

LFS 350 Community-Based Experiential Learning - 2017/2018

Artisan Farmers' Markets: Triple Bottom Line of Farmers' Markets (North Vancouver)

Final Community Project Report

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ARTISAN



FARMERS MARKETS

INTRODUCTION

Farmers markets across BC are helping to stimulate local economies and diverting dollars away from carbon-emitting transportation associated with importing foreign foods (BC Association of Farmers' Markets, 2017). Since 2002, the Artisan Farmers' Markets Society has been on a mission to celebrate and support BC farmers and small local businesses within community-connected markets currently in Burnaby, Lonsdale Quay and Ambleside that provide a selling opportunity for over 150 vendors every week from May through October. Our project team's goal was to assist the general manager in increasing vendor participation by identifying why vendors choose to sell or not sell at the North Shore markets; Lonsdale and Ambleside.

During the 2016 year, the Artisan Farmers' Markets Society found itself in a \$17,000.00 deficit in operational costs. Our research will directly contribute to understanding how to improve vendor participation so that the Artisan Farmers' Markets Society can remain profitable. On a broader scale, this project addresses the BC Farmers Market Association's key performance area (KPA), "Integrity in the Marketplace", under its strategic plan (desLibris, 2012). This KPA specifies that markets are expected to consistently increase overall vendor participation through ways such as improving communication between vendors and managers (desLibris, 2012). This project has assisted in meeting this KPA by using interviews and surveys to bridge communication gaps between vendors and the general manager.

Objectives:

1. To use interviews and quantitative surveys to identify the key social, environmental, political, and economic factors that are most important to a vendor when deciding to start and stop selling at the North Vancouver and West Vancouver Farmers' Markets by October 2017.
2. To use these identified key factors to determine what steps the Artisan Farmers' Markets Society can take to improve vendor participation and achieve its Integrity in the Marketplace KPA by December 2017.

METHODS

Data organization and collection

Before administering our surveys, we visited the Lonsdale and Ambleside markets to talk to gain a better understanding of the context we would be working in. Following the visits, we combined external research and feedback from the Artisan Farmers' Markets Society's general manager to finalize the appropriate questions and variables for the survey. The survey inquired about vendors' average daily revenue and overall satisfaction from sales. According to the general manager, vendor satisfaction would be a key influencer in their participation. We tested this in the by asking questions determined what factors influenced vendor satisfaction and participation at either market. These factors were presented to respondents within checkboxes so that the factors could act as variables in a quantitative analysis (see Appendix for a copy of the full survey). To prepare our respondent database, we transferred 10 years of hard-copy vendor information onto online excel sheets. We gathered a portion of our surveys from markets in person and sent online surveys to 454 vendors. Our final sample sizes of respondents from Lonsdale and Ambleside market were 11 and 36 respectively. In addition, we had 12 vendors who responded according to their participation at both markets and 12 more who did not specify.

Data Analysis

A one-way ANOVA statistical analysis tool was used to determine if there was a difference in average daily income amongst farmers, prepared food vendors, and crafters. A least significant difference (LSD) test was performed if a p value less than 0.05 was obtained to determine which types of vendors were significantly different. This analysis was done in relation to how satisfied each type of vendors are with the amount of sales they make in a day.

Ethical Considerations

Our surveys were anonymous, confidential and optional. From our TCPS-2 training, we developed a consent form that was presented to every vendor prior to completing the survey. All

consent forms contained vendor names, however they were kept private and separate from the anonymous surveys.

RESULTS

As indicated by table I below, farmers significantly make more than prepared food vendors and crafters in average daily income (ADI) at Ambleside. Although crafters have a higher average than prepared food vendors, there is no significant difference between the two in ADI due to the high variation for both groups. Based on the results obtained in table I, it is clear that there is a positive correlation between average daily income and percentage of satisfaction of average daily income. Farmers are the most satisfied and obtain the highest income among the other three groups.

Table I. Average Daily Income for the types of vendors selling in Ambleside (average \pm standard deviation)

	Type of Vendor		
	Farmers	Prepared Food	Crafters
Average Daily Income (CAD\$)	\$11830 \pm \$394 ^a	\$485 \pm \$337 ^b	\$530 \pm \$460 ^b
% Satisfaction of Average Daily Income	78%	50%	9%

*Superscripts "a" and "b" denote which averages are different from each other based on a one-way ANOVA ($\alpha = 0.05$).

In table 2, there is no significant difference between farmers and prepared food vendors at Lonsdale. However, crafters had the greatest satisfaction, which is a large contrast to the Ambleside market. This may be due to the small sample size in the Lonsdale Quay market relative to the Ambleside market. Since only one of the three crafters reported their ADI, it is hard to draw any conclusions as to whether they have a high ADI relative to the other vendors and how that correlates to their satisfaction of their ADI.

