

An Overview of Tennessee Farmers Market Resources



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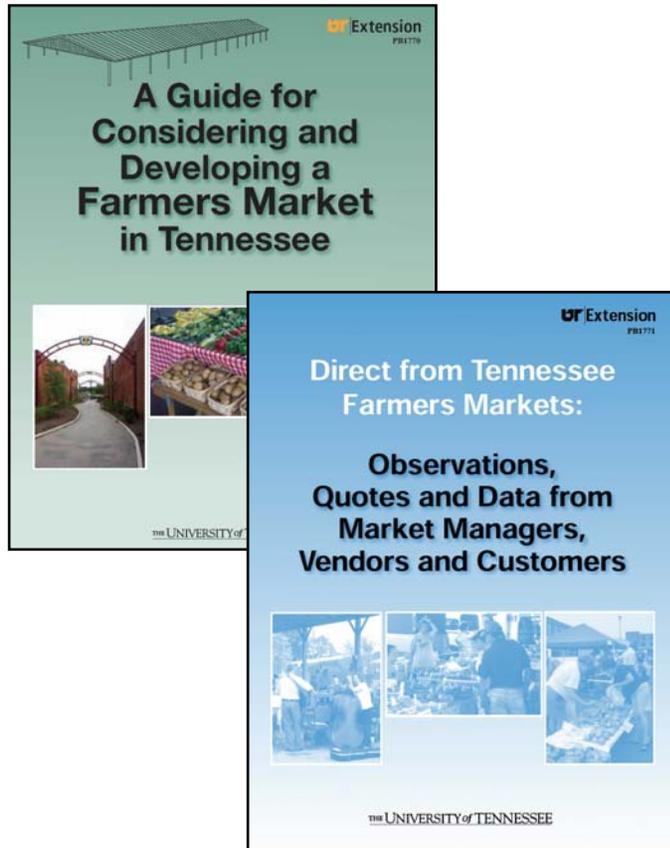
Farmers Market Forum
March 31, 2008

Objectives

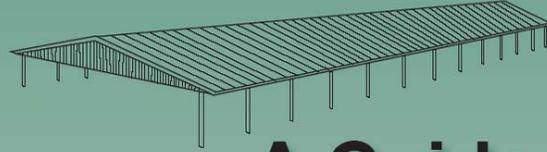
1. Introduce two new educational resources for Tennessee farmers markets
2. Provide an overview of steps to consider and develop a farmers market
3. Provide an overview of information learned in a study of Tennessee farmers markets



Two New Publications



- Developed through a partnership with the following organizations
 - Center for Profitable Agriculture
 - Tennessee Department of Agriculture – Ag Tag
 - USDA Rural Development



A Guide for Considering and Developing a Farmers Market in Tennessee



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Chapter 5 – Other Operating Issues	
Chapter 6 – Additional Educational Materials/Resources	
Chapter 7 – Summary	

Appendices

- Sample Farmers Market Bylaws.....
- Sample Mail Survey for Potential Vendor/Growers Prior to Market Establishment.....
- Sample Telephone Survey of Potential Customers.....
- Sample Outline of a Vendor Application Form.....
- Sample Mail Survey for Growers after End of Season.....
- Sample Personal Interview for Customers during Market Operation.....
- Sample Farmers Market Site Review Sheet.....
- Sample Farmers Market Safety Checklist.....
- Sample Farmers Market Rules.....
- Additional Resources That Address Safe Food-Handling Practices.....

Direct from Tennessee Farmers Markets:

Observations, Quotes and Data from Market Managers, Vendors and Customers



THE UNIVERSITY of TENNESSEE

An Overview of Considering and Developing Farmers Markets



What is a farmers market?

- A common facility or area where several farmers/ growers gather on a regular, recurring basis to sell a variety of fresh fruits, vegetables and other farm products from independent stands directly to consumers
- Potential benefits to
 - Farmers
 - Consumers
 - Communities



Why a farmers market?

Why a farmers market – for farmers?

- Desire opportunity to direct market products to consumers efficiently and effectively
 - Value-added
- Ability for new or small farms to generate income
- Ability to develop new customers for products



Why a farmers market – for consumers?



- Increasingly interested in buying fresh, local, source-verified, high-quality products
- Interested in supporting local farmers and economy
- Looking for a fun, community atmosphere

Why a farmers market – for communities?

