Iowa Farmers Markets Economic Impact Study

Iowa’s 200+ farmers markets transform streets, parking lots, city parks, waterfront piers, courthouse squares - just about any place - into bustling places alive with vitality and commerce.

Farmers markets help revitalize local farms, provide fresh produce to urban populations, and create rural/urban community ties.

For more information about Iowa’s farmers markets, or to locate a farmers market, contact the Iowa Department of Agriculture & Land Stewardship web site at www.iowaagriculture.gov

Funds for this project were provided through the USDA-AMS Specialty Crop Block Grant Program from the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship
Iowa's Farmers Markets

Iowa's Farmers Market Facts

♦ Nearly 99,400 people shopped at Iowa's farmers markets during a typical week during the market season. That translates to about 2.2 million “consumer visits” for the 2009 season.

♦ The average shopper went to market 10 times during the 21-week market season, was about 53 years old, and reported spending a little over $17 per visit.

♦ Weekly attendance at Iowa's farmers markets has increased 44% since 2004.

♦ The average distance a farmers market shopper traveled to attend the market was nine miles.

♦ Iowa has experienced a 70% increase in the number of farmers markets over the past fifteen years.

♦ Iowa has approximately 1600 seasonal market vendors. The average vendor sells at two markets, sells at any market for 25 days or more, and has participated in farmers markets for eight years.

♦ In the U.S., Iowa ranks fourth in the number of farmers markets and second in the number of markets per capita.

Freshness is our specialty

Economic Impact

Iowa's farmers markets generated $38.4 million in sales in 2009 resulting in an estimated $59.4 million gross sales transactions directly or indirectly related to market activity.

Figure 4: Percentage of Market Consumers Purchasing from Goods Categories, 2009 (N=4,055)

32% of consumers questioned reported they spent from $1 to $10 per market visit; 46% reported they spent from $11 to $30 per market visit.