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2019 Whitefish Farmers Market Survey Kit

Whitefish, Montana

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A random sample of attendees at the Whitefish Farmers Market completed a questionnaire throughout the 2019 season.

Whitefish Farmers Market

2019

Whitefish, Montana

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Case Study Report 2019-17

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Abstract

This study was conducted for the Whitefish Farmers Market to provide insights into the characteristics of attendees of the 2019 Whitefish Farmers Market. There were 192 surveys completed using tablets on site during the 2019 farmers market season. Of the valid residence responses, Montana residents made up 76% of the respondents and of those Montana residents, 83% were from Whitefish. Out-of-area respondents spent an average of 5.17 nights away from home. Of those nights, an average of 5.81 nights were in Montana and 3.44 nights (on average) were in Whitefish. Rental home/cabin/condo purchases received the highest total dollars spent during the event. Out of area respondents to the survey reported spending of \$62,286.00 in Whitefish outside of the Whitefish Farmers Market. Those Whitefish Farmers Market purchases were reported by both locals as well as visitors and those purchases totaled \$9,358.00. Results provide event organizers and the Whitefish Farmers Market with useful data for future event planning, making improvements to the event, event marketing/promotion, and understanding visitor spending as well as farmers market purchases.

Executive Summary

The 2019 Whitefish Farmers Market attracted out-of-area Montana residents (13%) and out-of-state (24%) visitors to the Whitefish area. The attendees of the event make important economic contributions to the Whitefish area. The results of the study are worth considering for future Whitefish Farmers Markets.

- 81% of visitors who reside outside of Whitefish spent at least one night away from home.
- 15% of locals attended the market with out of area visitors.
- 31% of visitors were visiting Whitefish for the first time.
- For 21% of those, the Whitefish Farmers Market was their primary reason for being in Whitefish.
- More money was spent by these out-of-area visitors in rental home/cabin/condo (\$16,500.00), hotel/motel/b&b/rental home (\$9,650.00), restaurant/bar (\$9,225.00), and groceries/snacks (\$7,653.00) than other spending categories.
- At the Whitefish Farmers Market, the most money was spent on farm products (\$4,329.00) followed by prepared food consumed at the market (\$3,284.00) by both locals and visitors.
- 35% of respondents reported staying in a hotel/motel/b&b, followed by 24% staying in the home of a friend or relative, 17% staying in a rental cabin/home, and 15% staying in a second home.
- Respondents were mostly attending in groups of: 26% self, 26% immediate family, 18% couple, 18% family and friends, and 10% friends.
- Respondents traveled with a variety of age categories in their group – the highest percentages were 25-34 years old (23%), 35-44 years old (22%), and 55-64 year olds (21%).
- Attendees heard about the event mostly from word of mouth (56%), some “other” source (15%), signs (12%), posters (8%), and social media (7%).
- Most attendees drove a car to get to the market (68%), walked (20%) or rode a bicycle (10%).
- For those who drove, most walked two blocks to get to the market (44%) followed by one block (21%) or three blocks (18%).
- While attending the market, people were also participating in dining as an activity (22%), entertainment as an activity (12%), shopping as an activity (9%), and some other activity (8%).

Management Implications

Survey results indicate that this event brings both resident and nonresident visitors to the Whitefish area, and the attendees of the event make a variety of monetary contributions. Nonresident visitors bring new money into Montana and make valuable economic contributions to the area.

It is recommended that the organizers review the respondents' comments from Appendix B to gain more insight into where people are coming from, other reasons they're in the area, more group characteristics including how people heard of the event.

Introduction

The Whitefish Farmers Market runs annually from the end of May through September in downtown Whitefish, Montana. Local farmers and craftsmen showcase their products while attendees can also listen to live music and eat prepared foods. This event is run by a volunteer committee which has been around since 2003 and organized by The Heart of Whitefish.

The purpose of this study was to provide the organizers of the 2019 Whitefish Farmers Market with an understanding of the characteristics of attendees of the market, visitor spending in Whitefish, attendee spending at the market, and other information related to trips to the farmers market.

Methods

Surveyors intercepted attendees for on-site completion of the survey. Surveys were given to people by random selection in an attempt to represent the attendee population. People willing to fill out the questionnaire were given a tablet with the survey already loaded.

No documentation of the number of refusals was recorded.

Limitations

As in all research, there are limitations to the study. Limitations for the 2019 Whitefish Farmers Market study include the following:

- Data was collected by Heart of Whitefish volunteers who received training from ITRR's survey contact person prior to the market season on how to intercept people and how to obtain completed surveys.
- ITRR personnel were not present during the data collection for quality control.

