

VENDOR SALES- REPORTED

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.

Prepare Your Vendors

- If vendors are to provide you with accurate information, they'll need to know that their data will be used responsibly, and will provide a real benefit to the market.
- Vendors should understand exactly how you will use their sales data. This is best accomplished in person at an annual vendor meeting, or in a market day "behind the table" chat; wherever vendors will feel comfortable asking questions. Explain how it will help make better management decisions (by knowing which promotions are working, and what other factors are impacting sales), and connect with new partners who can help support market operations (by demonstrating the economic value of the market's work). Show an example of the type of summary report where the data will appear.

How Do I Do It?:

Implementation

- Managers may use the Vendor Sales Slip template provided here, or a system they already have in place. In either case, ensure that the form you are providing is as clear and simple as possible. For the template, remove any currencies that are not accepted at your market.
- Distribute the Vendor Sales Slips with vendor's names on them to each vendor at the beginning of every market day. Remind them of the process and the need to turn the slip in before they leave for the day.

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

- 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.

Vendor-Level Sales

Vendors submit their sales information through their FM Metrics login. From the vendor homepage, select “Report Sales”, and choose the market and date for which they want to submit data. The website will populate only the currencies the market accepts. When done reporting sales, the vendor simply clicks “Submit,” and the data is recorded at the vendor level, as well as being reported up to the market level, for an aggregate report of all market sales.

At the market level, the sales fields in Per Market Day will automatically populate with the total vendors’ sales that have been reported. A pop-up to the right of each currency field will identify how many vendors have completed sales for this market day, allowing a market manager to follow-up with vendors who have forgotten to submit. In the event that not all vendors report sales, market managers are able to update these figures to correctly reflect the market sales.

What Should I Expect?:

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.

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

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, share the data with your vendors so they can use it and show that you safeguard individual data (as FM Metrics does) 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.

[Click Here to Download the Vendor Sales Slip](#)