more storytelling in their marketing. We know from this report that farmers' markets are important incubators for business, and these stories should be showcased. The high representation of women entrepreneurs supported by farmers' markets, and their individual stories, should be shared to demonstrate the accessibility and approachability of the farmers' market for business owners. This is especially true for diverse entrepreneurs who experience barriers in most entrepreneurial spaces. In addition, FMNS can tell the stories of farmers' market 'Alumni' - vendors who, thanks to the support of markets, have successfully grown their business beyond the scope of the market, opening their own store or restaurant. Where are they now? How did the farmers' market help them grow? These questions can be explored, shared and celebrated!

Inflation and rising food costs have diminished the "buy local" movement that had gained momentum during the pandemic. FMNS needs to remind customers why buying local and supporting local food production was and continues to be integral to community resiliency and well-being. Customers need to feel they are "in this together" with local vendors, and to recognize the success of their farmers' market is a direct reflection on the success of their communities. FMNS' marketing and promotions efforts should be directed towards: creating a new wave of farmers' market shoppers; increasing the basket size of existing market shoppers; and pulling people away from non-local "big box" stores and into local businesses.

FMNS should seek to address consumer misconceptions about the perceived higher cost of shopping at farmers' markets, relative to other food retailers. FMNS has already taken significant steps towards this. FMNS is working with Dr. Phoebe

Stephens and Vicki Madziak from Dalhousie University on a research project that will showcase the resilience of local food systems in Nova Scotia by comparing the rate of general food price inflation in the province to price changes at farmers' markets. They have already received the pricing data from one farm from 2018-2023 that lends to their hypothesis – that prices have not risen nearly as rapidly as general food price inflation in the province (which is calculated based on prices in large scale conventional retail). The results of this research will be available in early 2024, and will enable FMNS to strategically position farmers' markets as affordable locations to purchase food and essentials. This will in turn pull people away from supermarkets and into local Markets, while increasing the amount bought by current customers.

## Grow Customer Base

FMNS needs to expand their customer base beyond the typical market goer. One way FMNS has been successful in expanding their customer base is through their Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program. Not only does this program reduce barriers for low-income community members to shop at the farmers' market, it also allows them to experience the many benefits of shopping at the market, including supporting local producers, developing relationships with vendors, and being a part of a larger community - all of which contribute to customer retention. This is indeed true with the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program, where over a third of participants said they will continue shopping at the market even when the program ends and they no longer receive food coupons. This is a significant amount, considering participants face barriers, being low-income and food insecure. Their commitment to continue shopping at the market may also help rebut the misconception of farmers' markets being more expensive.

The Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program also drives new customers to the farmers' market, as participants often bring their kids, friends or other family members along with them who may not have otherwise gone. Many participants note how much they enjoy bringing their children. One stated shopping at the market is “a great opportunity for children to learn why it's good to buy local and support our local farmers”. This was a sentiment shared by many participants. This highlights the opportunity to engage children more in the market experience, instilling the values of the market, while creating fun memories and a sense of ownership over the space. Kids programming and partnerships with schools could aid in educating more children about the benefits of farmers' markets.

## Enhance Support for New Businesses

FMNS should implement programs or initiatives that specifically support and incubate new businesses, providing them with resources and guidance. A

mentorship program where seasoned vendors can help mentor new vendors could be one way to accomplish this. Ensuring programs are inclusive and accessible to marginalized populations will be essential. Given the high proportion of women and immigrant vendors the market already has, it is apparent that the market is already doing a good job at reducing barriers. Therefore, FMNS has the opportunity to be a provincial leader in inclusive, accessible and low-risk opportunities for entrepreneurs, especially those who disproportionately experience barriers. In doing so, FMNS can demonstrate the substantial benefits to enhancing the local economy when all community members have the support and avenues to participate.

FMNS has already started down this path, having recognized that market capacity building is critical to the growth and professionalization of the sector. Thanks to funding from the Nova Scotia Department of Labour, Skills, and Immigration, FMNS is developing a new Market Manager's Handbook, which will be provided to all FMNS member farmers' market managers, staff, and board members, as well as to new and aspiring farmers' market organizers. This comprehensive resource is complementary to FMNS' brand new 2023 Vendor Guidebook, titled *How to Start & Grow Your Business at a farmers' market*, which has been distributed free of charge to a variety of social organizations throughout Nova Scotia, as well as available to borrow through the Nova Scotia public library system.

Moreover, FMNS should expand collaboration with non-profit organizations, both those that are locally situated within communities and larger, regional organizations. Specifically, FMNS should collaborate with entrepreneurial support and incubation-based organizations, especially those focused on supporting women, immigrants, and BIPOC folks, as farmers' markets have already demonstrated to be supportive spaces for these vendors. Some of the FMNS member markets are already engaging in this work. The Wolfville farmers' market has enhanced their entrepreneurial support through their newly launched Sunflower Program. This program is designed to support and reduce barriers for People of Colour to participate in their Saturday markets.

To expand on the work of the Wolfville farmers' market and other member markets, FMNS is launching the *Taking Root* Program this spring. This program is in collaboration with FMNS partners at the Black Business Initiative (BBI), Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS), Ulnooweg Development Group, Centre for Women in Business, and Off the Eaten Path. The goal of the Taking Root program is to reduce barriers and increase support for new business owners who self-identify as Black, Indigenous, Person of Color, or newcomers living in Nova Scotia and are interested in selling locally grown or produced products at their local farmers' market.

## Contribute to Growing a Stronger Local Food Movement

The results of this study provide a sound basis for a province-wide call to action for greater support for local food production. FMNS is already uniquely positioned to advocate on behalf of and in collaboration with food producers, suppliers and other food-based organizations. One of FMNS' strategic goals in its 2023-2026 Strategic Plan is: "Establish FMNS as a key member of the local food, entrepreneurial, and community development ecosystems." Their work to provide expanded market opportunities for farmers' market vendors is apparent in the current status of the [Halifax Regional Food Hub](#). Continuing to collaborate with other organizations across the province to bolster the local food system will provide opportunities to current vendors and create supportive pathways for local entrepreneurs to enter the market.

Use the results from this study to share both the current and potential economic benefits of farmers' markets with customers, community members, businesses and government. Participating markets can share their economic impact snapshots with their local community and stakeholders. This will help inform and draw attention to the benefits of supporting and championing a stronger local food system.

## Include Induced Economic Impacts in Future Research

Future reports should include induced economic impact as well as direct and indirect for a more comprehensive economic impact analysis. Induced impacts include what market vendors and other business owners spend as a result of what they earn from the direct and indirect spending of customers. As money at the farmers' market is being earned by local business owners, the induced economic impact would be significant, as the money earned is put back into the local economy. This would also allow for a more comprehensive analysis of the impact of farmers' market and vendor employment, as their earnings are also recirculated into the local economy.

## Include Qualitative Analysis

Including qualitative data from customers could help identify influences on customer spending habits and motivations. Customer engagement is critical in understanding how to better enhance their Market experience, and spending. Qualitative data would also be useful in highlighting the social return on investment. Farmers' markets are part of the social fabric of a community, and a key platform for building social capital, especially in rural areas. The impact farmers' markets have in

improving community resilience through both economic and social impacts should be documented. It would also be useful to determine what percentage of out of province tourists markets are capturing, as this demographic has a significant impact on the local economy by bringing money into the province.

## Increase Frequency of Economic Impact Assessments

This 10-year comparison highlights the many changes that can occur in a relatively short amount of time. Global affairs, climate change, inflation and more are having significant impacts on customer spending, producer revenue and the overall success of the farmers' market. These changes, as seen with the pandemic, can be abrupt and have long-lasting impacts. Therefore, economic impact reports should be conducted more frequently, at least bi-annually. This would allow for temperature checks on the current status to make adjustments as needed.

## Conclusion

Farmers' markets act as significant economic drivers for their communities and the province as a whole. On the day of the study, the average market saw 1,090 patrons, with each spending an average of \$16.67 at the market, resulting in customers spending \$18,170 on local goods during a typical day of operation. Market customers also spent an average of \$12.37 at other local businesses in the course of their market trip, resulting in a one day indirect impact of \$13,483 per market. Using weighted averages based on market size, a one-day total economic impact of the sector amounted to \$1,148,302 – a 48% decrease from 2013. This stark difference can be partially explained by differences in methodology; however it also speaks to the significant changes in the retail food landscape and the record levels of food inflation.

There is significant room to capture more of people's spending. The results of this study stress the urgent need for greater support to sustain and grow the local food ecosystem in Nova Scotia. The next step in building a more comprehensive insight into the economic impact of farmers' market is to conduct this study more frequently and incorporate other data points including induced economic impact and social return on investment.

# Appendices

## Appendix A: Rapid Market Assessment Detailed Handout



### FMNS Rapid Market Assessment 2023

Data Collection Overview for Market Managers

#### [About the Rapid Market Assessment](#)

The Rapid Market Assessment is the first part of a two part Economic Impact Study for FMNS. The Rapid Market Assessment (RMA) was developed by Oregon State University's Larry Lev and Garry Stephenson. It is a simple, low-cost method that allows markets to gather valuable information without requiring large investments of money or time from market staff, vendors or patrons. This study will measure the economic impact that farmers' markets have on the communities in which they are located, as well as to gather relevant customer data to help markets make informed operational decisions. The second part of the study will be a vendor analysis and more information on that will be shared soon.

Completing this assessment now is also very timely for two reasons. First, because the last economic impact study was done in 2013, which is why 2023 is the optimal year to conduct another assessment for a 10 year comparison. Secondly, with the food and beverage and similar reports coming out, we can present this data so farmers' markets are not left out of the conversations and decision making happening in the sector.

