



2019 National Farmers Market Manager Survey

Market Performance



Developed through a
Wheaton College and
USDA partnership.

Introduction

In 2020, the United States Department of Agriculture – National Agricultural Statistical Service (USDA-NASS) conducted a survey of farmers market managers in the U.S. under an agreement with the Agricultural Marketing Service (USDA-AMS). The survey collected data from the managers of U.S. farmers markets that were operating in 2019 in the 48 contiguous states. For this survey, a farmers market was defined as a collection of two or more farm vendors selling agricultural products directly to customers at a common, recurrent physical location. For more information about the survey, reference the *Farmers Market Managers Survey Overview*.

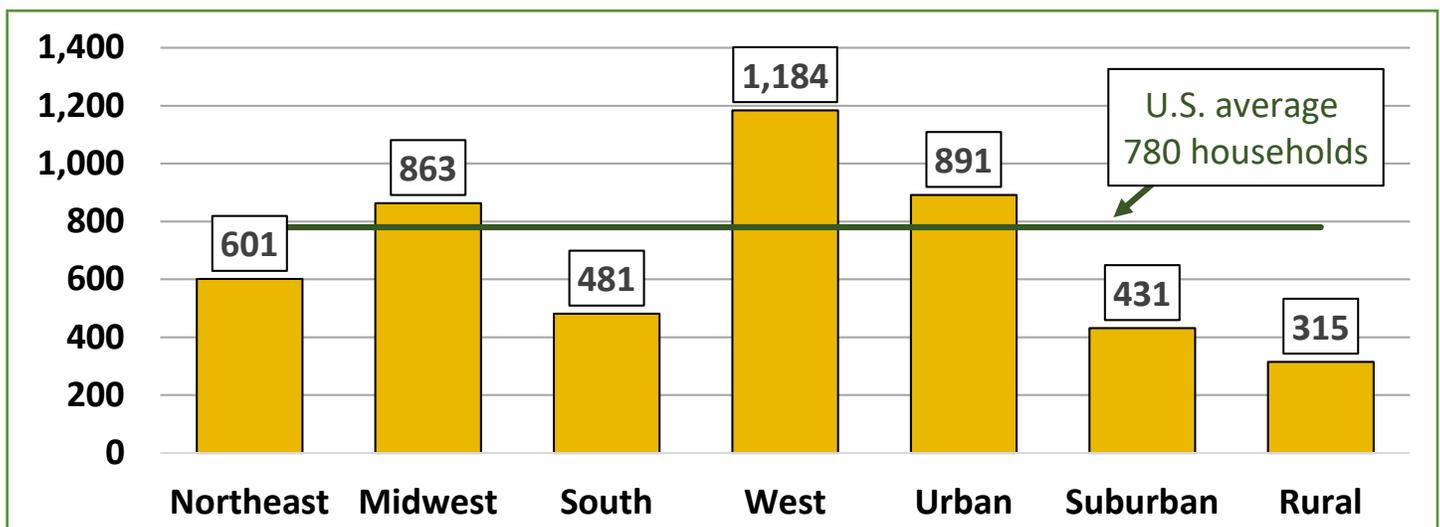
This document summarizes farmers markets performance, including vendor retention and growth, peak season shopping, and peak season sales. It highlights how well markets are doing based on a given number of vendors, sales, and overall market success.

Vendor Retention and Growth

Respondents were asked about the retention of vendors from the 2018 season and growth in 2019. Analysis of the data reveals:

- Overall, more than half of respondents (52%) reported that their farmers market had the same number of vendors in 2019 as in 2018. More than one-third (37%) experienced an increase, and around one in ten (11%) experienced a decrease (Figure 1).
- Nationally, 68% of vendors present in 2019 returned from the 2018 season.
- The size of the consumer base for markets varied by region and urbanicity. Nationally, 780 households shopped at a farmers market on a peak season day on average. Western markets averaged the most shoppers (1,184), while Southern markets had the least (481). Number of shoppers also differed by urbanicity. Urban markets averaged 891 households on a peak season day, whereas rural markets averaged 315 (Figure 1).
- Nationally, total market sales during peak season averaged \$11,615 per market day. Markets in the West (\$17,951) reported the highest total market sales during peak season, and markets in the South averaged the lowest (\$5,284). These differences can, to some degree, be explained by the lower average number of shoppers.

Figure 1. Average Number of Households that Shop at the Farmers Market on Peak Season Day



Market Impacts on Vendors

The survey presented a series of questions about market impact, including economic development, innovation, and marketing opportunities. The results show:

- Overall, 63% (4,933) of farmers market managers reported they knew how their vendors benefited from participating at their market.
- Of the market managers who responded knowing how their vendors benefited from market participation, the most frequently cited perceived benefit was that vendors were able to increase the range of products they sold (73%), followed by an increase in the overall production of direct-marketed farm activities (64%), which are both production-focused (Figure 2). Figure 2 shows all perceived benefits reported in the survey.

Figure 2. Vendor Benefits Perceived by Market Managers