Results

Of the 178 valid responses to the residence questions, 76% (136 people) were from Montana and 24% (42 people) were from out-of-state or Canada (see Tables 1 and 2). Twenty-one U.S. states and at least one Canadian province were represented (14 responses were unspecified). Of all Montana respondents, 83% (113 people) were from Whitefish while 17% (23 people) were from elsewhere in Montana.

Table 1: Residence of all Respondents

Place of Residence	# of total	% of total
Whitefish	113	63%
Other Montana resident	23	13%
Montana=136		
U.S. State	36	20%
Canada	7	4%
Total all Residences	178	

Table 2: Out-of-State and Canadian Residences

Residence	# of respondents
Alabama	2
Alberta, Canada	7
Arizona	2
Arkansas	1
California	6
Florida	1
Idaho	1
Massachusetts	1
Minnesota	1
Nevada	2
New York	3
North Carolina	1
Ohio	1
Oregon	3
Pennsylvania	1
Tennessee	1
Texas	4
Utah	1
Vermont	1
Washington	1
Wisconsin	1
Wyoming	1

Of those who were from outside of Whitefish and responded to the survey, 81% reported that they spent at least one night away from home. Of those nights spent away from home, the greatest percent of respondents (19%) spent ten or more nights in Montana. The mean number of nights spent in Whitefish was 3.44 nights. A full breakdown of nights spent as well as results of all other questions in this survey can be found in Appendix A.

Expenditures

Spending information was asked of event attendees who reside outside of Whitefish. The survey asked that they report their best estimate of the total amount of money they and their family/travel group (if applicable) spent in Whitefish in the following categories: accommodations, restaurant or bar, groceries or snacks, gasoline, transportation, auto rental, retail goods, and entertainment or recreation. In addition, Farmers Market specific purchases were asked of all attendees (including locals).

Table 3 presents the expenditure data of only those respondents living outside of Whitefish who reported spending money in those categories. Table 4 presents the expenditures of all spending reported at the Whitefish Farmers Market- by both locals and visitors. The mean expenditure of those who spent money for each category can be found along with the percentage of people who reported that they spent money in that category. The last column provides the total dollars spent by those respondents in each category. The total reported expenditure for visitors who spent in Whitefish was \$62,286.00. The total reported spending at the Whitefish Farmers Market was \$9,358.00.

Table 3 – Expenditure Data: Expenditures calculated using only visitors (those who live outside of Whitefish) who spent in the following categories in Whitefish:

Expenditure Category	Mean expenditures of visitors <u>who reported that they spent money</u> in these categories	% of respondents who reported spending money in each category	Total dollars spent in each category <u>by respondents who spent</u>
Rental home/cabin/condo	\$2357.14 (n=7)	11%	\$16,500.00
Hotel/motel/b&b	\$689.29 (n=14)	22%	\$9,650.00
Restaurant/bar	\$271.32 (n=34)	52%	\$9,225.00
Groceries/snacks	\$273.32 (n=28)	43%	\$7,653.00
Auto rental	\$518.18 (n=11)	17%	\$5,700.00
Retail goods	\$222.60 (n=25)	38%	\$5,565.00
Entertainment/recreation	\$236.36 (n=22)	34%	\$5,200.00
Gasoline	\$117.45 (n=22)	34%	\$2,584.00
Campground	\$52.25 (n=4)	6%	\$209.00
Local transportation	\$0.00 (n=0)	0%	\$0.00
TOTAL			\$62,286.00

Table 4 – Expenditure Data: Expenditures calculated using only those who spent in the following categories at the Whitefish Farmers Market:

Expenditure Category	Mean expenditures of those <u>who reported that they spent money</u> in these categories	% of respondents who reported spending money in each category	Total dollars spent in each category <u>by respondents who spent</u>
Farm products	\$35.48 (n=122)	64%	\$4,329.00
Prepared food consumed at market	\$35.70 (n=92)	48%	\$3,284.00
Art or crafts (includes clothing)	\$36.47 (n=30)	16%	\$1,094.00
Packaged food items (e.g., honey, breads)	\$13.78 (n=36)	19%	\$496.00
Miscellaneous	\$11.07 (n=14)	7%	\$155.00
TOTAL			\$9,358.00

Appendix A- Results

Are you a resident of Montana? n=178

76% Yes

24% No

Are you attending this event with out of area visitors? (only asked of Whitefish residents) n=135

15% Yes

85% No

Is your primary residence in Whitefish? (only asked of Whitefish residents) n=136

83% Yes

17% No

What is your zip code? (only asked of Montana residents who do not reside in Whitefish) n=23

Montana Zip Code	# Of Respondents from that Zip Code
59711	1
59801	1
59845	1
59901	10
59903	1
59911	1
59912	5
59919	1
59937	2

The next set of questions were only asked of out of area visitors:

In what state, province, or foreign country do you reside? (See Table 2.)