- Communities interested in revitalizing business districts or downtowns
 - Bringing consumers back to these areas may result in economic benefits for neighboring businesses
- Communities interested in retaining farmland



Challenges

- Accumulating resources (land, labor, capital)
 - Working with multiple people from several groups
 - Varying goals, agendas, personalities
 - Developing new by-laws, policies and procedures
 - Recruiting vendors
 - Addressing regulatory issues
 - Marketing
-

Major Components for Consideration

- Number of vendors with variety of products
- Number of customers willing to shop
- Organization, operation and management of the market
- Location and facilities needed and available
- Marketing strategies for the market



Steps in Consideration and Development of a Farmers Market

- Assessment of interest
 - Feasibility
 - Organization and Implementation
 - Operation
 - Continued Operation and Evaluation
-

Assessment of Interest

- Assess interest by meeting with community leaders who may be interested in a market
 - Include city/county, Chamber, business leaders, farmers, Extension, TDA, consumers, etc.
 - Is there a need for a market?
 - Discuss the purpose, type and size of market envisioned
-

Assessment of Interest

- Identify any potential assistance and funding
- Identify any potential opposition
- Organize a market study committee to consider opportunity in more detail



Feasibility

- Market study committee should determine
 - Are there farmers interested in selling at a farmers market?
 - Is there sufficient customer demand to support the market if established?
 - Is there a general consensus in the community that a farmers market is needed?
 - Is there any opposition to the formation of a farmers market? What are the objections?
 - Is there financial support for the market if it is not a profit center?
-

Feasibility

- Identify purpose of the market
 - Identify potential sponsors
 - Gather more information about potential opposition (why, intensity)
 - Identify characteristics of the market
 - Size, who able to market
 - Identify organizational structure and market management alternatives
-

Feasibility

- Identify local government and community issues
 - Zoning, health department, liability insurance, etc.
 - Identify site/facility alternatives
 - Identify financing needs and alternatives
 - Identify publicity strategies and alternatives
-

Organization and Implementation

- Convene permanent market steering committee
 - Begin to develop policies, goals, priorities and standards for the market
 - Survey potential vendors and customers
 - Develop preliminary budget for implementation
 - Develop market rules and regulations
-

Operation



- Pursue financing
- Acquire and prepare site
- Identify and/or hire a market manager
- Recruit vendors
- Begin public relations

Continued Operation and Evaluation

- Collect information in order to evaluate progress of market
 - Determine community's awareness of new market
 - Allow vendors and customers to submit suggestions for changes or improvements
 - Grower/vendor plans to market next season
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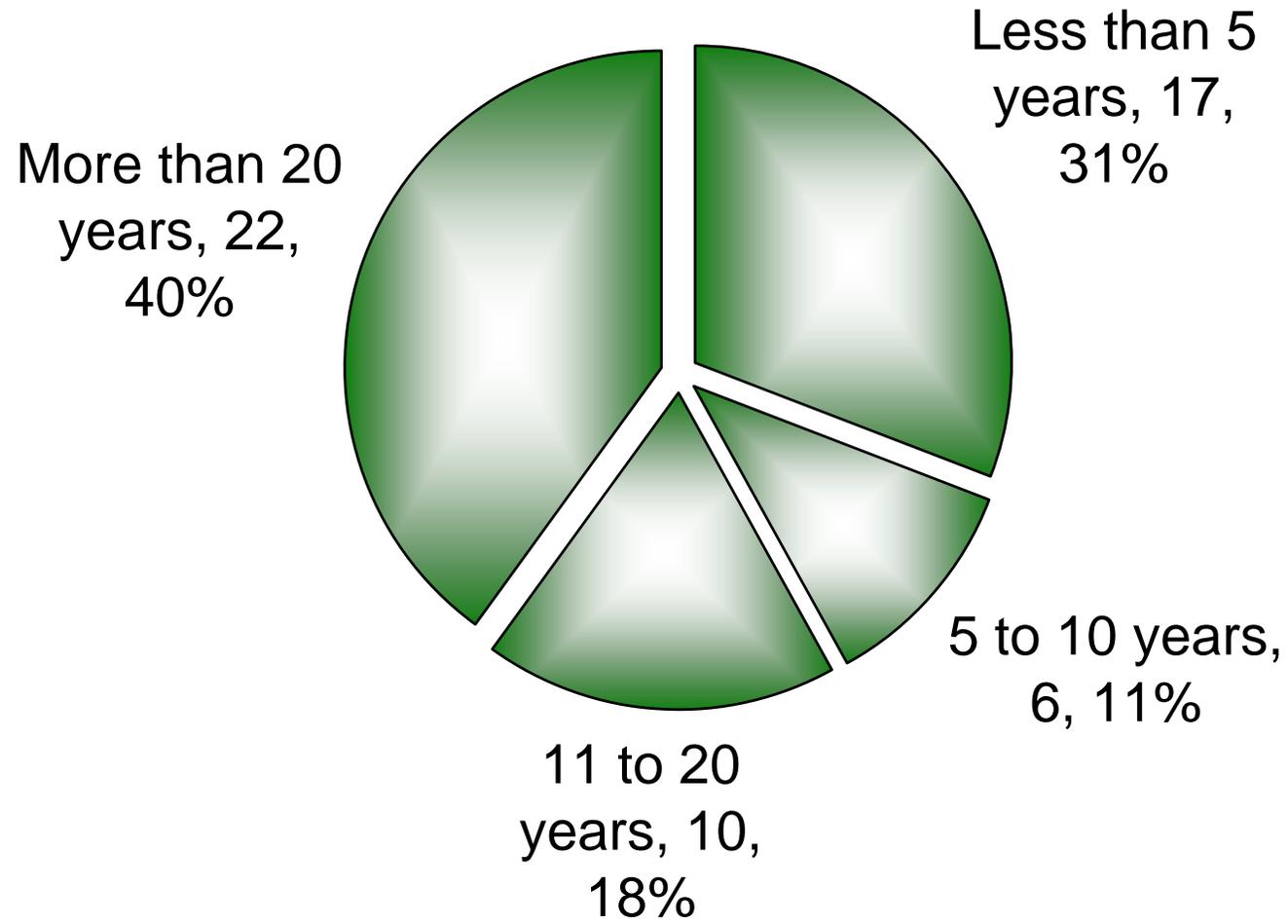
Overview of Tennessee Farmers Markets



