

Online Shoppers; Who Attends Farmers' Markets, Who Does Not, and Why?

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INTRODUCTION

Farmers' markets have been the most popular markets for local fresh produce. As more consumers increasingly shop online and fruits and vegetables being available in the online market, it is vital to investigate whether the online shoppers attend farmers' markets in their communities. In this study, we identify characteristics of those who attend and who do not. We further present reasons for not attending.

SPECIFIC STUDY OBJECTIVES

1. Explain the frequency of attendance at farmers' markets among online shoppers,
2. Describe the overall experience at farmers' markets among online shopper attendees,
3. Describe reasons why some online shoppers do not attend farmers' markets.

METHODOLOGY

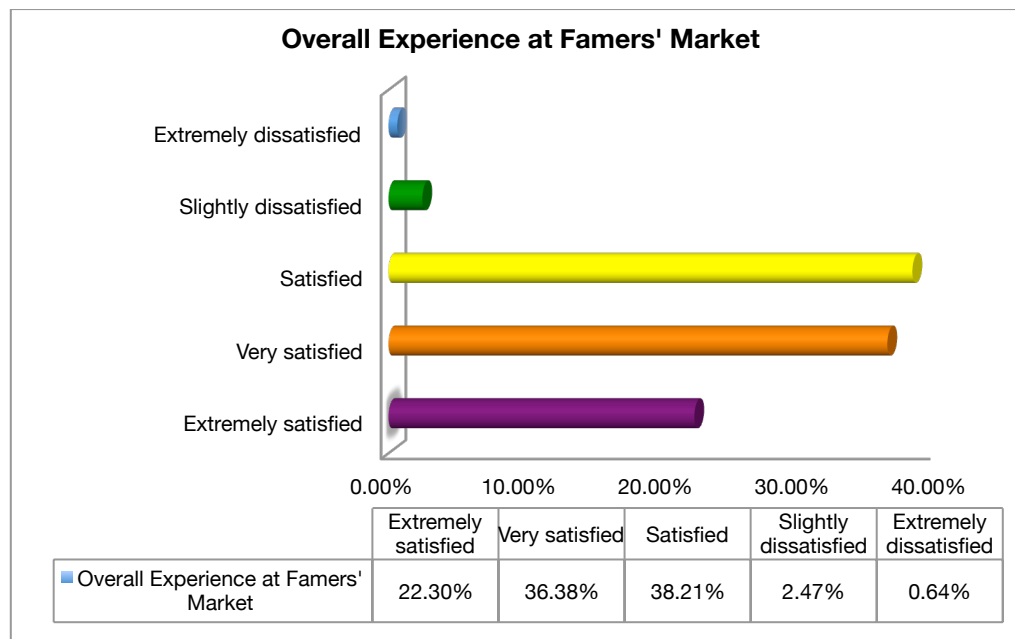
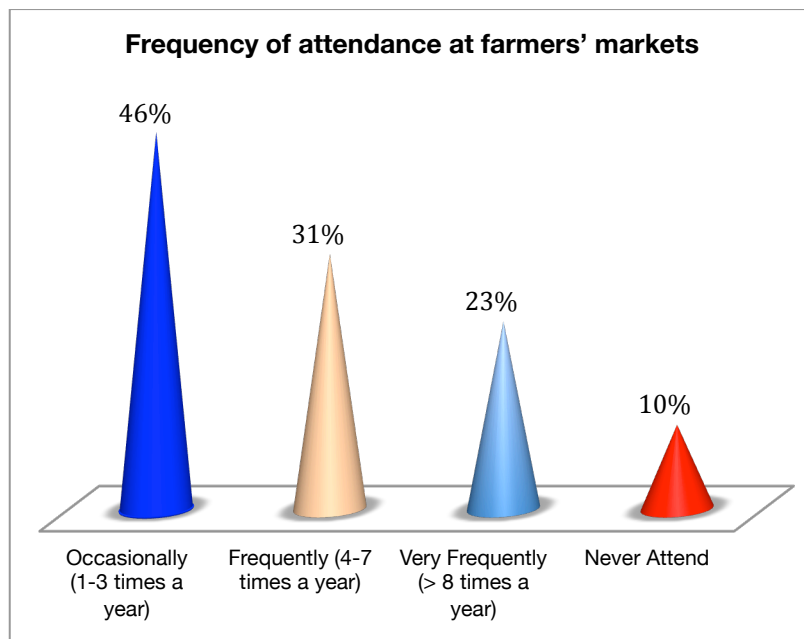
This study uses data collected from a stratified randomly selected sample of 1,205 online shoppers in 15 states of the South region of the U.S. Data were collected in 2016 using a survey emailed to the Qualtrics actively managed market research panels and those using social media such as Facebook and Twitter. Qualtrics is a professional survey software provider that offers sophisticated and advanced online data collection tools combined with respondent panels.

KEY FINDINGS

1. On average, the majority of online shoppers attend farmers' markets occasionally
2. Almost all online shoppers who attend farmers' markets indicated that they had at least a satisfactory overall experience
3. Major reasons for those who do not attend farmers' markets are (a) unawareness for existence of the markets in the area, (b) inconvenient hours of operations, and (c) inconvenient place (limited parking, long distance, do not like the location, and not a one-stop shopping destination).



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This study is useful to fresh produce growers and agricultural marketers as it provides critical information about farmers' markets attendance among online shoppers. It is useful in identifying those who could be targeted when marketing farmers' markets online. Future researchers will find this analysis useful when furthering knowledge in this area.