



Lawrence/Douglas County Case Study
Supporting Area Farmers Markets
November 17, 2017 | Kansas Rural Center



www.douglascountyks.org/fpc

Overview

1. USDA Farmers' Market Promotion Program Grant
 - Data Report + Recommendations
 - Farmers Markets of Kaw Valley
2. eXplore Lawrence
3. Perry-Lecompton Farmers Market
4. Lawrence Farmers Market

The
Farmers Markets
of Douglas County, Kansas
SYNOPSIS OF FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS



www.fmkawvalley.org

Why seek out a USDA Farmers' Market Promotion Program grant?

- Get useable data
 - Why do customers come to market?
 - Why don't customers come to market?
- Work across area markets
- Bring in outside perspective to provide recommendations
- Technical assistance



The Douglas County Food Policy Council

- Established by the County Commission in 2010
- Convened as a joint City-County Council in 2013
- Identifies the benefits, challenges and opportunities for a successful food system
- Recommends local policies to support food system
- Represents a wide range of stakeholders in food system



Douglas Co. Food Policy Council

County-appointed	City-appointed
At-Large (No-till + cattle producer)	At-Large (Health Department)
At-Large (Haskell professor)	At-Large (State Foundation)
At-Large (State policy advocate)	Agricultural Producer (Produce, flowers)
Agricultural Producer (Poultry)	Retail Food Outlet (Restaurant)
Agricultural Producer (Produce, flowers)	Retail Food Outlet (Co-op Grocer)
Agricultural Producer (Farm Bureau)	Sustainability Advisory Board
Retail Food Outlet (Grocer)	Food Security
Institutional Food Purchaser (Hospital)	Farmers Market in Douglas County
Education (University of Kansas)	Business Community
Extension Service	
NGO- Health/Nutrition/MD	
NGO- Local Food Systems/Sustainable Ag.	
Youth Representative	
Senior Food & Nutrition Programs	



The Grant

Four Objectives:

1. **Collect key data points** to inform the entire farmers market sector of Douglas County
2. **Utilize research data** to create a set of **strategic recommendations** and a Douglas County Farmers Market **Action Plan** for market sector enhancement
3. **Provide technical assistance and capacity building** support for the six farmers markets of Douglas County
4. **Disseminate research process and results** to statewide agriculture and health leaders to serve as a model for enhancement of the farmers market sector in Kansas

Budget:

- Hire consultant (1 & 2): \$47,500.00
- Hire TA support (3): \$6,150.00



Research

<http://www.ruralscale.com/>

Methodology	Number of participants
Vendors Survey	76
Rapid Market Assessment	366 (approximately)
Vendor Interviews	15
Farmers Market Shopper Interviews	12
Non Farmers Market Shopper Facebook Solicitation	62
Focus Group participants (vendors)	17
Focus Group participants (Farmers Market Shoppers)	10
Focus Group participants (NFMS)	3



<https://www.douglascountyks.org/fpc/reports>

Findings: Markets

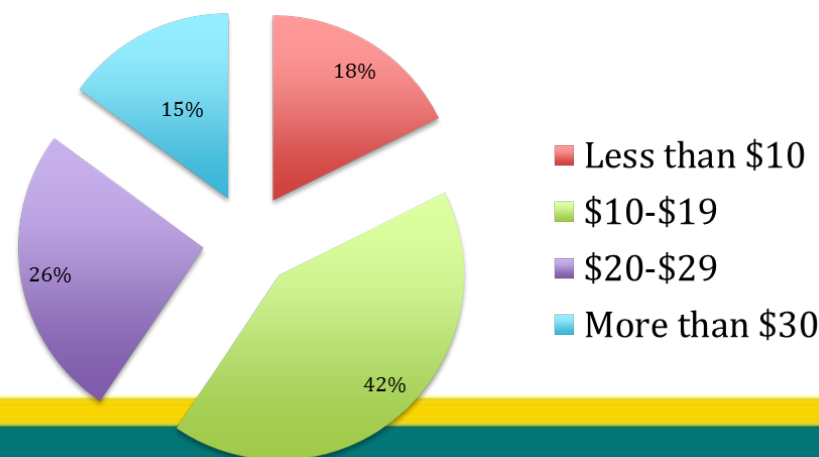
- Markets have assets to build on, ideas for expanding consumer engagement
- Room for improvement in overall market presentation
- Sales, net income just too low for many farmers and vendors
→ Too many markets in the area?
- Few vendors offer samples: misunderstand state rules?
- No plans for vendor recruitment
- For LFM, perception is that the market is not growing or improving, but has hit a plateau or a slight decline
 - Vendor fees low compared to other markets
 - Location issue important, needs resolution



Findings: Consumers

- Shoppers do not view market as a primary source of groceries (esp. meat)
- Logistical challenges, social discomfort prevent shoppers
- Need more information
- Opportunity with off-season outreach, to current and new customers

How much do you spend at the farmers market?

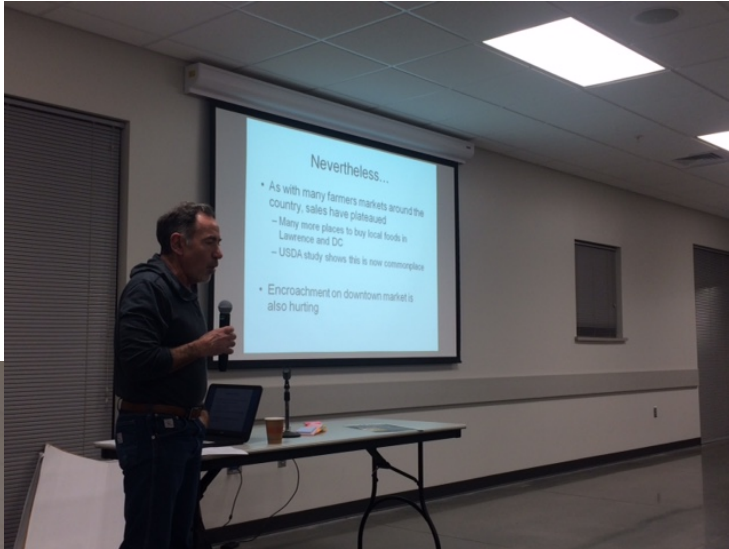


12 Recommendations

- *Marketing, Outreach and Promotion of Farmers Markets*
- *Strengthening Market Leadership, Management and Governance*
- *Increasing and Strengthening the Vendor Base*
- *Securing a Viable, Long-term Location for the Downtown Market*
- *Policy Support, Clarity*



So what do you do with a report?



- Meet 1-on-1 with SCALE
- Eat good food together
- Find shared purpose, energy
- Totally change TA plans from grant
- Share with others



Recommendation 7

Consider forming a countywide farmers market association whose goal is primarily twofold:

- **To facilitate peer learning among market managers and leaders** that leads to sharing of ideas and practices that work, solves problems and strengthens markets; **and**
- **To increase the buy-in from all or most markets on joint projects and city or countywide efforts**, including especially the broader effort to expand the customer base for farmers markets.



FPC Continues Support



Adopted June 28, and July 11, 2017



DEVELOPED BY



New Priority:

- Invest in signage, shared infrastructure, and coordinated marketing to support Douglas County farmers markets.

<https://www.douglascountyks.org/fpc/food-system-plan>



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