From inquiries with 55 Tennessee farmers market representatives and visits to 12 markets during the summer of 2006.

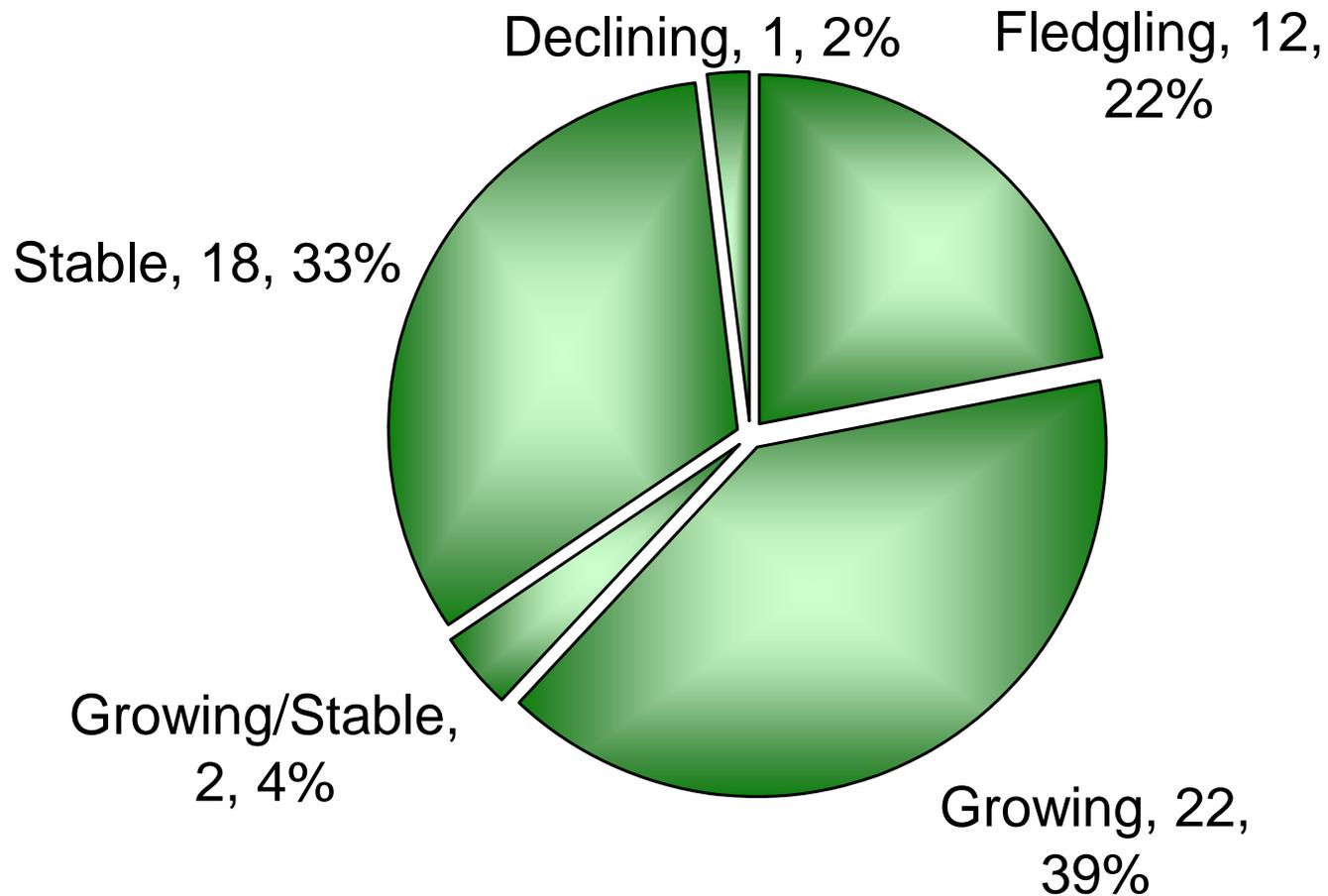
Number and Percent of Markets by Year of Operation

