**Farmers' Market Audit Tool**

These measures are designed to rate the nutrition environments of farmers' markets and produce stands across a variety of geographic and income settings. There are other establishments that may offer food products to purchase that fall into an exclusions category (see below) and may be enumerated but not necessarily rated. However, based on your survey purposes, you may decide to set different exclusion criteria.

For our purposes, a farmers' market is a common facility or area where several farmers or growers gather on a regular, recurring basis to sell a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables and other locally-grown farm products directly to consumers. This would include but is not limited to farmers' markets, roadside stands, curbside markets, tailgate markets, etc. The outlet does not necessarily have to sell 'local' produce. This does not include CSAs (Community Supported Agriculture) or buying clubs.

**Exclusions**
1. Establishments not open to the general public, or those where you have to pay a charge just to enter.
2. Establishments that focus on a variety of foods, have a closed space such as grocery stores, super centers.
3. Organizations that require a membership such as Community Supported Agriculture (CSA).
4. Food cooperatives, such as cooperative grocery stores.
5. Small road side stands with only one vendor selling food.

Before beginning the audit, please make sure you contact the market manager so that he/she is aware of the project.

**The basic principle of these measures is to gather information on <u>comparable</u> items across farmers' markets within and between geographic areas.**

General Completion Tips - Remember to follow the tips below to decrease data cleaning time later.
1. Write legibly.
2. Check your work.
3. Use the correct line/bubble.

**Preparation -** At the top of each page, fill in the following:
. Auditor ID
. Market ID

**Cover Page -** On the cover page, fill in the following:
. Start time (when you enter the market)
. End time (when you have finished the measures and reviewed them for completeness)

1. Page 1: Conduct farmers' market tours between 7 am and 10am, unless the market is only open in the afternoon. (This helps to ensure that items have been stocked for the day and are not sold out.) Indicate name of auditor (your name), your ID, date and time of day audit was conducted, and name and address of the farmers' market.

2. Page 2: Complete the section on seasonality and business hours of market, as shown in the example.

**Vendor Section**

1. Count the number of total vendors within the space of the farmers' market (All type of food or products being sold). A vendor is a stand/table for one producer or farmer. If the producer/farmer has more than one table, only count this as one vendor. If there are vendors selling food outside the designated space, do not count these vendors. This information can be gathered by walking the market and counting each vendor/ seller. Please count vendors selling fresh produce, meats, cheeses, breads, but do not count vendors selling prepared foods, snacks, or meals.
2. Now count the number of vendors selling prepared foods, snacks or meals.
3. Count the number of unique vendors that sell fruits or vegetables. These vendors may also sell other products but if they are selling fruits and/or vegetables, also include them in vendor selection #3.
4. For each vendor, count the number of unique fruits and vegetables being sold. If two types/ varieties of tomatoes (e.g., vine-ripened and cherry tomatoes) are being sold, count each type of tomato – so that would be two. If greens are being sold, count each type of green, such as kale, romaine lettuce, collards:  that would be three.  If there are three different varieties of lettuce (e.g., Bibb, Romaine, and Red Leaf lettuce), that would be three. Do not count organic and conventional as two separate varieties. For example, if there is organic spinach and conventional spinach, that would be one. Do not count processed fruit or vegetable such as dried fruit, jam, jellies, fruit pies, or vegetable quick breads such as zucchini bread. You can use the space under the table to take notes.

**Availability**
Before recording any information, first look for the listed item. If the listed item is not available, write down the name of the most comparable item on the "Alternate" line. For example, if "hot house" tomatoes are not available but "heirloom" tomatoes are available, indicate other variety (e.g., heirloom) on the "Alternate" line.

If an item is sold out, write "sold out" in the Available (y/n) section and record any available information. Continue down the list until an item is available or the list has been exhausted.

Do not include plants in the audit. If a tomato plant is available this does not count as the tomato being available. Only include food items that are ready to eat in their current form.

**Measurement Procedures**

<u>Produce Section</u>
- Find all the vendors selling each fruit or vegetable item.
- Look for the fruit or vegetable listed. If it is **available**, wartie "yes" in the "Available (y/n) box. You only need to record if it's available at the market.
- If the item is not available and there is a line below it for an alternate item, look for the <u>cheapest</u> similar alternate. Write it down and write "yes" next to it. For example, if there are no hot house tomatoes, but there are cherry tomatoes, white "Cherry" on the line below "hot house tomatoes". If there are no Red delicious apples and Gala apples are the cheapest alternate, write "Gala" on the line below "Red delicious".
- If the vegetable or alternate is available, mark "yes". If it is not available, mark "no". If the item is sold out, write "sold out" and record the available information. If the fruit is available but mixed with other fruit in a container, mark "no" for available but note the fruit cup contents, price and size in comments.
- Record how many vendors are selling this particular vegetable item. (Provide slash marks of 4 straight lines and then the fifth draw through.)
- Record the **quality** of the item by marking "A" for acceptable or "UA" for unacceptable.
  - Acceptable = peak condition, top quality, good color, fresh, firm and clean
  - Unacceptable = bruised, old looking, mushy, dry, overripe, dark sunken spots in irregular patches or cracked or broken surfaces, signs of shriveling, mold or excessive softening
  - The rating is based on the majority (>50%) of vegetables or fruits. If it seems difficult to decide whether to mark "A" or "UA", mark "UA" and describe in comments.
- If the market you are auditing has other fruits or vegetables that are not on the list that you would like to record, include up to three fruit and 3 vegetable items in the rows labeled "Other Fruit" or "Other Vegetable".  In this section include vegetables or fruits that have been canned, but do not include jams, jellies, or salsas. Only if the produce has been minimally processed for canning, and not made into another food product.