#### [Benefits of the Study](#)

The Rapid Market Assessment is beneficial for your Market for a few reasons:

- Every market will receive a one page snapshot of their annual economic impact which is helpful for fundraising, social media and other marketing channels
- The data can help inform business, strategic and marketing plans
- Provides a benchmark or baseline measurement
- Provides customer feedback
- Allows you to compare your market to other markets.

### August Commitment

- Attend or watch recording of one Rapid Market Assessment Training webinar for staff/volunteers
  - This will be an opportunity to ask more questions, and receive training on how to conduct the assessment
- One day in August of data collection that includes:
  - Collecting attendance counts
  - Conducting intercept surveys
  - Reporting data back to FMNS
- Email Melissa [mgrandberg.work@gmail.com](mailto:mgrandberg.work@gmail.com) with the date you have chosen to conduct the survey.
- Minimum 2 - 4 staff/volunteers to conduct counts and surveys, depending on size of market:
  - Small Markets: 2 staff/volunteers
  - Medium Markets: 3 staff/volunteers
  - Larger Markets: 4 staff/volunteers
- Materials:
  - Clipboard(s), pens, printed copies of count sheet and surveys, tally counter, table
  - To help you in these efforts, FMNS will provide each market with \$100 as an administration fee, and will cover up to \$50 for materials needed (Receipts required).
- Map out your Market

- Map out your Market to get a good sense of the best locations for doing attendance counts and intercept surveys. Think about contingency plans too, for instance if the weather takes a turn.

## How it Works

Note: Market size is based on the following:

- Small Markets = <20 vendors
- Medium Markets = 20-39 vendors
- Large Markets = 40+ vendors

### Step #1. Attendance Counts

To be part of this Rapid Market Assessment, your market must conduct an attendance count on the day of the study. For the purpose of this study, attendance counting involves counting adults entering the market. The following guide for conducting Attendance Counts is the minimum expectation. If you already have a counting system in place that goes above and beyond the following guide (e.g. laser counters), you can use that system instead.

- See count sheet template provided
- When should counts be conducted?
  - Each hour the market is open
  - Same time period each hour
  - 10 minutes each hour (e.g. from 25 minutes past the hour to 35 minutes past the hour)
- Where are counts conducted?
  - At each entrance point
  - If the market is outdoors or people enter from all directions, use imaginary lines to divide “count areas” between volunteers.
- Use hand tally counters to count adults entering the market
- Enter total count at the end of each 10 minute period on count sheet

### Step #2. Intercept surveys

Intercept surveys are a quick and low resource way to gather information from visitors. The unit of measurement for the surveys is the shopping group, so this is a group of adults who are shopping together or managing their money in common (for example, a family, a group of friends, roommates, etc.). An individual can also be a shopping group if they are shopping alone. For more information on how to conduct the survey, view the Intercept Survey Template provided.

- What is the minimum number of intercept surveys that should be conducted?
  - 50 surveys for small markets
  - 100 surveys for medium markets
  - 150 for large markets
- What are the minimum staff/volunteer recommendations?
  - 1 staff/volunteer for small Markets
  - 2 - 3 staff/volunteers for Medium to Large Markets
  - Staff/volunteers will be intercepting market goers to conduct the survey with them
- Location
  - High traffic area(s) that will not inconvenience vendors, at an exit if possible
  - Provide a table for participants to leave their bags while responding

### Step #3. Report back data

- The final step, after completing a day of data collection, is to send in your data using the [online survey link](#) provided.
- Volunteers or staff will need to complete the basic calculations on the attendance sheet and input the total count at the bottom of the table provided on the count sheet.
- Tallies on surveys need to be added up for a total response number per answer to each question. If multiple survey sheets were used, be sure to add them all together for one final count for each answer.
- The deadline to submit data is September 11, 2023. But we highly recommend completing this third step on the day of to simplify the process for your team.

## Appendix B: Intercept Survey and Handout for Volunteers



### Rapid Market Assessment Intercept Survey

#### Background for Volunteers:

The Rapid Market Assessment is the first part of a two part Economic Impact Study for FMNS. It is a low cost, low resource way to collect valuable information. This data is really important for being able to capture the economic impact farmers' markets have on their communities. The last assessment was done in 2013, allowing us to do a 10 year comparison this year.

#### How to use intercept surveys:

Stay in a general area, such as at an exit, but be sure to invite customers over, do not wait for them to come up to you. These surveys are voluntary, you can explain why completing a survey would help support their market, but respect when someone does not want to fill it out.

You can offer to complete the survey with them, or they can fill it out themselves. If they chose to fill it out themselves, be sure to show them how. Stay close without looking over their shoulder, so you can answer any questions they may have. Offer a place on a table that they can set down their bags while answering. If they are unsure, offer for them to have a look at the questions before deciding.

#### What to say to customers:

- Good morning/afternoon! I have a survey here on behalf of the farmers' market to help us capture a snapshot of a day at our market to contribute to a larger economic impact study on Markets across NS. Do you have 3 minutes to

answer 4 multiple choice questions? We do not ask for any identifying information and your answers are confidential.

- Remind them: There are no wrong or better answers to these questions, answer the questions on behalf of your shopping group and use a tally to indicate your group's answers.



## **2023 Rapid Market Assessment Survey**

Thank you for completing the 2023 Rapid Market Assessment Survey! Please answer the following 4 questions on behalf of your shopping group, or for yourself if you are shopping alone. There is no right or wrong way to answer the following questions, answers as accurately as you can. Place one tally in the box of the answer that best fits your group's answer. If your group is visiting from multiple locations, you may use a tally for each location that applies to your group. There is one question per page.

1. How many people came with you to the market today? (one tally per group)

a) No-one (Just me)	b) 1 Person
c) 2 People	d) 3 People
e) 4 People	f) 5 People
g) 6+ People	

2. How much did your group spend at the market today? (one tally per group)

a) \$0	b) \$10	c) \$20
d) \$30	e) \$40	f) \$50
g) \$60	h) \$70	i) \$80
j) \$90	k) \$100	l) \$110+

3. How much did your group spend at surrounding businesses and/or intend to spend at surrounding businesses today? (one tally per group)

a) \$0	b) \$10	c) \$20
d) \$30	e) \$40	f) \$50
g) \$60	h) \$70	i) \$80
j) \$90	k) \$100	l) \$110+

4. Where are you visiting from? (Check each location that applies to your group)

a) Town/Community of Market	b) Adjacent Community	c) HRM
d) Other Community NS	e) Out of Province	

# Appendix C: Vendor Survey



## FMNS Economic Impact Vendor Survey

1. What role best describes you?

- a. Owner
- b. Employee
- c. Specialty Contractor
- d. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

2. During market season, how many times do you sell at this market?

- a. 2 or more times a week
- b. Once a week
- c. Biweekly
- d. Once a month
- e. Less than once a month

3. How many employees do you employ? (Not including the owner)

	Seasonal	Year-Round
Part-time		
Full-time		

4. How many FMNS member markets do you sell at? (Including this one): \_\_\_\_\_

5. What category does your primary product of sale fall into?

- a. Primary producer (fruits & veg)
- b. Primary producer (meat/eggs/dairy)
- c. Primary producer (grains, flowers, other)
- d. Seafood
- e. Baked goods
- f. Alcohol
- g. Value-added (e.g. maple, honey, preserves, spice mixes, etc.)
- h. Prepared foods (e.g. food to go)
- i. Artisan or maker

6. What category does your secondary product of sale fall into, if any?

- a. Primary producer (fruits & veg)
- b. Primary producer (meat/eggs/dairy)
- c. Primary producer (grains, flowers, other)
- d. Seafood
- e. Baked goods
- f. Alcohol
- g. Value-added (e.g. maple, honey, preserves, spice mixes, etc.)
- h. Prepared foods (e.g. food to go)
- i. Artisan or maker

7. What is your average weekly sales from this market?

- a. Under \$200
- b. \$200 to \$500
- c. \$500 to \$750
- d. \$750 to \$1,000
- e. \$1,000 to \$1,500
- f. \$1,500 to \$2,000
- g. \$2,000 to \$3,000
- h. \$3,000 to \$4,000
- i. \$4,000 +

8. What is your gender? \_\_\_\_\_

9. What age category do you fall into?

- a. 15 - 24
- b. 25 - 34
- c. 35 - 44
- d. 45 - 54
- e. 55 - 64
- f. 65 - 74
- g. 75+

10. What demographics listed below do you identify with? (Please check all that apply.)

- a. Person with a disability
- b. 2SLGBTQIA+
- c. First Nation, Inuit, Metis
- d. Acadian/Francophone
- e. Immigrant
- f. Person of Colour
- g. Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

11. How long have you lived in Canada?

- a. 0 - 2 years
- b. 3 - 5 years
- c. 6 - 8 years
- d. 9+ years

12. What is your first language?

13. What style of business best describes your business?

- a. Sole proprietorship
- b. Partnership
- c. Corporation
- d. Co-operative
- e. Non-Profit
- f. Unregistered

14. How many years of experience do you have selling your current product at a Farmers Market?

- a. 0 - 1 years
- b. 1 - 3 years
- c. 4 - 6 years
- d. 7 - 10 years
- e. 10+ years

15. How long do you commute to this market?

- a. 0 - 15 min
- b. 16 - 30 min
- c. 31 - 45 min
- d. 46 - 60 min
- e. 60+ min

16. In one sentence, describe the economic impact that your participation in this Market has had on you and your business?

