

# Collecting and Using Data







Professional Development for Ohio Farmers Market Managers and OSU Extension Educators on Creating a Culture of Data Collection for Sustainability Planning for Markets and Farmers

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## Data 101 for busy markets and vendors

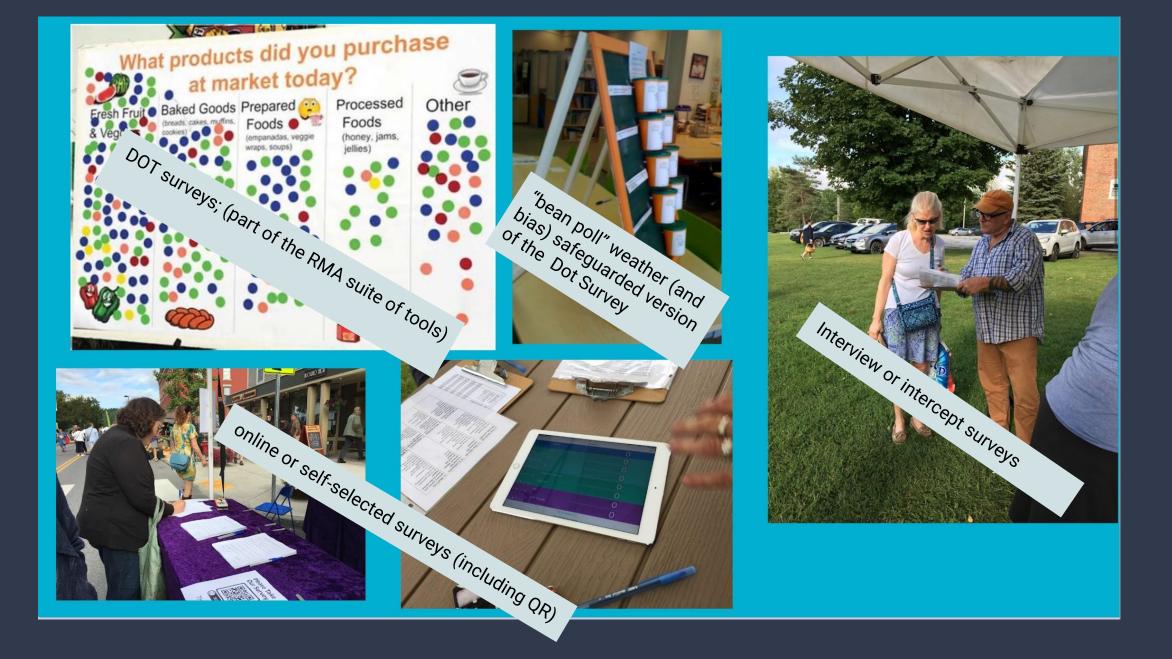
l. Collect as little data as possible. Be strict with yourself and your stakeholders. Some of our stakeholders forget that the market s not a laboratory, but an actual mercantile space! Also, every piece of data you collect will need to be checked (probably by you) or accuracy and relevance so the less added work the better.

2. Hone those audiences for the data. Using a few simple tools, you should break it down to a few partners each season that you vant to influence or keep engaged.

3. Start with the simple data. Any data point that requires complete collection (like vendor sales) or advanced calculations (like average sale per shopper) should be a later goal and not a goal at the beginning.

1. Promise yourself that for each main data point (metric) that you gather, you will use it often. On social media, in your email signature, on chalkboards, shared with vendors.

#### Collecting data is the next step; depending on the metrics you choose, the collection method will differ







Dot Surveys pros and cons:

Pros

Very participatory!

Less onerous to manage

Easy to explain

Cons

Response bias is an issue

Weather can be a factor

Answers can be confusing





### Interview Surveys pros and cons:

Pros

Detailed information Requires training of surveyors

Easier to ensure representation Time required can be a factor

Follow up can be done Technology or transcription needed





### QR/Online Surveys pros and cons:

Pros

Detailed information Requires a well-built survey

Can be offered over time Time required can be a factor

Follow-up can be done Technology needed

Representation can be skewed

To begin data collection, plan the dates well ahead of time in order to organize the labor and resources needed. Weather or other issues may arise which as the day arrives, may make it seem better to cancel but if it all possible, keep that agreed upon date.

Alert your vendors and shoppers to the collection dates using the market website, Facebook page and signs at the market leading up to the collection days.

If volunteers are needed, then adding that request to chalked market signs, the market Facebook page and in email newsletters weeks ahead may increase chances of encouraging market enthusiasts to help with collection.

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Consider following or adapting the example schedule presented below. The underlined days are the primary days for two days of collection. However, if you have the data collection team available and would like more precise data, the other two dates should be added.

Counting Days On the 4th, <u>10th</u>, <u>16th</u> and 22nd market days

Surveys On the 5th, <u>11th</u>, <u>17th</u> and 23rd market days (if unable to conduct on Counting Days)

Observation On the 6th, <u>12th</u>, <u>18th</u> and 24th market days

Ideally surveys should be conducted on the same day as counting visitors. If two seasons of data collection are desired, repeat the dates above for each season.

## Collecting and Using Data

- 1. Choose the tool that gets the information you need, NOT the tool you think is "easiest"
- 2. Build a team to assist, train them, support them. If done right ahead of time, survey time will be much easier.
- 3. Communicate early and often to the market community.

#### Comprehension Quiz

- 1. What are the 3 methods of data collection this guide recommends for farmers markets?
- 2. Name one drawback to Dot Surveys
- 3. How many times does this guide recommend that you count visitors in one season?
- 4. What does this guide recommend you do if you want to measure a multi season market site?