Repeat the steps above for the fruit items listed. After completing the information for the fruit items, count the number of vegetable and fruit items that are marked "yes" under available, and record the total.

<u>Meat Section</u>
- Find any vendors that are selling pork, ground beef, chicken, or fish.
- Choose one vendor for each meat product that has the lowest prices.
- Focus on unprepared meats. If it is pre-seasoned or pre-marinated, count this product.

*Pork*
- Find the vendor who is selling pork loin at the lowest price. Look at price per pound. If available, mark yes.
- Find the vendor who is selling pork loin pastured at the lowest price. If available mark yes.
- Indicate the number of total vendors selling pork loin.
- If there are no vendors selling this item, indicate "none".

*Ground Beef*
- For the healthier option, locate the lean ground beef with less than or equal to 10% fat. If **available**, mark yes. Choose the package of lean ground beef closest to one pound. Indicate if the beef is conventional, or  grass-fed by marking yes in the appropriate box.
- If no lean ground beef with less than or equal to 10 % fat is available, mark "no".
- For the regular option, locate the standard ground beef with > 10% fat. Repeat steps above.
- If there is no label for fat content, write "no label" in the column for availability.
- Record the number of vendors selling that each product.

*Chicken*
- Find any vendors that are selling skinless chicken breast or whole chickens. Select the vendor selling chicken for the lowest price. If available, mark yes.
- Indicate the number of vendors selling skinless chicken breast or whole chickens that are conventional and the number that are pasture raised.
- Indicate if the chicken is chicken breast or whole chicken.
- If there are no vendors selling this item indicate "no".

*Fish*
- Find any vendors that are selling shellfish, whole fish, or fish that has been sliced. Do not include prepared fish or canned. If available, mark yes.
- Indicate the type of fish or shellfish under "type".
- If there are many types of fish, select the cheapest fish per pound. Choose one fish vendor that has the lowest price per lb or per oz.
- Indicate the number of vendors selling fish.
- If there are no vendors selling this item indicate "no".
- Record in the comments box if the fish is farm-raised.

<u>Cheese Section</u>
- Find the vendors selling cheese.
- Choose the vendor with the lowest selling price of goats cheese. If they don't sell goats cheese choose another type of cheese (cow's milk or feta) and write in the line provided for the alternate the type of cheese.
- Indicate availabilty and number of vendors selling cheese.
- Indicate if they provide nutrition information for their cheese products with yes/no on line provided.
- Indicate if they offer lower calorie versions with yes/no on line provided.
- Record if there are other types of cheese being sold in the far right column.

Eggs Section
- Find all vendors selling eggs.
- Choose the vendor with the lowest selling price for a dozen eggs. If there is no vendor selling a dozen, choose the vendor that is selling the lowest price for one egg.
- Indicate availability and number of vendors selling eggs for both regular and free range eggs.

Breads and Grain Products Section
- Find all vendors selling bread.
- Indicate on the form availability and number of vendors selling white bread – do not include breads with any "food" in them, such as strawberries, cranberries, raisins. Include in this category only if bread is made from enriched flour and it is not whole grain, wheat, rye, or other dark bread.
- Indicate availability and number of vendors selling sweet breads (banana, zucchini, pumpkin, other). Include in this section such breads that may have strawberries or other fruits in them.
- Indicate on the form how many vendors are selling whole grain varieties of bread, such as wheat, rye, or other darker breads.

Samples Section
- In the samples section, list how many vendors are offering any food samples. Such as salsa with chips, cheese, apple slices.
- In the next section list how many vendors are offering fruit or vegetable samples. Such as apples, blueberries, tomatoes, or broccoli.
- In the last table, write in the space provided what type of vendor (such as fruit vendor) and then describe the ingredients for the sample.

**Pricing – If you wish to assess food prices at the market, here are some ideas:**
- If price is not available, ask someone at the vendor stand. Wait until all of the measures have been completed before asking the price of the items that are needed. Be sensitive to vendors' needs to sell products and thus do not interrupt a vendor from a customer interaction.
- Record the lowest price of all the vendors selling that item.
- Do not use a sale price unless it is the only price posted and write "sale price" in comments.
- Record the regular **price** of the fruit. Always choose the pound to price if there is an option.
- Write the **quantity (#)** of the fruit that is listed **for the price**. For example, if the sign says 2 for $1.00, write "2" for the quantity. If the sign says 3 lbs for 99¢, write "3" for the quantity.
- If the fruit is not loose but packaged (e.g., pint or container), count the quantity as "1" and write the quantity of the package in comments.
- Indicate if the price of the fruit is calculated by the piece or pound by marking "pc" or "lb". For example, if the sign says 2 for $1.00, mark "pc" for piece. If the sign says 3 lbs for 99¢, mark "lb" for pound.
- If packaging is other than pc/lb (e.g., per pint or bunch), mark "pc" and note under comments.