n=55



Number and Percent of Markets by Market Status

n=55



Policies and Procedures

- 83% of markets had written policies, by-laws and/or procedures
 - In the words of market vendors...
 - “We have a good set of understandable rules and policy – not too wordy and not too polished, just straightforward and to the point.”
 - “What’s the point of having rules if they are not enforced.”
-

Location/Facilities

Facility Type	# Markets	% Markets
Covered (Buildings, Sheds, Pavilions)	19	35%
Uncovered (Parking Lots, Vacant Lots, Parks)	32	58%
Other	4	7%
<i>Total</i>	<i>55</i>	<i>100%</i>



Kingsport, TN



Maryville, TN



Bristol, TN



Lebanon, TN



McMinnville, TN

Management

<i>Description of Management Official</i>	<i># Markets</i>	<i>% Markets</i>
Manager & Board of Directors	14	26%
Manager/Director/Coordinator	10	19%
Extension Agent & Other (Chamber (3), City, Board or Volunteers)	6	11%
None	5	9%
Extension Agent	5	9%
Board of Directors/Vendors	4	7%
Government Agency Employee	4	7%
Private Owner	3	6%
Chamber or Merchants Association	2	4%
Volunteers	1	2%
<i>Total</i>	<i>54</i>	<i>100%</i>

Management Compensation

- Compensation varied
 - None (volunteer)
 - Salary
 - % of Fees
 - Perks (get to choose own vendor space)



Management...in the words of market vendors

- “Leadership is really the key to getting a market going and keeping it going.”
 - “We really do not have any authority or person that sets policy or enforces it. We need some rules, and they need to be enforced.”
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Open/Close Dates