17. Is there anything else you would like to share?

## Appendix D: Economic Impact Calculations

### Participating Market Data Calculations

#### Indirect Economic Impact Calculations

One-Day Indirect Economic Impact per Participating Market

= (indirect economic impact per capita) x (average daily attendance, all markets)

= \$12.37 x 1,090

= \$13,483.3

#### Direct Economic Impact Calculations

Direct Economic Impact per Capita

= average direct economic impact per capita x average daily attendance

= \$16.67 x 1090

= 18,170.3

#### Total Economic Impact Calculations

Total Economic Impact Per Capita

= (indirect economic impact per capita) + (direct economic impact per capita)

= \$12.37 + \$16.67

= \$29.04

One Day Economic Impact Per Market

= (Total economic impact per capita) x (average daily attendance, all markets)

= \$29.04 x 1,090

= \$31,653.60

### Calculations for Sector-Wide Data (Weighted Averages)

#### Total Annual Attendance of Sector

= (Average daily attendance large markets) x (sum of all large markets days of operation per year) + (Average daily attendance medium markets) x (sum of all medium markets days of operation per year) + (Average daily attendance small markets) x (sum of all small markets days of operation per year)

= 2,117 x 501 + 815 x 372 + 268 x 441

= 1,481,985

### Indirect Economic Impact Calculations

Large Markets: One-day indirect economic impact per market per day

= (indirect economic impact per capita large markets) x (average daily attendance, large markets)

= \$11.50 x 2,117

= \$24,345.5

Large Markets: Market day indirect economic impact of sector

= (One-day indirect economic impact per day large market) x (# of Large Markets)

= \$24,345.5 x 11

= \$267,800.5

Large Markets: Annual indirect economic impact of sector

= (One-day indirect economic impact per day large market) x (sum of all large markets days of operation per year)

= \$24,345.5 x 501

= \$12,197,095.5

Medium Markets: One-day indirect economic impact per market per day

= (indirect economic impact per capita medium markets) x (average daily attendance, medium markets)

= \$14.44 x 815

= \$11,768.6

Medium Markets: Market day indirect economic impact of sector

= (indirect economic impact per day, medium market) x (# of Medium Markets)

= \$11,768.6 x 13

= \$152,991.8

Medium Markets: Annual indirect economic impact of sector

= (indirect economic impact per day, medium market) x (sum of all medium markets days of operation per year)

= \$11,768.6 x 372

= \$4,377,919.2

Small Markets: One-day Indirect Economic Impact per Market per Day

= (indirect economic impact per day small markets) x (average daily attendance, small markets)

= \$10.57 x 268

= \$2,832.76

Small Markets: Market day Indirect Economic Impact of Sector

= (indirect economic impact per day, small market) x (# of small markets)

= \$2,832.76 x 20

= \$56,655.2

Small Markets: Annual Indirect Economic Impact of Sector

= (indirect economic impact per day, small market) x (sum of all small markets days of operation per year)

= \$2,832.76 x 441

= \$1,249,247.16

Market Day Indirect Economic Impact of Sector (weighted average)

= (one day indirect economic impact of large markets) + (one day indirect economic impact of medium markets) + (one day indirect economic impact of small markets)

$$= \$267,800.5 + \$152,991.8 + \$56,655.2$$

$$= \$477,447.5$$

Annual Indirect Economic Impact of Sector (weighted average)

= (annual indirect economic impact of large markets) + (annual indirect economic impact of medium markets) + (annual indirect economic impact of small markets)

$$= \$12,197,095.5 + \$4,377,919.2 + \$1,249,247.16$$

$$= \$17,824,261.86$$

### Direct Economic Impact Calculations

Large Markets: One-day Direct Economic Impact per Market per Day

= (direct economic impact per capita, large markets) x (average daily attendance, large markets)

$$= \$17.31 \times 2,117$$

$$= \$36,645.27$$

Large Markets: Market Day Direct Economic Impact of Sector

= (direct economic impact per day, large markets) x (# of Large Markets)

$$= \$36,645.27 \times 11$$

$$= \$403,097.97$$

Large Markets: Annual Direct Economic Impact of Sector

= (Direct Economic Impact per day, large market) x (sum of all large markets days of operation per year)

$$= \$36,645.27 \times 501$$

$$= \$18,359,280.27$$

Medium Markets: One-day Direct Economic Impact per Market per Day

= (direct economic impact per capita, medium markets) x (average daily attendance, medium markets)

$$= \$18.24 \times 815$$

$$= \$14,865.6$$

Medium Markets: Market Day Direct Economic Impact of Sector

$$= (\text{direct economic impact per day, medium market}) \times (\# \text{ of Medium Markets})$$

$$= \$14,865.6 \times 13$$

$$= \$193,252.8$$

Medium Markets: Annual Direct Economic Impact of Sector

$$= (\text{direct economic impact per day, medium market}) \times (\text{sum of all medium markets days of operation per year})$$

$$= \$14,865.6 \times 372$$

$$= \$5,530,003.2$$

Small Markets: One-day Direct Economic Impact per Market per Day

$$= (\text{direct economic impact per capita, small markets}) \times (\text{average daily attendance small markets})$$

$$= \$13.90 \times 268$$

$$= \$3,725.2$$

Small Markets: Market Day Direct Economic Impact of Sector

$$= (\text{direct economic impact per day, small market}) \times (\# \text{ of small markets})$$

$$= \$3,725.2 \times 20$$

$$= \$74,504$$

Small Markets: Annual Direct Economic Impact of Sector

$$= (\text{direct economic impact per day, small market}) \times (\text{sum of all small markets days of operation per year})$$

$$= \$3,725.2 \times 441$$

$$= \$1,642,813.2$$

Market Day Direct Economic Impact of Sector (weighted average)

= (one day direct economic impact of large markets) + (one day direct economic impact of medium markets) + (one day direct economic impact of small markets)

= 403,097.97 + \$193,252.8 + \$74,504

= \$670,854.77

Annual Direct Economic Impact of Sector (Weighted Average)

= (annual direct economic impact of large markets) + (annual direct economic impact of medium markets) + (annual direct economic impact of small markets)

= \$18,359,280.27 + \$5,530,003.2 + \$1,642,813.2

= \$25,532,096.67

### Total Economic Impact Calculations

Large Markets: Total Economic Impact Per Capita

= (direct economic impact per capita, large markets) + (indirect economic impact per capita, large markets)

= \$17.31 + \$11.50

= \$28.81

Large Markets: One-day Direct Economic Impact per Market per Day

= (total Economic Impact per day, large markets) x (average daily attendance, large markets)

= \$28.81 x 2,117

= \$60,990.77

Large Markets: Market Day Direct Economic Impact of Sector

= (total economic impact per day, large markets) + (# of Large Markets)

= \$60,990.77 x 11

= \$670,898.47

Large Markets: Annual Direct Economic Impact of Sector

= (total economic impact per day, large markets) x (sum of all large markets days of

operation per year)

$$= \$60,990.77 \times 501$$

$$= \$30,556,376 \text{ (annual economic impact of large markets)}$$

Medium Markets: Total Economic Impact Per Capita

= (direct economic impact per capita, medium markets) + (indirect economic impact per capita, medium markets)

$$= \$18.24 + \$14.44$$

$$= \$32.68$$

Medium Markets: One-day Direct Economic Impact per Market per Day

= (Total economic impact medium markets) x (average daily attendance, medium markets)

$$= \$32.68 \times 815$$

$$= \$26,634.2$$

Medium Markets: Market Day Direct Economic Impact of Sector

= (Total economic impact per day, medium market) x (# of Medium Markets)

$$= \$26,634.2 \times 13$$

$$= \$346,244.6 \text{ (One day economic impact of sector)}$$

Medium Markets: Annual Direct Economic Impact of Sector

= (Total economic impact per day, medium market) x (sum of all medium markets days of operation per year)

$$= \$26,634.2 \times 372$$

$$= \$9,907,922.4$$

Small Markets: Total Economic Impact Per Capita

= (direct economic impact per capita, small markets) + (indirect economic impact per capita, small markets)

$$= \$13.90 + \$10.57$$

$$= \$24.47$$

Small Markets: One-day Direct Economic Impact per Market per Day

= (total economic impact per capita, small markets) x (average daily attendance, small markets)

= \$24.47 x 268

= \$6,557.96

Small Markets: Market Day Direct Economic Impact of Sector

= (total economic impact per day, small market) x (# of small markets)

= \$6,557.96 x 20

= \$131,159.2

Small Markets: Annual Direct Economic Impact of Sector

= (total economic impact per day, small market) + (sum of all small markets days of operation per year)

= \$6,557.96 x 441

= \$2,892,060.36

Market Day Total Economic Impact of Sector (weighted average)

= (one day total economic impact of large markets) + (one day total economic impact of medium markets) + (one day total economic impact of small markets)

= \$670,898.47 + \$346,244.6 + \$131,159.2

= \$1,148,302.27

Annual Total Economic Impact of Sector (weighted average)

= (annual total economic impact of large markets) + (annual total economic impact of medium markets) + (annual total economic impact of small markets)

= \$30,556,376.77 + \$9,907,922.4 + \$2,892,060.36

= \$43,356,358.53

## Employment

Full-Time, Year-Round Employees in Sector

0.4 (Average full-time, year-round employees per vendor) x 1,113 (total # of vendors per day at all markets) = 445

Full-Time, Seasonal Round Employees in Sector

0.19 (Average full-time, seasonal employees per vendor) x 1,113 (total # of vendors per day at all markets) = 211

Part-Time, Year-Round Employees of Sector

0.4 (Average part-time, year-round employees per vendor) x 1,113 (total # of vendors per day at all markets) = 445

Part-Time, Seasonal Round Employees of Sector

0.37 (Average part-time, seasonal employees per vendor) x 1,113 (total # of vendors per day at all markets) = 412

