

2) Profile of Ontario Farmers' Markets

2.1 Sample Size

This study was based on 3,066 interviews conducted with individual farmers' market shoppers over the period from July to October, 2005.

2.2 Demographic Highlights

The results showed that, on average:

- 64% of market shoppers are female and 36% are male, nearly a 2:1 ratio
- Two-thirds of the principal shoppers are 45 and older, with more younger shoppers coming than in 2002
- 94% of shoppers have lived in Canada twenty years or more

2.3 Shopping Patterns

- Two-thirds of principal shoppers have been coming to the market for five years or more
- 45% state that fresh produce is their number one reason for coming
- 78% of shoppers use their own car to reach the market and 14% walk
- 62% of shoppers visit the market at least once a week
- The average size of the shopping party is 2.5 persons per party, with 10% of the shoppers identified as children
- 95% of shoppers state that "buying products produced in your community" is either very important (77%) or moderately important (18%)

Market shoppers display very loyal shopping behaviour with frequent repeat business, year after year.

2.4 Shopper Satisfaction

- 92% are very satisfied with the **quality** of products
- 86% are very satisfied with the **variety** of products
- 47% are very satisfied with **facilities** at the market
- 88% are very satisfied with the market's **location**

Market shoppers are very pleased with the products they buy at their farmers' markets.

2.5 Economic Impact on Ontario

- Average spending by shoppers has increased to \$30 per visit
- Total farmers' market sales across Ontario in 2005 are estimated to be \$645 million
- The combined Ontario economic impact is estimated at \$1.9 billion
- Sales at farmers' markets are growing at about 5% per year, representing real growth, well ahead of inflation