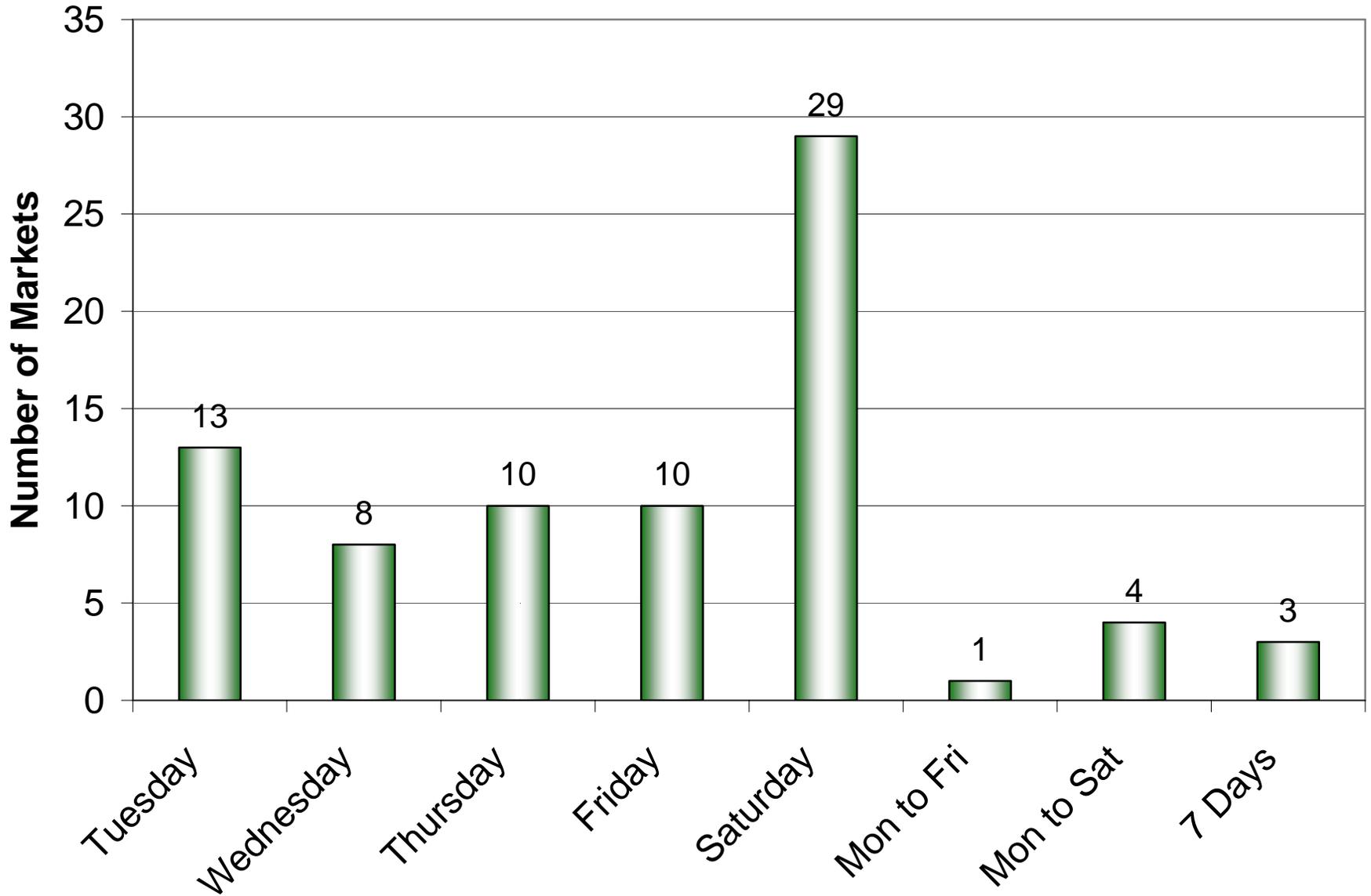
- 7 markets open year-round



Month Opens	# Mkts	% Mkts
March	2	4%
April	6	13%
May	22	47%
June	17	36%
Total	47	100%