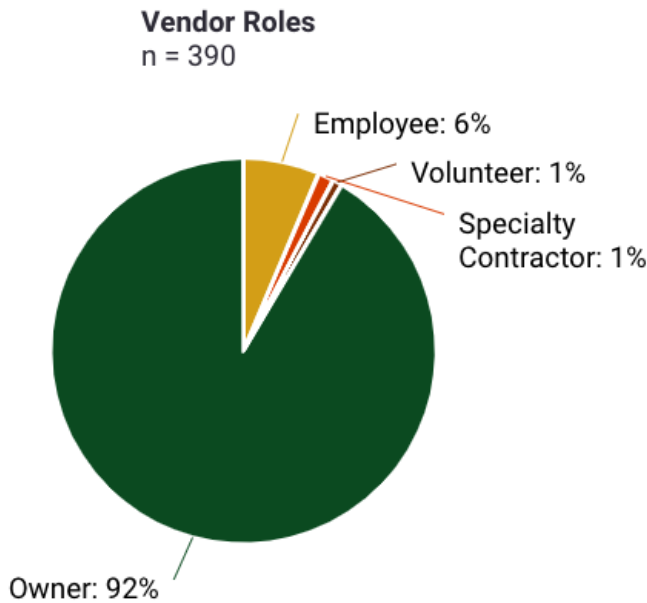
Total Number of Employees, Employed by Vendors in Sector

445 (Total full-time, year-round employees employed by FMNS vendors) + 211 (Total full-time, seasonal employees employed by FMNS vendors) + 445 (Total part-time, year-round employees employed by FMNS vendors) + 412 (Total part-time, seasonal employees employed by FMNS vendors) = 1,513

# Appendix E: Vendor Survey Results

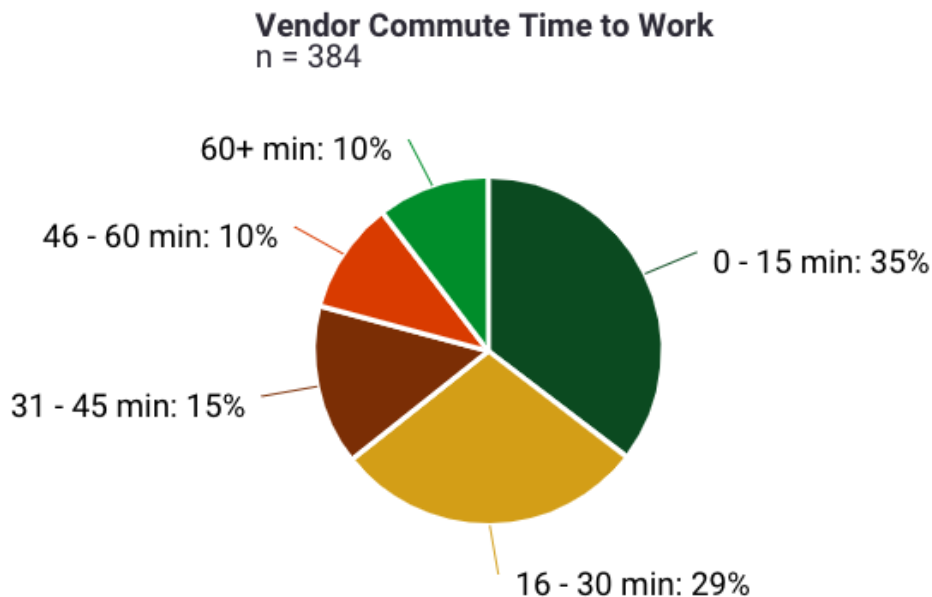
## Vendor Roles

A significant majority of vendors (92%) identified as owners, including one owner-worker, followed by 6% employees, and 1% for both volunteers and specialty contractors.



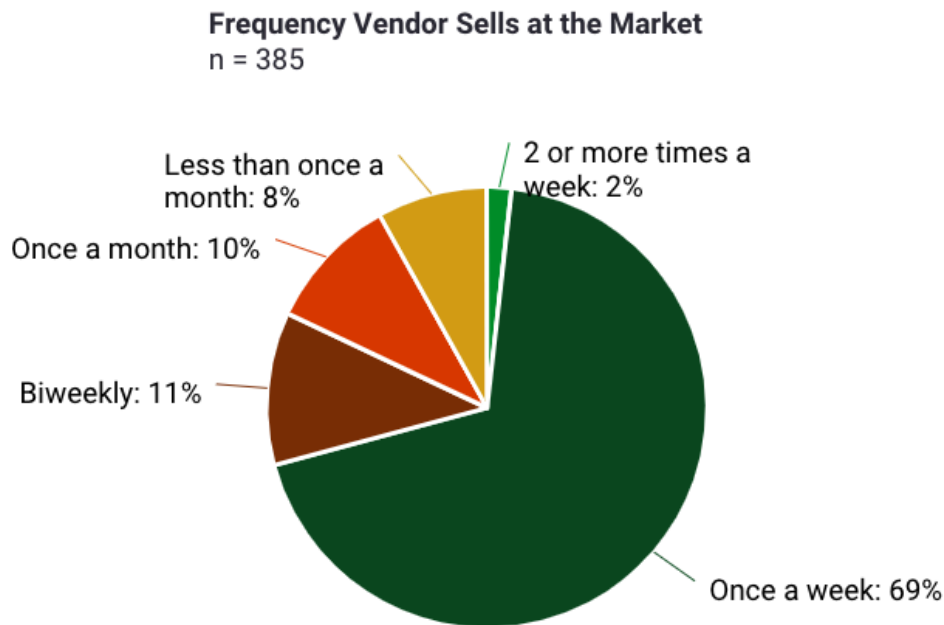
## Vendor Commute Time to Work

About two-thirds (64%) of vendors live in close proximity to their farmers' market, commuting up to only 30 minutes. The other third (35%) commute more than 30 minutes, with 20% of vendors commuting more than 46 minutes to sell their products at the farmers' market.



### Frequency Vendor Sell at the Market

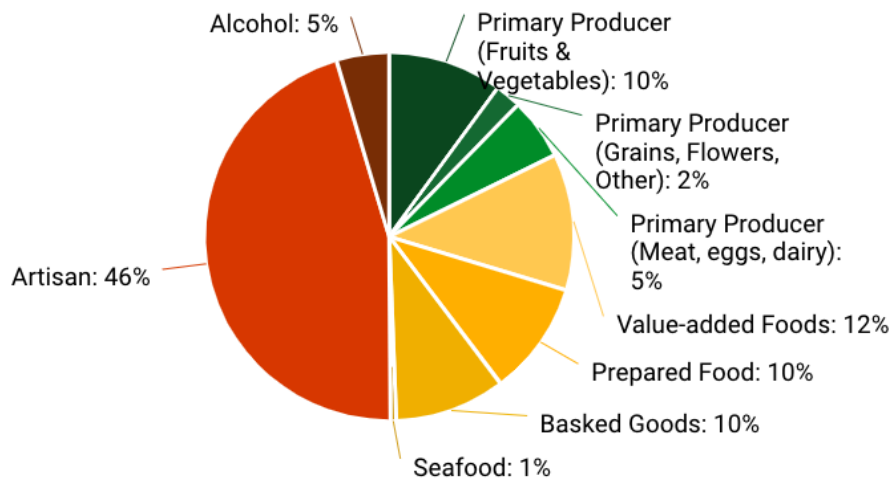
When asked how often they sell at this particular market, 69% said weekly, 11% biweekly, 10% once a month, 8% less than once a month and 2% two or more times a week. Note that vendors were asked to respond to this market only. With the average vendor selling at 1.7 markets, some vendors could be selling more frequently when taking all their markets into account.



## Primary Categories of Sales

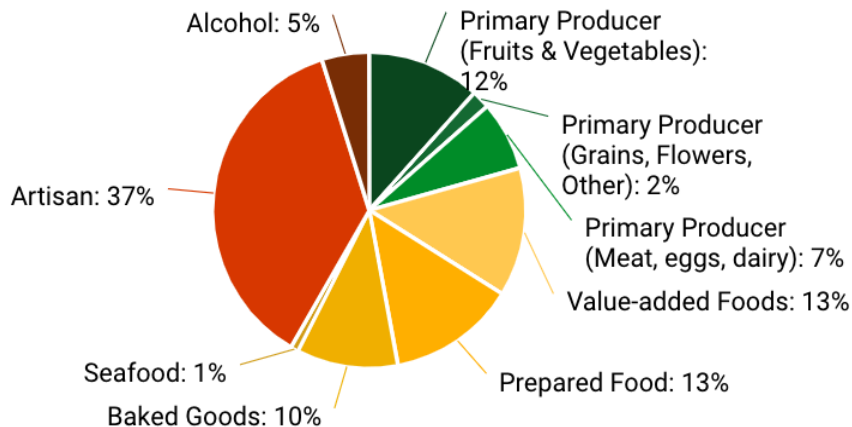
We looked at the categories of sales for all vendors as well as only the vendors who sold once a week. The largest category for primary sales was artisan and maker at 46% (all vendors) and 37% (weekly vendors). Primary producers made up 17% (All Vendors) and 21% (weekly vendors) of primary sales. Other food categories (value-added, prepared, baked goods and seafood) make up 33% (all vendors) and 37% (weekly vendors) of primary sales. Alcohol made up %5 for both all vendors and weekly vendors. When looking at only weekly vendors, the artisan and maker category went down 9%, while increasing food categories by a combined total of 8%.

