

VENDOR SALES- ANONYMOUS

HOW TO PREPARE:

Vendor sales often go undocumented because of concerns about vendor privacy and difficulty in collecting the information, but it's imperative that market managers have access to this information. Without sales information, you can't make informed decisions about market operations, or accurately demonstrate your market's impact on its vendors and local economy.

Some markets find that anonymous sales slips allow them access to vendor sales data, without making vendors uncomfortable. This will outline the implementation of an anonymous vendor sales slip system, which can then be entered into the Per Market Day area of FM Metrics by the market manager.

Prepare the Materials

- Customize the Vendor Sales Slip to reflect your market's name, and the payment methods used by vendors. Delete any unused payments methods in the Vendor Sales Slip Word document.
- Obtain a canister or box where vendors will be asked to deposit their completed Vendor Sales Slips each market day. Post a sign or label on the canister or box, so its purpose is clear. Vendors should feel confident that they're putting their sales slip in the correct place, even if you aren't nearby to confirm.
- Print a list of all vendors to place next to the canister or box so vendors can check themselves off when they submit their slips. If there are strong concerns about checking their name off a list (even though their business cannot be linked to a specific slip) the market can alternately create a list of vendors by category (Fruit/Veg, Value-added, Processed, Non-Food) and ask the vendors to put a hash mark when they submit their slip. The purpose for this is the data received will have to be weighed to gauge whether enough vendors of each category have answered before using that data.
- Print enough Vendor Sales Slips for all of the vendors who will attend your upcoming market day, with a couple extras for anyone who misplaces their slip.

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Prepare your Vendors

- Show examples of the Vendor Sales Slip, and describe the process. Vendors will complete the Vendor Sales Slip to the best of their ability at the end of every market day, fold the slip in half, place it into the marked box or canister at the market info booth, and check their name off of the list for the day.
- If your market uses tokens and a central point-of-sale device for processing credit, debit or federal nutrition benefits (we'll call this your central terminal), explain that these sales will be recorded in the first column of the Vendor Sales Slip. If a vendor has their own point-of-sale device and processes credit, debit, or EBT on an individual level, those sales will also be included in the first column the vendor sales slip where noted.
- The second column of the Vendor Sales Slip can be used for managing reimbursements for those markets that offer daily reimbursements for their vendors.

How Do I Do It?:

Implementation

- Distribute the Vendor Sales Slips to each vendor at the beginning of every market day, by visiting each vendor. Remind them of the process and the need to turn the slip in before they leave for the day.
- Place the canister or box in an easy to view location (at the market booth or other central location), with a vendor list and pen or pencil easily accessible. It may be useful to walk the canister around the market at the end of the day, to collect sales slips, and remind vendors to complete them.
- If you operate a central terminal for credit, debit or federal nutrition benefit sales, reference the Central Terminal Transaction Report supplied by your service provider (most are available online), to enter your sales information from that market day into the Vendor Sales Slips.
- At the end of the market day, compile the total sales for the Market and enter these figures into the Per Market Day area of FM Metrics.

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

OTHER SUGGESTIONS:

Some markets report that collecting sales data from vendors remains one of the most stressful and time-consuming tasks that they undertake. Much of that stress comes from that most markets have not had reason to ask for regular data from their vendors in the past.

However, as more markets are asked to “make the case” for their funding, or to keep their current location, or for their vendors to remain exempt from onerous regulations, they will need data. Each market must show the positive impacts it has on increasing the number of small businesses, on the amount of good farmland being managed by vendors and its role in cultivating new leaders in the food system. Still, even when explaining the reasons explicitly (and asking for the data well ahead of time and in a manner that is doable for the market vendors), there are likely to be a few vendors who push back on any data collection, especially in the first round.

If you use the data well, you share the data with your vendors so they can use it, and show that you safeguard individual data, your vendors will become more comfortable in sharing data.

Try sending out this [Vendor Letter](#) to start preparing your market vendors for what to expect as you begin using Farmers Market Metrics.

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