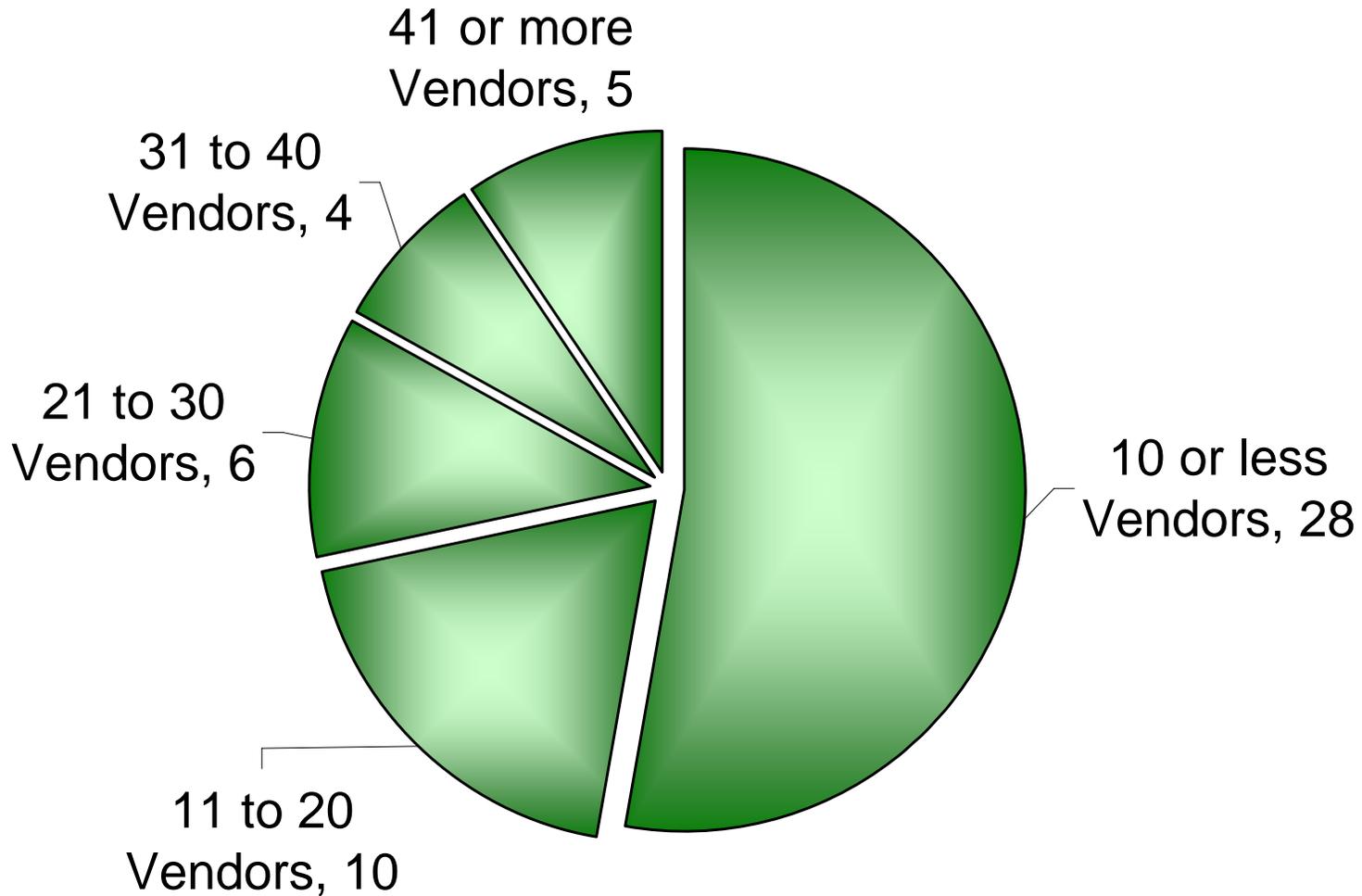
Month Closes	# Mkts	% Mkts
August	1	2%
September	8	17%
October	30	64%
November	7	15%
December	1	2%
Total	47	100%