**Primary Category of Sales (All Vendors)**



**Primary Category of Sales (Weekly Vendors)**

n = 266

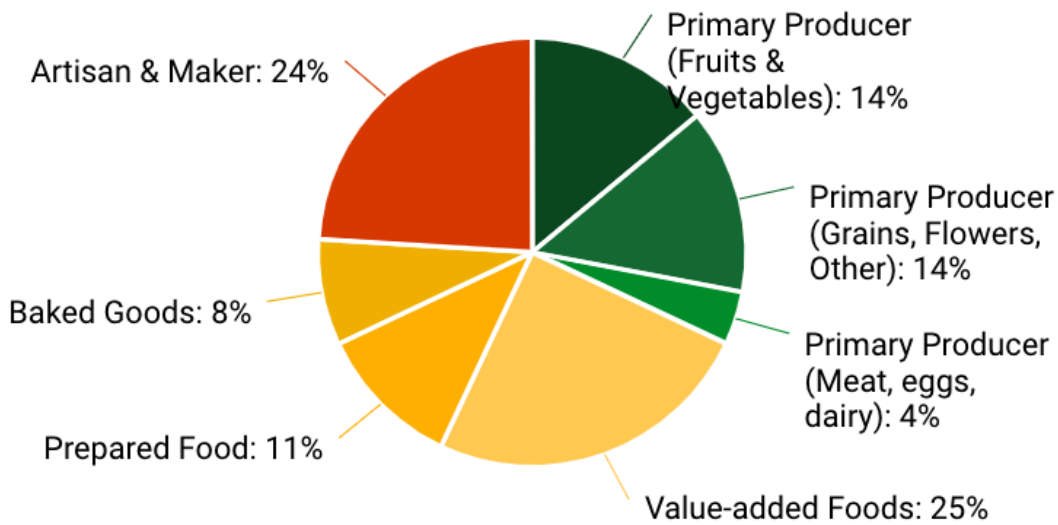


## Secondary Categories of Sales

Secondary category of sales varied very little between all vendors compared to only weekly vendors. Artisan and Maker were 24% and 25% for all vendors and weekly vendors respectively. Primary producer categories were a total of 32% (all vendors) and 31% (weekly vendors) and other food categories were at 44% for both all vendors and weekly vendors. There were no alcohol or seafood categories when looking at vendors' secondary category of sales. For more detailed breakdowns, review the images below.

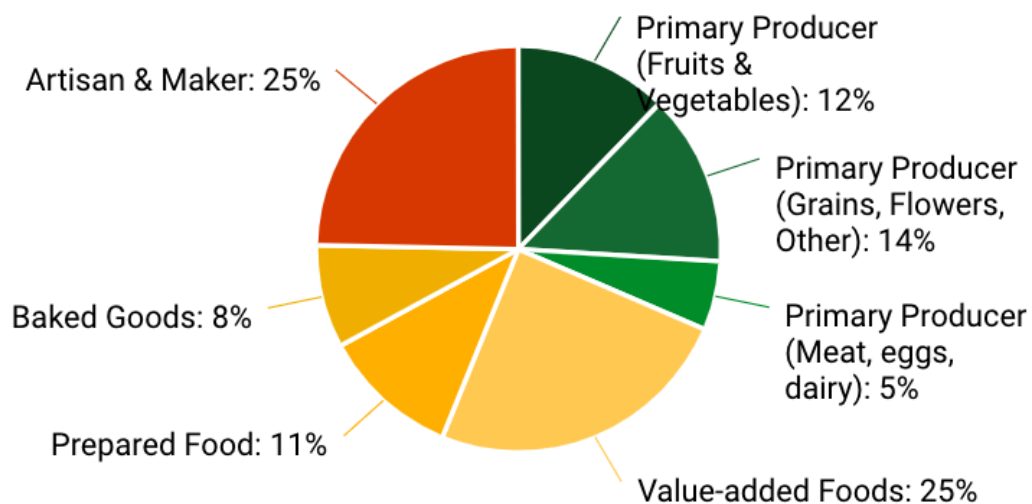
### Secondary Category of Sales (All Vendors)

n = 101



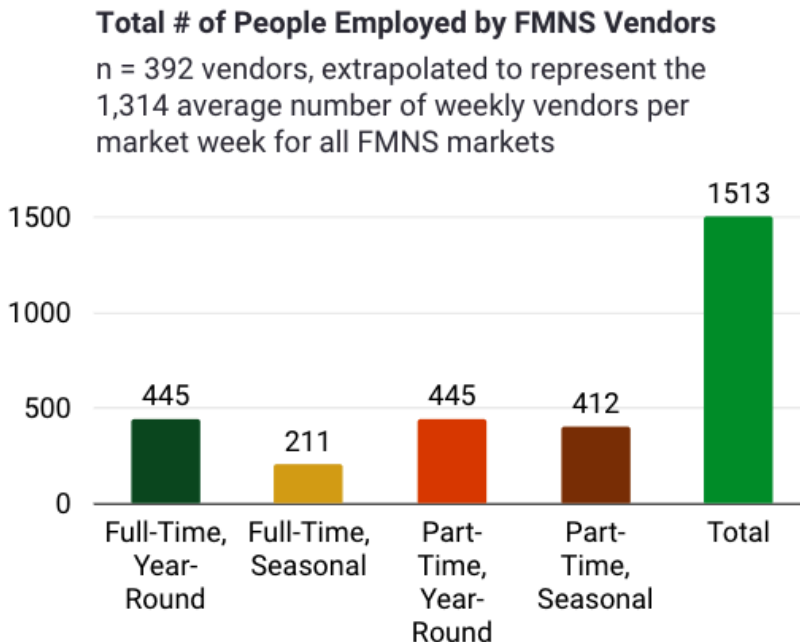
### Secondary Category of Sales (Weekly Vendors)

n = 73



## Employment

The 392 vendors who filled out the survey employ a collective total of 536 employees, including 158 full-time, year round employees, 76 full-time, seasonal employees, 156 part-time, year-round employees and 146 part-time seasonal employees. These numbers can be extrapolated to determine the total number of employees employed, on average, by FMNS markets based on the average number of vendors at each market per week (see Appendix C for calculations). The resulting number is a total of 1,513 employees employed by FMNS markets (Note, this is not based on the total number of vendors that sell at FMNS, but rather based on the average number of vendors present at each market weekly).

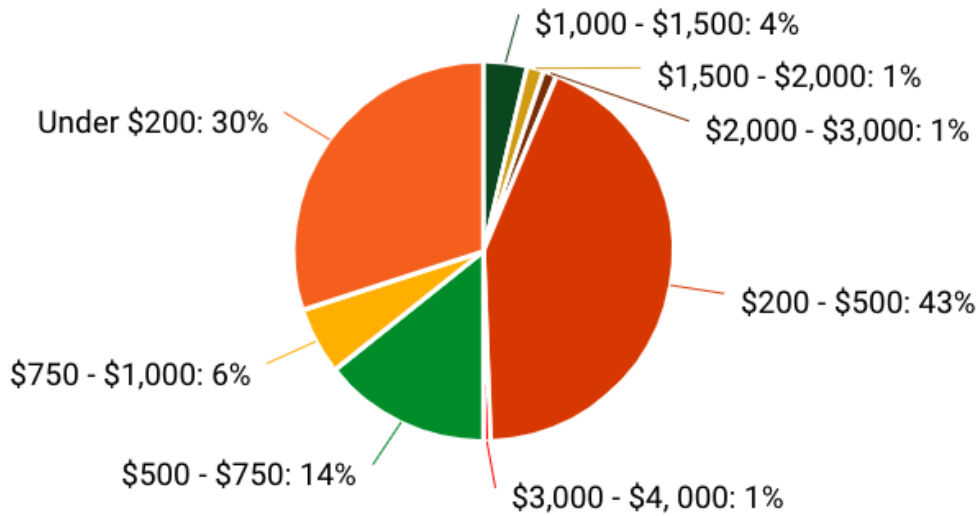


### Vendor Owner Average Weekly Sales

The majority of vendor owners (43%) reported earning \$200-\$500 on average every week, followed by 30% earning under \$300 per week. 14% of vendor owners earned an average weekly sale of \$500-\$750, 6% \$750-\$1,000, 4% \$1,000-\$1,500, 2% \$1,500-\$3,000 and less than 1% earned over \$4,000 per week. Note, that these numbers are based on their weekly sales from one market, and therefore does not represent the total weekly sales for vendors who sell at more than one market.

#### Vendor Owner Average Weekly Sales (from one market)

n = 351

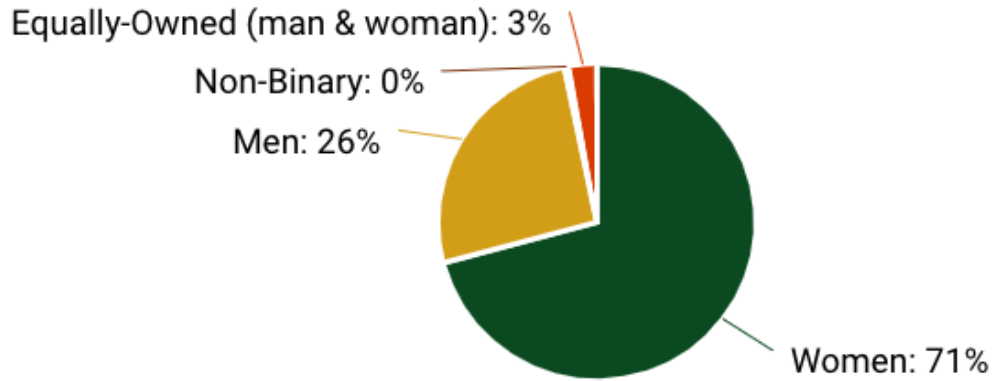


### Vendors by Gender

Over two-thirds of vendor owners were women (71%), followed by 26% men, 3% equal ownership (man & woman) and less than 1% non-binary. Other vendors (employees, specialty contractors and volunteers) were evenly split between women and men at 45% and 10% for non-binary folks.