Is this your first time visiting Whitefish? n=68

31% Yes

69% No

Was attending this event your primary reason for being in Whitefish? n=70

21% Yes

79% No

For what other reasons were you visiting Whitefish? (Select all that apply.) n=65

20% Vacation/recreation/pleasure

10% Visiting friends/relatives

3% Just passing through

6% Shopping

5% Business

On this trip, how many nights will you spend away from home? n=59; mean = 5.17 nights

19% 0 nights
2% 1 night
3% 2 nights
14% 3 nights
7% 4 nights
5% 5 nights
10% 6 nights
12% 7 nights
5% 8 nights
7% 9 nights
17% 10 or more nights

How many of those nights are in Montana? n=54; mean = 5.81 nights

7% 0 nights
0% 1 night
4% 2 nights
17% 3 nights
9% 4 nights
7% 5 nights
11% 6 nights
17% 7 nights
2% 8 nights
7% 9 nights
19% 10 or more nights

Of your nights in Montana, how many will you stay in Whitefish? n=54; mean = 3.44 nights

33% 0 nights
2% 1 night
4% 2 nights
22% 3 nights
7% 4 nights
6% 5 nights
6% 7 nights
0% 8 nights
2% 9 nights
11% 10 or more nights

In what type of accommodation(s) will you stay in Whitefish? (Select all that apply.) n=46

- 35% Hotel/motel/b&b**
- 17% Rental cabin/home/condo**
- 4% Public land camping**
- 2% Private campground**
- 24% Home of friend/relative**
- 15% Second home/cabin/condo**
- 0% Resort**
- 2% Guest ranch**

Please enter the best estimate of the TOTAL amount of money (in US dollars) you (and your family/travel group, if applicable) will spend IN WHITEFISH in each of the following categories.

See Table 3

How many people does the above spending represent (including yourself, i.e., your travel group/family size)? n=41

- 12% 1**
- 32% 2**
- 17% 3**
- 29% 4**
- 5% 5**
- 2% 6**
- 0% 7**
- 2% 8**
- 0% 9**
- 0% 10 or more**

The next set of questions were only asked of out of area visitors:

What option best describes the group with whom you attended this event? n=160

- 26% Self**
- 18% Couple**
- 26% Immediate family**
- 1% Extended family**
- 18% Family & friends**
- 10% Friends**
- <1% Business associates**
- 0% Group or club**

Please select all the age ranges represented in your group. (Select all that apply.) n=192

- 3% Ages 0 to 5
- 8% Ages 6 to 10
- 7% Ages 11 to 17
- 9% Ages 18 to 24
- 23% Ages 25 to 34
- 22% Ages 35 to 44
- 17% Ages 45 to 54
- 21% Ages 55 to 64
- 15% Ages 65 to 74
- 4% Ages 75 and over

What best describes your annual household income (in US dollars)? Optional n=108

- 7% Less than \$20,000
- 16% \$20,000 to \$39,999
- 13% \$40,000 to \$59,999
- 12% \$60,000 to \$79,999
- 6% \$80,000 to \$99,999
- 23% \$100,000 to \$149,999
- 9% \$150,000 to \$199,999
- 13% \$200,000 and over

How did you hear about the Whitefish Farmers Market? (Select all that apply.) n=192

- 4% Hotel/restaurant employee
- 1% Visitor information center
- 56% Word of mouth
- 5% Newspaper
- 8% Posters
- 12% Signs
- 3% Farmers Market website
- 7% Social media
- 1% Other website
- 15% Other

Please enter the total amount of money in US dollars you (and your group) spent on the following categories at the Whitefish Farmers Market:

See Table 4

How did you get to the Farmers Market today? n=172

- 20% Walk**
- 10% Bicycle**
- <1% Shuttle**
- 68% Car**
- <1% Taxi/Uber**

If by car, where did you park? n=106

- 19% Parking lot**
- 22% Parking garage**
- 54% On the street**
- 5% Other**

How many blocks did you walk from parking to the Market? n=112

- 2% 0 blocks**
- 21% 1 block**
- 44% 2 blocks**
- 18% 3 blocks**
- 9% 4 blocks**
- 4% 5 blocks**
- <1% 6 blocks**
- 0% 7 blocks**
- <1% 8 blocks**
- <1% 9 blocks**

Are you combining your trip to the market with other activities in Downtown Whitefish? n=192

- 30% No other activity**
- 22% Dining**
- 9% Shopping**
- 12% Entertainment**
- 8% Other**

What is your gender? n=160

- 30% Male**
- 70% Female**

When is the next time you might come to the Whitefish Farmers Market again? (Select one.) n=166

64% Next week

17% Another time this summer

8% Next year

7% Within 5 years

3% Never

Appendix B- Open ended responses

Please tell us what you liked about the Whitefish Farmers Market.