Number of Markets Open by Days



Number of Markets by Average Number of Vendors Per Day

n=53



Fee Schedules

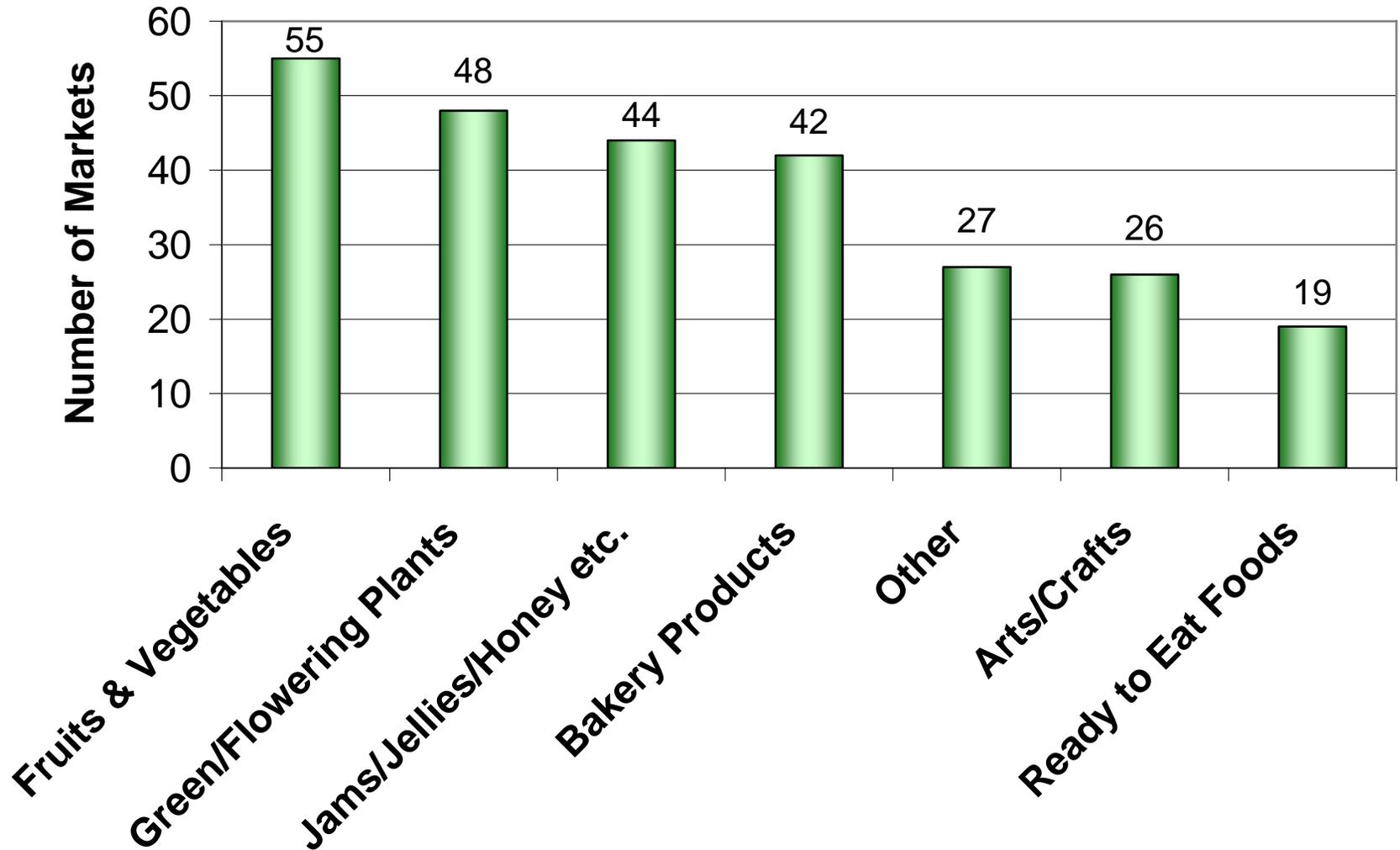
- 21 markets had no fees for vendors
 - Markets with application or membership fee
 - Fee of \$5 to \$20 charged by 13 markets (average = \$15)
 - Plus % of sales charged by 4 markets (4% to 8%)
 - Plus flat daily fee by 8 markets (\$1 to \$ 10 per day, average = \$4.50)
 - Markets without application fee
 - Daily rates -- \$2 to \$20
 - Weekly rates -- \$5 to \$20
 - Monthly rates -- \$30 to \$255
 - Yearly rates -- \$15 to \$250
-

Fee Schedules

- Higher fees charged in some cases (as much as double regular rates) for
 - Vendors from out-of-county or out-of-state
 - Craft versus food vendors
-

Products Offered by Number of Markets

n=55



“A good mix of products is essential for a successful farmers market.”