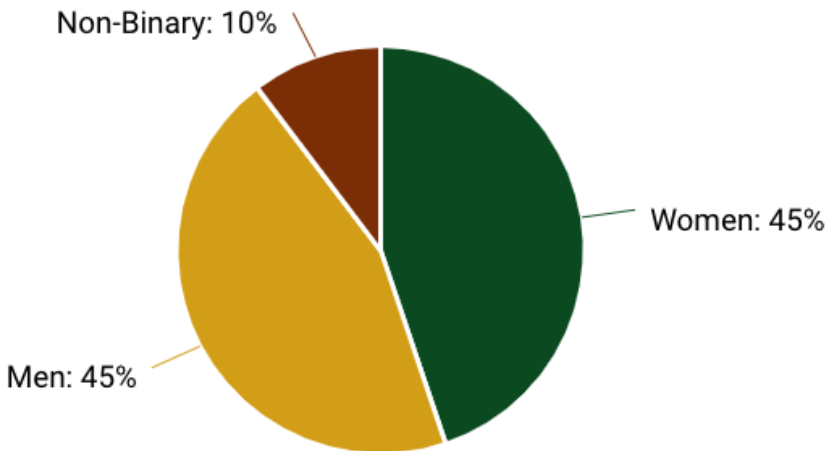
#### Vendor Owners by Gender

n = 325



#### Non-Owner Vendors by Gender

n = 29

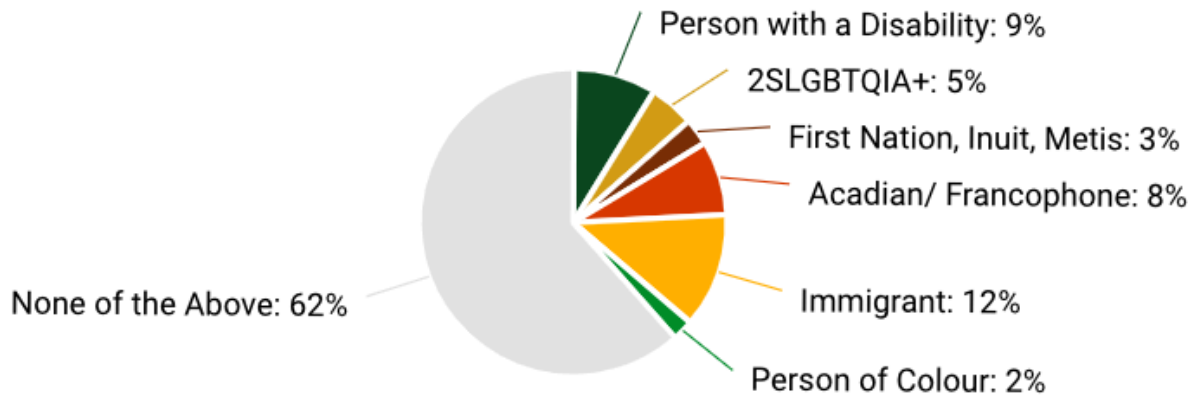


## Vendor Demographics

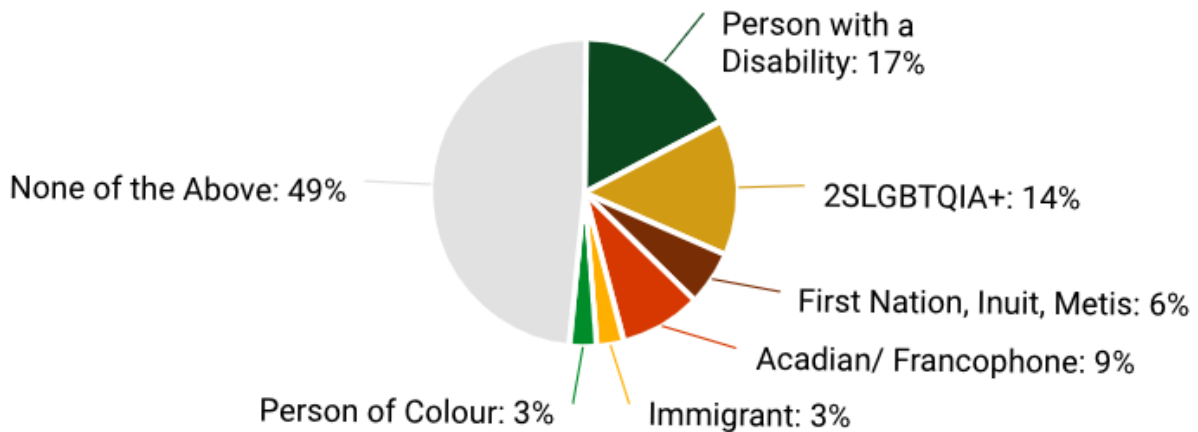
The highest demographic category identified by vendor owners was immigrants (12%), 54% of whom have lived in Canada for 9+ years, 14% 6-8 years, 12% 3-5 years, and 10% followed by persons with a disability (9%), Acadian/francophone, 2SLGBTQIA+ (5%), First Nation, Inuit or Metis (3%) and finally persons of colour (2%). 62% of respondents did not identify with any of the above categories.

Non-owner vendors (employees, specialty contractors and volunteers) had a much larger representation of people with a disability (17%) and those belonging to the 2SLGBTQIA community (14%). 9% of non-vendor owners identified as Acadian/francophone, 6% for both persons of colour and First Nation, Inuit or Metis, and 3% immigrants. 46% of the 34 non-vendor owners did not identify with any of the above.

### Diversity of Vendor Owners

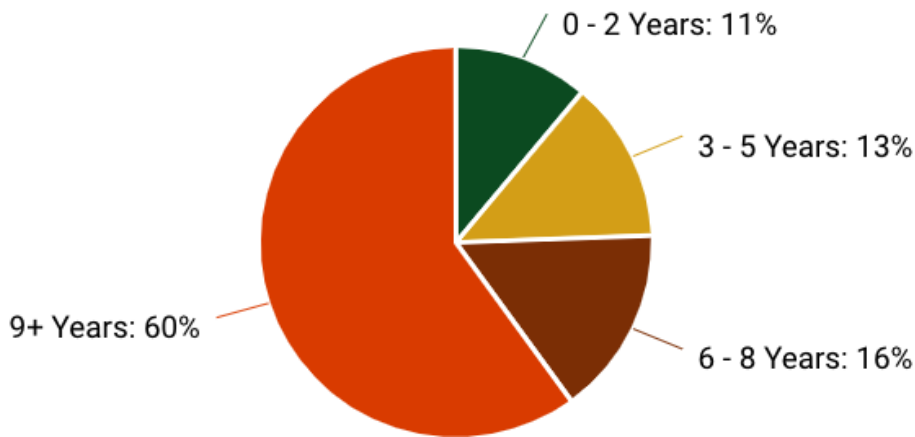


### Diversity of Vendor Non-Owners



**Length of Time Immigrant Vendor Owners have Lived in Canada**

n = 45



**Vendors First-Language**

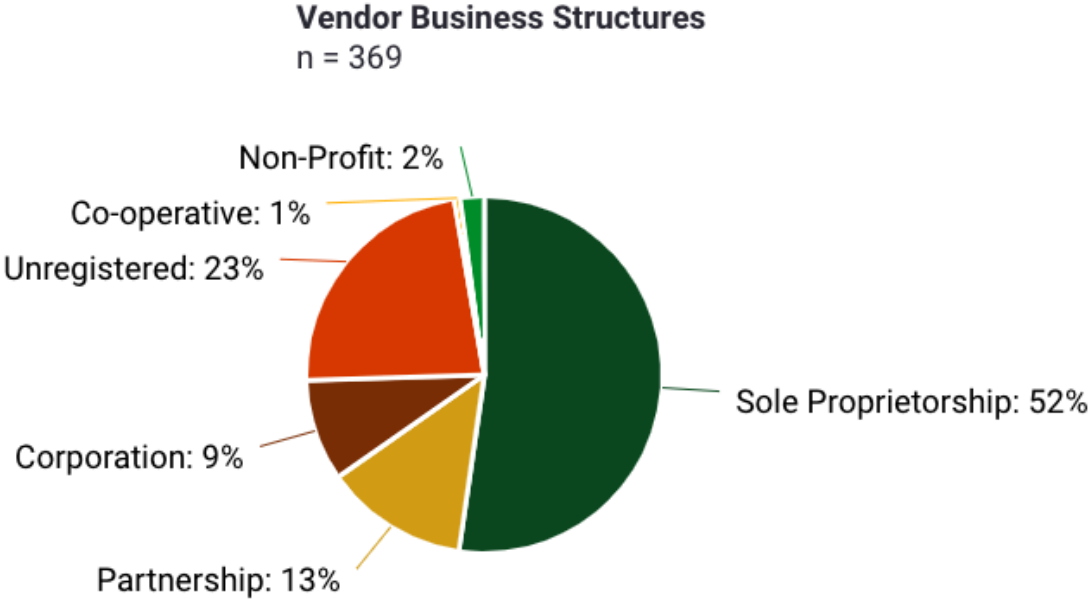
This question was important for FMNS staff to know if it would be useful for materials to be translated and if so into what languages to translate them to, in order to better support their vendors. The languages which were mentioned by more than one vendor were English (86.3%), French (5.1%), German (5%), Spanish (5%), Tagalog/Filipino (1.1%), Dutch (0.8%), Hangul/Korean (0.8%) and Arabic (0.6%).