a variety of items
access to local farm food
all
all of it
all the fresh produce and friendly vendors
arts and crafts and food
atmosphere
atmosphere
atmosphere is friendly and inviting
beautiful day!
beautiful produce, helpful people
buying fresh food
clean nice good produce
cleanliness, friendly, quality vendors, music
community
community
community
community and dinner out
community feel and local farmers
community!
crafts
crafts
dinner music fresh vegies
everything
everything
everything
everything
EVERYTHING Rhonda is the best
everything except no beer
farm products music
food

food
food
food crafts music
food and produce
food community
food trucks baked goods
food trucks and produce
food trucks, live band and arts and crafts
food. spread out. location
fresh food
Fresh food, seeing friends
fresh organic produce
fresh produce
fresh produce
fresh produce and flowers
fresh veggies
fresh vegies
fresh vegies and fruit
friendly, health, out of doors activities
friends nice spot park is nice music is nice good eats
fun
fun place to hang out
good prepared food
good size and open space, good mix of vendors
great energy
great food
great goods, fun atmosphere
great mix of farm product and value added products
great produce
great veggies, love the farmers, food trucks, the park, answer seeing friends
great vegies, great music, see all your friends, people watch
I liked ghetto spread of stands and the amount of space available the trees were nice shade and parking was available as well
it's my favorite summer tradition!!
it's the best

it's the best!
like markets
likes everything
local food
lots of vendors, lots of variety
love fresh produce and community
love the market
more diversity of vegetables,
more organics lots of art
music and food
music and vegies
music, PM weather
nice atmosphere
Nice outdoor atmosphere and products to look at
nice way to be a part of the community
no dogs!
no fuss
not comfortable sharing money spent
not too crowded
community
open space
out with healthy people
people food music
people watching
perfect temperature, freshest food ever and great people watching
prepared food
prepared food
pretty girls
produce
produce and friends
produce, friends, music
ready to eat food
remind me of fair festive
see my friend Sue
seeing friends

seeing people, HOLY BASIL
selection of everything
sense of community
sense of community, great farmers
snow country farms!
so big and variety
so cute
so glad the pond is gone!
so many options and friendly vendors. seeing people we know from around town
So much great food, family friendly, perfect weather, casual
social
Sue
supporting local economy, learning the variety of goods
the atmosphere
the community
the community
the evening/dinner vibe, the variety of products
the farmers at purple frog, the Indian tacos, Greskos bakery
the gorgeous food and the food coins and the senior packet
the whole environment
this is great yall need more music
tomatoes
variety
variety
variety
variety of food
variety of produce super kid friendly cotton candy
variety of vendors and the people
veggies only
veggies, music, crafts
vegies
vegies and crafts
vendors
vendors and music and convenience
we liked the live music and the variety of vendors

weather, beautiful scenery
wicked good farm, Thai food bus, North woods pb, Kim children vendor, pole bridge bakery, location, atmosphere and community, affordable, supporting local

Please tell us if you have any suggestions for improvement to the event or if there is anything you did not like about the Whitefish Farmers Market.

a photo booth for kids
all good
beer and wine
better layout of endorsement in park more continuity
bigger music
bigger music venues. serve and wine
bigger signage for no dogs
bike valet, beer garden
bread vendor
bring back the dogs
bring the dogs back or enforce the rules and bring back the bread either
cheaper prices
dogs come back
Doing a great job.
I wish dogs were here still
intersection at entrance to market gets crowded
it's all great better each year
keep it up! reduce intersection traffic. it gets too crazy WITH bad drivers. close railway to through traff.
keep up the good work
liked everything
live music
looks great
love for it to start at 4
loveit
miss the dogs
miss the dogs but understand about the biting
more bread options
more carrots

more free ice cream
more gluten free items available, more seating
more kids who work for the farmers and help lower the food prices, woofers.
more parking
more picnic tables by the music
more produce
more seating, didn't get food because no where to sit
more table
more variety, massage chair
more wagons
n/a
no
no changes
no paper plates waste with dining
Nope
nothing
nothing except miss dogs
nothing
parking
parking
parking
parking and shade for the band likes no dogs more picnic tables
parking especially handicapped parking - could parking closest to the market be designated handicapped for Tuesday afternoons?
parking is frustrating
parking is hard
parking stinks
picnic tables, miss the fire engines
seating
serve beer
start at 4 pm
tables
the survey is too long
variety of vendors crafts etc plus the music
want Kendra back

we like not having dogs at the market

we loved bringing our dog and seeing other dogs. big mistake taking them away.

we need recycling get bins desparately. it would be great if vendors started using recycle able straws. let's get water filling stations

well behaved dogs should be allowed. many people in the area have dogs, including myself.