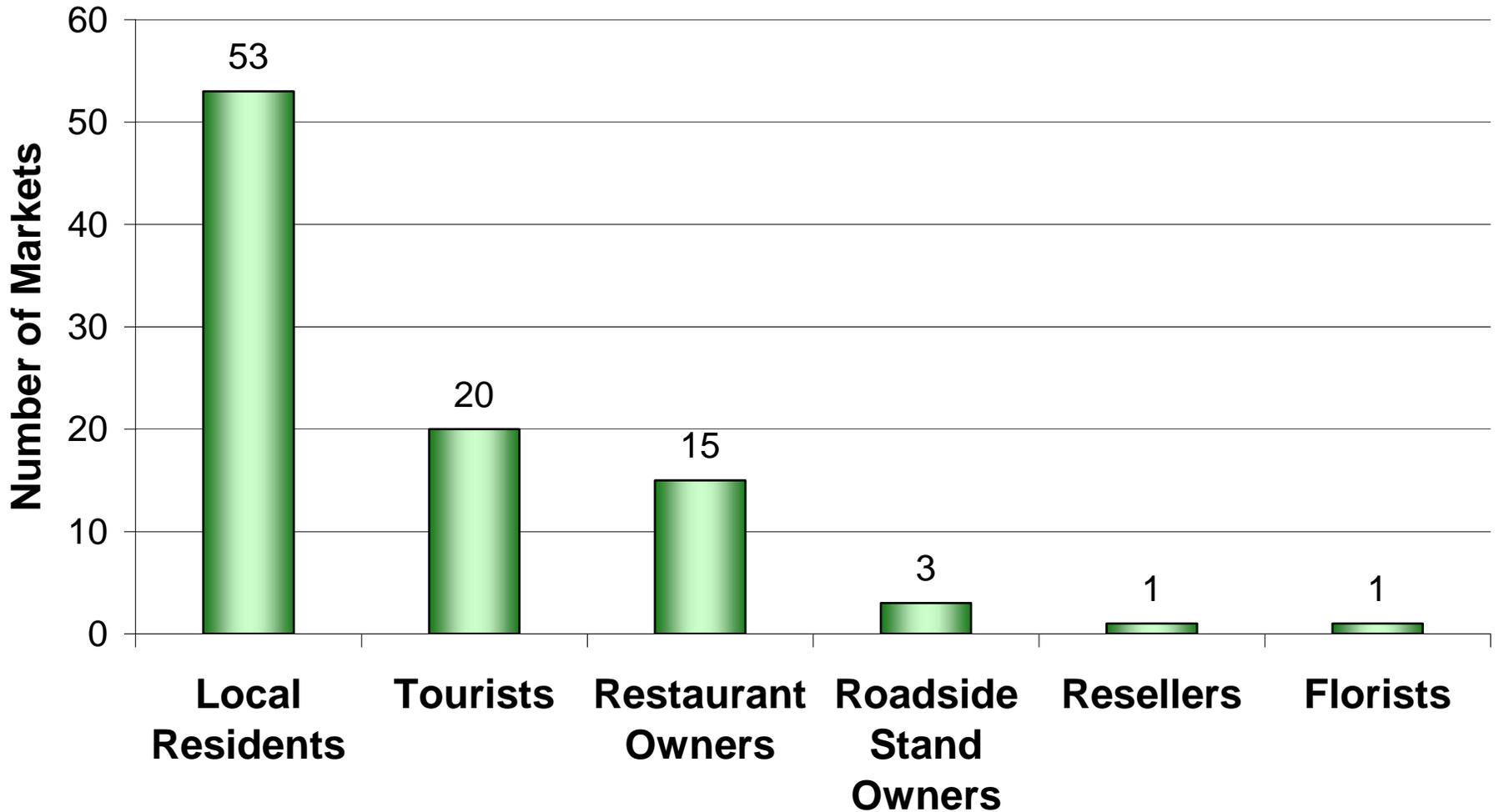
HILLSIDE BAKERY, LLC

Organic Sourdough Bread & Granola
Always Fresh Flour - Stone Milled in the Bakery



Type of Customers by Number of Markets

n=53



Average Number of Customers Per Day

<i>Number of Customers</i>	<i># Markets</i>	<i>% Markets</i>
Less than 20	4	8%
20 to 50	15	28%
51 to 100	5	9%
101 to 200	8	15%
201 to 300	6	11%
301 to 400	3	6%
401 to 500	2	4%
501 to 1000	4	8%
More than 1000	6	11%
<i>Total</i>	53	100%



Marketing

- Signs
- Brochures
- Posters
- Press releases
- Demonstrations
- Special events (15 markets)
- Web sites (9 markets)

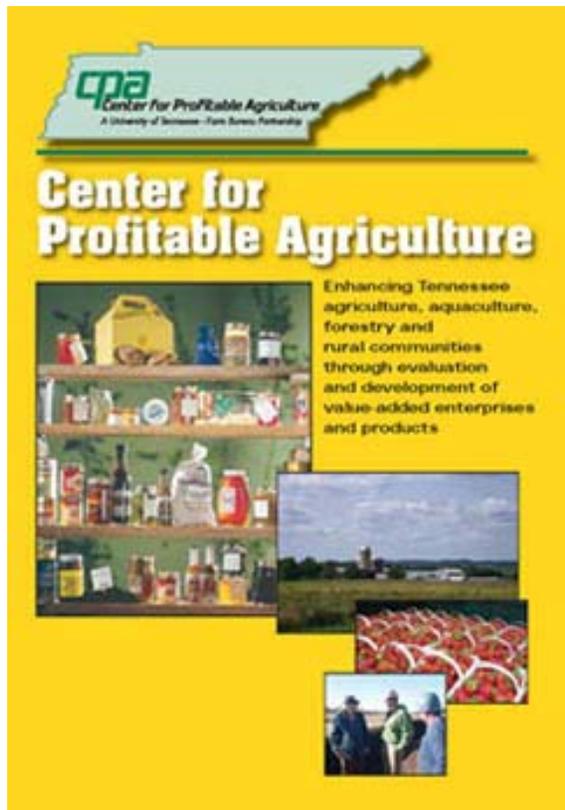


Summary

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2. Provide an overview of steps to consider and develop a farmers market
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Contacting the Center



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