Language	# of Vendors
Total Number of Respondents: 357	
English	308 (86.3%)
French	18 (5.1%)
German	5 (1.4%)
Spanish	5 (1.4%)
Tagalog (Filipino)	4 (1.1%)
Dutch	3 (0.8%)
Hangul (Korean)	3 (0.8%)
Arabic	2 (0.6%)
Gujarati	1 (0.3%)
Syrian	1 (0.3%)

Language	# of Vendors
Perisian (Farsi)	1 (0.3%)
Portuguese	1 (0.3%)
Hungarian	1 (0.3%)
Danish	1 (0.3%)
Urdu	1 (0.3%)
Napali	1 (0.3%)
Hindi	1 (0.3%)

**Vendor Business Structures**

Over half (52%) of vendors describe their business structure as a sole proprietorship followed by 23% being unregistered, 13% partnership, 9% corporation, 2% non-profit and 1% co-op



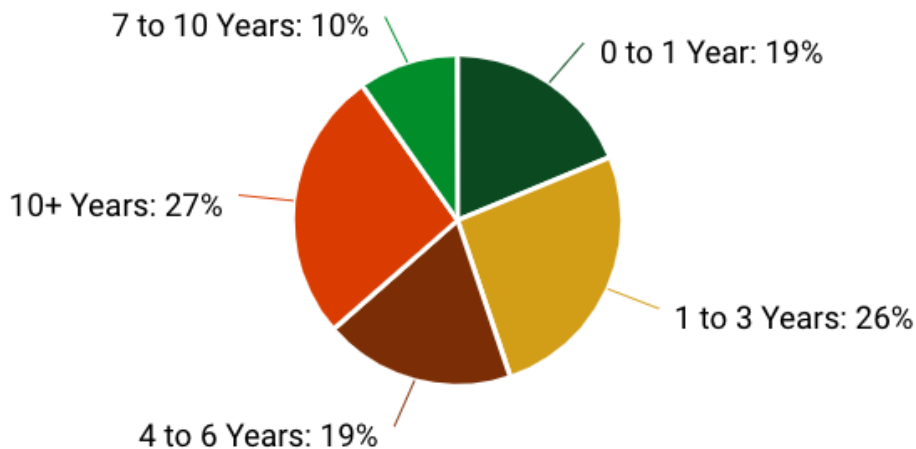
## Years of Experience

### Vendor Owners Years of Experience Selling Current Product at Market

When asked how many years of experience they have in selling their current product at their farmers' market, 27% of vendor owners have been selling their product for 10+ years, while 26% have only been selling for 1-3 years. 19% of respondents responded that they have been selling for 0-1 years, another 14% for 4-6 years and 10% 7-10 years.

### Vendor Owners Years of Experience Selling Current Product at Market

n = 346



**Qualitative Data:** In one sentence, describe the economic impact that your participation in this Market has had on you and your business?

Steady but low sales. There has really been no increase in sales over the last 5 years.
This is my 'home' market and is essential to my livelihood, so this market's success means my success and should it fail the consequences would be disastrous on my business.
Must have
The Farmers Market is how I started my business. I have made so many great contacts through the market. I was able to quit my full time job 7 years ago and focus on my business more.
Love it gives me a great pastime and I love baking
About 50% of all revenue
Without this market, for the past 2 years our family would not have had an income
It has been an alright place to promote my business to the local community
Expansion of network of regular customers.
Increase sales and marketing
I know that my base clientele has increased; the customers have increased their weekly spending and also spending more time at other vendors too.
Minimal impact as disposable income is much less this year.

We have good success selling our products at this Market
Wonderful atmosphere and meet lots of people in the community.
This is a small part of our budget as the market was operated every two weeks so we only went with seedlings.
I think this market gives consistency to my small business in that customers know I will always be at this market. Although it is small and I don't do great in sales, my presents helps the market the grow.
This market has allowed to have a consistent store frontage (without a store) and consistent cash flow while learning from other sellers and from our own weekly experiences.
It helps fill in the gaps from my part-time retail job. Hoping to increase sales as we go along.
The market gave me a steady customer base
This market is our business. It's joyful and lovely and I'm glad to be here.
It provided me with a much needed income from January to May, my off season.
This market is the beginning of my business. first contact with my customers with my products.
I am a stay at home father, this market allows me to each extra money for my family. I am a new business so this market has been wonderful for introducing my business to the community.
Great exposure to new clientele, where we have had the opportunity to gain more return clients.
Introduce product to Halifax consumers and some new commercial accounts.
It's my primary income from April to Dec
As an employee I make the effort to connect with customers, get to know them and this normally means they become recurring customers or they become curious about our products.
The wrap-around support I received as a new vendor was amazing and today the no-drama management makes for a productive selling atmosphere.
It has made people aware of our products and our sales have increased immensely
Very favorable
Significant
It has been an opportunity to witness the 2020 commitment of buying indigenous, buying Black and buying local.
Sales from the brewery are the most consistent and stable from any other market we attend.
This launched our business
This is my first year at the market so it has been an amazing start to my business. I have many regulars and receive custom orders for small occasions and large events.
Has built and sustained our business
The market provides an outlet to my craft
Not a huge economic difference yet but we just started and are optimistic. Having lots of fun.
Awesome to meet new people and store owners that want our products in their store

Very good
Sharpening items that otherwise will not be used, replaced or thrown away as garbage
I love participating in our market, we are here all year long
Helped me sell my product
People get to know you and quality of your work
This market is funding my kids university education
It is the only resource to selling
It has allowed me to move from online only sales to being able to sell in person to a larger market, increasing my sales dramatically.
Were selling 50% of our gross sales through one market, so it's really important for us to have customers through the market
Helped a little to keep up with some of the bill payments
Brand awareness
We have generated approximately \$200,000,00 in gross revenue over its last 10 years, employing several person years of employment
Sales has been decreased by approximately 30%
Provides a stable, consistent location for me to sell my products
It keeps me in milk, bread and other groceries while providing a quality healthy product
We have chosen to sell exclusively at this market. It provides an additional income in our retirement
Selling at the market has made us more visible in the community. It has been a wonderful experience for the participants.
Great for exposure of brand
Sales and money, from the people
Generally very positive, but very weather dependant
A closer connection with community
Spreads knowledge of existing business
It's my "fun" money, and helps subsidize my pension
Incredible response!
Have only attended one holiday market
Increased visibility and sales
50% of our products are sold at Hubbards Farmers Market
My only source
To exhibit my work and put a face to the products
Fantastic
Connects me to my community of writers and readers
It is my main source of income
It has opened my eyes to the support and caring individuals we have in the community and

province.
The market provides me with a venue to sell my products, and a customer base to sell the products. The market allows me to stay creative and busy.
Not much. I do it to be part of a community development effort.
Meeting many nice people. Dealing with young kids some have money and others don't so if they want something you can tell and they come back each market you give them at a lower price.
20-30% of my annual income
Some markets are better than others
It helps with specific family projects, as a booster to our economic resource, but I do it mostly to remain in social contact with my community.
An opportunity to show my craft
Not Applicable: outlet for hobby
As this market is once a month it has a good attendance and many are tourists that are our target market as our product is high end and discretionary. It is an excellent sales channel
Revenue has improved 500% since we started plus product exposure throughout the South Shore
Markets are our only source of income.
This market has been amazing. My products have been very well received. I have regular customers that look for me & always buy from me. Being new to the Area, it made it possible to build a customer base.
About half to three quarters of my entire income from my business
Ability to market Laughing Whale coffee beans to establish long term market to L___ and seasonal customers. (also participating in Halifax market)
Only source of income other than pensions
The market is the busiest market that we attend. Therefore it is the market (out of 3) that we attend which brings in the most income.
Contact to my customers who buy my products in general stores
Amazing and vital to the business
This is my primary market, producing 60-75% of revenue
Good
This market allows me to primarily work from home excepting one day per week, and make a living without having to have infrastructure for selling.
My family and I are grateful for the market as it gives us experience, a chance to connect with both customers and vendors. It is also great to bring diversity to the market.
Less travel, less cost, better day
This market provides a year-round revenue which allows us to employ bakery staff employed when summer business dips down and gives us the opportunity to connect with our community directly.
The market is an absolute boon to our weekly sales as it allows us an opportunity to connect with the community while introducing them to the entire scope of our product base.

Great exposure and introductions
It provides weekly income, product awareness and valuable feedback
70% of sales through this one market.
Selling at the market allows me to share in the household expenses as well as have funds to do somethings I otherwise would not. I am also able to continue to create as I will use the money to buy more supplies.
Mabou market is my main retail place and I rely on it for about 18% of my total income.
The market was essentially for the success of my business, it went from sales of around 200 a year to about 700 but the end of the market season and only attending 6 times.
Poor sales making me reevaluate products for future
Our products are very popular with the Market goers, so it has become more than a thriving business
It's where we make the majority of our profit
This market allows you to meet other vendors and a chance to socialize with the people attending this market.
Huge economic impact. Love that the people of Mabou and are so supportive.
This market is our primary sales outlet and has been critical to our business
Being a "small business", the exposure is very important to further our sales opportunities.
Got noticed by locals
Absolutely incredible market. S well run by Karrie, Mabou Market.
I love the Mabou market for the community-social interactions, getting business names out there. I've gained many new customers via market both in person and on my socials.
It has completely changed my life
I replaced 4 old windows in my house. My business has grown.
One of the only markets that kept on finding a way in the height of the pandemic. Much appreciated.
Best earning market, good publicity
It pays a few bills
I am very happy with my sales and expanded business
I enjoy the interaction with the people and producing the products
A good source of secondary income and networking
The market doesn't have a great economic impact on me - I love what I do and I love the social interaction with the people I meet at the market.
Met some great people - made a little money selling stuff I love to create
Unknown
Getting my name out
The economic impact of the market keeps me coming back
Though sales have been lower than we hoped, the exposure and networking has helped our business grow nicely.

