

VISITOR COUNT

BEFORE YOU START:

This form allows you to break down the count by every 10 minute increment so you can see how accurate the 10-minute, 20-minute counts are compared to the full count. It is not necessary to use this form; only if you want to test different counting methods.

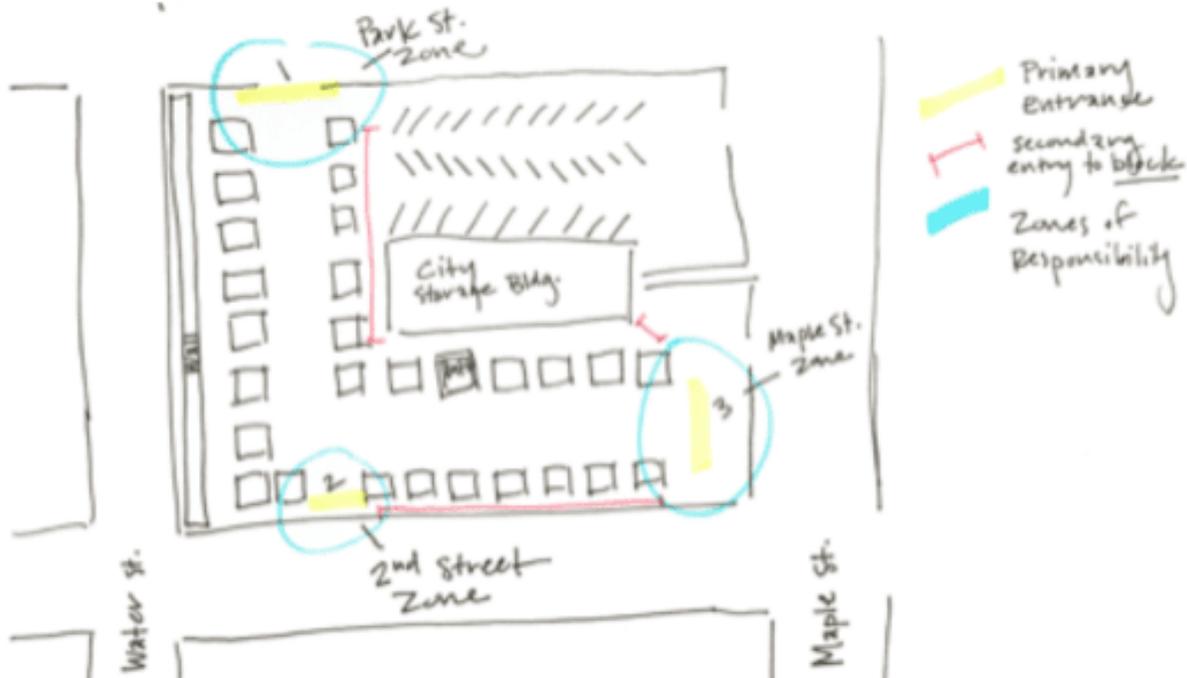
The other Zone Form is the most used form and allows for 20 minute and full counts for each hour.

Counting visitors entering your farmers market requires planning and adequate personnel. The number of people needed depends on how many entry points your market has. Identify how many data collectors you'll need, as well as how to prepare them for data collection by following the steps below.

Map Your Market: Create a map of your market by sketching its physical features. Include vendor booths, seating areas, buildings, and other structures. Then mark all entrances. Draw a line at each entrance, which classifies people as 'in' or 'out' of the market. Identify any secondary entrances (between booths, through an alley, etc.) that could be blocked off on counting days. If you can move a garbage can, chairs or even use caution tape to block off a secondary entrance, it will help guide visitors to the primary entry points, and decrease the number of data collectors you'll need.

Once you have identified the entrances, give each one a name (i.e., the street name, food court, etc.) so that everyone on your team is clear about which entrance is which. Ideally, you will have one person assigned to each market entrance. However, if multiple entry points (especially primary and secondary) exist within the same field of vision, they can be monitored by one data collector. Create 'zones of responsibility' on your map which outline the areas (including one or multiple entrances) that can be monitored by one person.

DATA COLLECTION METHODS



Sketch of a market map, with zones of responsibility and entry points identified.

How Do I Do It?:

On to the counting! We encourage markets to try to do full counts, meaning counting everyone entering all day, whenever possible. Since the market will only be counting a few times per season, this will allow for a much more accurate count and mean the other metrics that depend on this number to be calculated will also be more precise. In some cases, however, this is not tenable given market resource constraints. The secondary method used within FM Metrics is a sample count or timed entry count, which means to count everyone entering the market for a set period of time. Please scroll below for additional instruction on the Sample Count.

Prepare Collection Materials: Complete the top portion of the Visitor Count Record with your market's name and map. Add any other information for the data collectors to know. Print copies for each data collector. Provide data collectors a Visitor Count Record and a hand-held clicker. Hand-held clickers are inexpensive, subtle, and improve the accuracy of these counts. If no clickers are available, instruct data collectors to keep a tally of visitors on the back of their Visitor Count Record. If tallying by hand, data collectors may require clipboards.

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Implementation: Assign one person to keep an eye on the clock, and to make sure that all entrances are staffed at the designated times. This person should also collect all Visitor Count Records at the end of the day. Give each data collector a Visitor Count Record, and highlight the instructions:

- Count only adults.
- Count individuals.
- Do not count visitors that re-enter.
- Do not count vendors.

Enter the Data: Visitor count data is entered into the FM Metrics site under the Tally and Survey tab of your market.

Sample Count: Additional Instruction: The second 20-minute window of each hour is the recommended window for counting. This method was chosen because it is generally agreed to be the most precise and the most doable for most markets.

Identify Your Counting Periods: Counts will be conducted for 20 minutes of each hour that the market is open. The first counting period should begin 20 minutes after the market opens, and the counting periods should remain consistent. So, if your market opens at 9:00am, counts will take place from 9:20am to 9:40am, 10:20am to 10:40am, and so on. Enter the time of the counting periods into the Visitor Count Record.

Implementation: Consider these tips along with the ones mentioned above:

- Record the total from each 20-minute counting period on the Visitor Count Record.
- If you can, set an alarm on your phone or watch for reminders to help maintain accuracy.

If you plan to use a visitor counting method not discussed above, FMC staff is open to discussing this with you to ensure that it meets minimum requirements for data collection as defined by researchers.

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

What should I expect?

Counting is often easier than expected! If the market community has been prepared beforehand that the day will include a count, roping off leaky entrances is made easier. Check in with the counters after each hour to see how things are going. Often, one person is much better at counting at busy or multiple entrances and so can be relied upon to work independently or to take someone who is less comfortable under their wing.

[**Click Here to Download the Visitor Count Zone Form: *This is the Individual Counter's Form***](#)

[**Click Here to Download the Visitor Count Tally Sheet: *This Tracks Totals for Each Hour and for the Day***](#)

[**Click Here to Download the Visitor Count Testing Methods Form: *This allows you to count every 10 minute increment to test how accurate 10 minute and 20 minute counts are compared to the full count. It is not necessary to use this form, only if you want to compare results of counting methods.***](#)