The business has improved by participating at this market but there is still a long way to go.
This was the best opportunity for sharing my product across a wide range of customers. Consistent and good sales at each market.
Gets my art to a wider number of people including tourists.
This market has been an integral part of running our business as attendance is consistently high and we are able to sell almost guaranteed on a weekly basis much more of our product at this market than the other market we attend, thus providing a sense of financial security which is not always a given when attending farmers' markets.
Mabou is a very good market to sell at due to the significant tourist volume, and has a strong regular demographic that seeks out quality.
Market is 70% of yearly sales
This is my sole source of personal income. Sales allows me to purchase personal items and items to further my sales.
We have a product that really connects with visitors to the market.
We love Mabou and are blown away by the amount of tourist and locals who have supported out business
Extra income for a retired person who finds it hard to live on pensions
Exposure to new customers
Becoming a part of the Farmers market was a dream come true for me. I am originally from India and wanted to open my own restaurant there which I was not able to do but I got that opportunity through the Farmers Market and I am so pleased and blessed for it. The community loves my food and appreciates me being there for them which is very heart touching for me and my family. Economically it has helped a lot too, being at the market is kind of a second job for me and my wife and we are so happy that our hobby is our second job.
One of the only markets that reliably kept going in the pandemic
We are just starting out with new craft ideas and it is a learning experience as to what customers are looking for. We find that some artisans struggle to sell their goods.
Though we may not have had many sales to date, I've found even the exposure and the chance to have people learn about our product is beneficial since we sell such a niche item.
it supplements my income and has helped me grow my customer base as I am retired with no work pension.
break even after expenses. Enjoy the social aspect
It really increases the sales for us, within those 3hrs of market, especially on Sundays, where it is quiet in Sydney.
Gives a little extra money on a day we'd otherwise be closed
Great impact because it is the only place I sell my creations
I have many regulars that now contact me before hand with order so I do not run out at the market or bring too much that doesn't sell.a
Kept it alive
New ideas and possible collaborations with other vendors for 2024
Positive

Farmers market is the primary outlet for my product without Farmers Market my farm business would not be viable.
Inflation definitely impacted sales and amount of customers within the market
As a retiree, participating in the weekly market keeps me engaged and interested not to mention that it is a lot of fun
Positive impact
Not as well as I would like
Constant place to show my product, constant form of income
Visibility of my products has improved greatly and customers frequently contact me after the market to purchase my product
Regular clients. Word of mouth sales.
Increased customer base
Participation has allowed me to turn a hobby into a full time job.
Very important income source
It open the eyes of any that this craft is still going.
A must to keep the farm active. Excellent contact with customers "public".
The market provides weekly sales that enable me to have a cash flow throughout the year for salaries, production expenses.
This is my only source of income.
The farmers market is like my first child to me.
The market has been a great way to introduce my business brand to the area as I wait for my brick and mortar shop to open, it gives me both an economic and marketing benefit as well as becoming part of the community mosaic.
The farmers market has given me a perfect, low cost, high traffic location to be able to sell my product
Primary
Increases our customer base in the area
This market allows me to increase my sales by providing an in-person experience
Main source of income.
It has had a great impact. It has brought me repeat customers.
Due to the NGFM I have been able to grow my business enough to open a brick and mortar!
If I could make this market biweekly I would as it is the market I enjoy the most and sell the most. People enjoy their local artist love!!
Hard to say at this point!!'ve slightly increased prices but my sales have not yet been affected at this market.
It has introduced hot sauce to those that enjoy it.
This is my first year selling; can't really say financially however I love coming every week and feeling like a member of a fantastic community.
Great for exposure. Increase in sales.
Selling at the market enables me to buy raw materials that provide a creative outlet for me.

Positive
I have built a clientele and long lasting friendships
Its where we make the majority of our income
Excellent way to start as an artisan. Wouldn't have gotten off the ground without the market.
Sales have tripled since west river started at the market
this market has allowed my business to grow and thrive. It means everything to me!
An ideal way to introduce our products to customers beyond our business's actual location.
This market has expanded my customer base and has helped my business thrive both in-person and online.
It's given me greater exposure to customers who love my product!
Helps to pay for heat!
This has helped me pay for extra curricular for my children
Helps supplement primary income
I volunteer to help prepare and serve healthy food to the community each week. We operate on a donation system and roll over each week to buy food to make for the following week. I enjoy the fact that anyone can come eat and some can support each other.
The market is my outing each week. I get to help make food for my community and share with my friends.
I come with my family and help with the food we share and pass out samples of the fruits and veggies at my table. Sometimes I help give away extras that the farmers share with us.
We are a very small producer just getting starting our business
None yet
As a small start-up business, the Farmer's Market is a great way to let the community know about the services we offer, showcase our products and promote the business
Lots of fellowship and enables me to donate more to the hall.
Allows me to sell some of my work, but haven't made a profit
It covers our farm expenses
Helped deal with carbon tax!
I had a successful summer at the market
Privateer Market has had a significant impact over the years on my bottom line.
This is first time so unknown.
Provides me an affordable venue to network and make sales. Helps me be a stay at home mom for my 1 & 3 year olds while making ends meet :)
It has been a boost for my business. The sales I have made are a huge help for meLocal earning keeps money in our own towns.
It encourages people to buy locally made products.
The impact of sales at the market is relatively minor, but we develop contacts which result in follow-up farmgate sales
Vital. It is integral to my business

This past year, a noticeable decline in visitors and spenders.
It's been good
We cover some expenses
Strictly hobby
Nice having a reliable sales outlet and developing a customer base close to home. Great having the market as a central pick-up location for our CSA.
Fantastic community helping us expand our customer reach
It has helped us to expand our business and serve more customers
Because it is an unusual art form it draws people in
Balancing the cost of produce
In recent years, the market has opened up our sales to locals and driven off-season orders
It provides me with a place to affordably buy high quality food that I feel connected to
Helped to get established and contribute to my home financially
The market is a place where I feel I am part of a bigger whole and I am supported to grow.
We have grown so much as a result of the exposure at the market that he cannot keep up with the demand
Improving more diversities to attract customers in the market
Slightly greater income
It has allowed me to have a major venue for local sales
Definitely inspired to make more products over the winter months so I will be better prepared for next year ;)
Without the market I would not have a successful business
Good
We've been able to afford bills and save for things that otherwise would be impossible to attain with the work that we can get in our community.
The market has helped a lot of people love my products
It has helped create awareness of my business
Hard to compare with just one time being there in 2023
Great, gets you out there and known for our product
Massive
It helps
My product supplements my regular income
Additional sales for our small art business, wider recognition for artwork
Contributes to my income as I am retired
This market has been the platform to launch my business into stores and other markets
Its a fun market and great for my business
Increase in sales
I can sell my products

Meet lots of wonderful people and vendors. Very friendly atmosphere - get new ideas for products through conversation.
Having a booth at market adds to the extra income that my full-time work doesn't have for the "extras"
My business supplements my income. The market provides a happy place to offer work
Sales allow for a continuation of repurposing materials into craft creations
I can actually feed my kids :)
Market has improved my local presence but overall has had little economic impact as most of our business is via delivery
Encouragement and pride and knowledge
Provides income for non-profit association and provides a platform to share a love of nature with others.
Coming to the market has given me a place in the community and has been the place for my sales that have grown with a growing clientele
Both markets we attend allow us to grow our business and connect people to our brand
Gave me the opportunity to get my business going
Added revenue & exposure (Marketing)
This market has brought much attention to our business and increased our sales in our products
Help build our knowledge and confidence about the business. Also helped in gaining some profit to afford and cope with inflation.
The exposure to the community to spread our message and provide a reliable source of food has been HUGE.
My first and only channel to sell my products face to face with my customers. So a huge impact on getting me off the ground.
This market is my main source of sales. It has also assisted in recognition for my product.
The market has helped me provide an input for my family financially. Being here has also created contact and sales beyond the market through posting my presence here through social media.
This market has helped us get going again after Covid. Summers are great with all the travellers around.
Now that we participate with the market, we have been planting more and more garlic each year.
I feel it has helped the business
Able to move a bit more product
Allowed me to grow my business quickly and reach a wider demographic of people
Markets are my only income
I have been able to hire workers to do yard work, snow & leaf removal and also to purchase machines & household appliances to make my life easier
Working here gives me the opportunity to support an amazing market and spend more time with local businesses :)

It has been hard since Covid but I am reinventing
Increased revenue and increased goodwill
Good for social networking & finance
I rely on the income I get from this market to support myself
This is our second retail outlook besides our shore front
Great exposure for my business as I had relocated and was starting new to NS
Being involved in the farmers market enables me to sell things in person and a lot of the time for cash so tax free
This market allows me, as an owner, to connect to our community in a way no other venue allows.
The farmers market has provided our business more reach and allowed us to become more involved within our local community.
Selling at the WFM has brought additional work to my monday to friday business of custom cabinetry & furniture.
We have managed to replace my income by selling at the market
I make my living
It has enabled me to pay for a farm and give people a saturday job with a living wage (\$22/hr). I make +/- \$1.31 hr :)
Able to recycle product
This is my business
I support myself solely on farm markets
It's been great to be a part of the community & the awareness of our business has grown due to the market.
I love the networking
First full year and it's my most profitable sales outlet.
It has been a great experience. Thanks.
The energy of this market lifts my heart and spirits and the experience is beyond economics...it is why I love this market :)
Gives social opportunity and somewhere to sell craft items
Help me keep my sanity
It is. the only place we sell our honey with lots of return visitors
Actually, I don't know yet...but it's a good experience to do my restaurant. Thanks.
This market launched a business we didn't even know we had.
Being an easy recognizable person I have had extremely high sales reports.
The market has enabled financial security at various times over the years. I plan to return to full-time year round within 1-2 year period.
Definite awareness of our social media sites, also gives an opportunity to share our 'craft' with others. It's a GREAT thing to look forward to weekly.
This gives me extra income to help support my full time job.

Hobby. I enjoy baking and it generates extra spending money.
It brings us in a little extra income
It provides one income in a two income household.
Provides extra money
Hobby
The market have helped me attract more customer and grow my business
Hobby
Has provided a certain income year-round. This helps sustain my farm and provincially inspected abattoir.