Table 2. Average Daily Income for the types of vendors selling in Lonsdale (average \pm standard deviation)

	Type of Vendor		
	Farmers	Prepared Food	Crafters
Average Daily Income (CAD\$)	\$800 \pm \$625 ^a	\$564 \pm 368 ^a	N/A
% Satisfaction of Average Daily Income	60%	33%	100%

*Superscripts denote any differences in averages are different from each other based on a one-way ANOVA ($\alpha = 0.05$), in this case, there is no significant difference.

*N/A for Crafters is due to the lack of sample size to complete the one-way ANOVA. Only one out of three crafters provided an answer, which is insufficient to conduct this analysis.

Table 3 shows that the type of customers that vendors interact with is vendors' favourite aspect of the markets and attracted them to sell at Ambleside and Lonsdale. This demonstrates that vendors enjoy interacting with their customers and forming lasting relationships.

The amount of sales was the most challenging aspect for vendors at both location and was indicated as the top reason to end participation. This finding complements the results for ADI, which illustrate that Ambleside crafters are at the highest risk for ending participation as they are the least satisfied. Furthermore, many Ambleside vendors feel that the change in market location has posed a challenge as it has negatively impacted sales. This factor was supported throughout our visits at the Ambleside market where a number of vendors verbally expressed their concern about the new market location.

Table 3. The top three factors for both Ambleside and Lonsdale Quay for each survey question

Survey Questions	Location	Ranking		
		First Choice	Second Choice	Third Choice
What factor(s) attracted you to this market?	Ambleside	Type of Customer 64%	Location of the Market 53%	Number of Customers 47%
	Lonsdale	Location of the Market 73%	Type of Customer & Relationship with Market Manager (Tie) 64%	Number of Customers 55%
What factor(s) do you enjoy most when selling at this market?	Ambleside	Type of customer 58%	Relationship with other vendors 44%	Location of the market & Relationship with market management (tie) 36%
	Lonsdale	Type of customer 45%	Location of the Market 36%	Relationship with other vendors 27%
What factor(s) do you find most challenging when selling at this market ?	Ambleside	Market has changed locations 33%	Location of the market 31%	Amount of sales 28%
	Lonsdale	Amount of sales 27%	Number of customers, City policies, and Other ^x (tie) 18%	Competition, Relationship with vendors and market management (tie) 9%
What factor(s) make you consider ending participation at this market?	Ambleside	Amount of Sales 36%	Market has changed locations 22%	Market Location 19%
	Lonsdale	Amount of Sales, Relationship with market management, Other ^y (tie) 18%	Number of customers, Location (tie) 9%	N/A ^z

*x -Vendor comments: Once again, the loading and unloading (referring to difficulty of having to set up their equipment at this market), Didn't get much support from the Market's manager! (Previous manager)

Y- Vendor Comments: When the previous manager was not supportive!!, Not accepted for the 2017 markets, and didn't receive very many dates for the 2016 market.

Z- All remaining factors had zero votes.

DISCUSSION

By improving vendor participation at local farmers' markets, our project contributes to a food system that stimulates the local economy as BC farmers markets contribute substantial economic benefits to the provincial economy (Connell, 2012) and protects human and environmental health (BC Association of Farmers Markets, 2017). In addition, increasing and diversifying vendors at farmers markets can improve community food security by providing an environment that is welcoming and accommodating to everyone in the community including low-income households.

Vendor participation at Ambleside and Lonsdale markets was linked to a variety of factors including overall satisfaction, sales, location, management, and types of customers. Our data on vendor satisfaction revealed an interesting relationship between time, sales, and satisfaction. Those vendors who had been participating the longest, were also the ones grossing the highest daily sales, and the most satisfied overall.

Our first recommendation to increase social media presence for both markets builds on this finding to use a culturally relevant and low-cost marketing medium to increase customer traffic, thereby encouraging sales and increasing profits, satisfaction, and long-term participation. This finding also led to our second recommendation, to provide Ambleside crafters with business and sales training. Since overall satisfaction amongst Ambleside crafters is currently very low (9%), investments into sales education for crafters could potentially accelerate daily sales, satisfaction, and eventually long-term participation of this group. The final recommendation is related to relationships with management and fellow vendors – which were also factors influencing vendors at both markets. Since these relationships were indicated to be important to vendors, we recommend that the markets' general manager host summer social events for vendors to get to know each other and strengthen a sense of community. We intend for these recommendations to directly improve vendor participation at both Ambleside and Lonsdale markets.



In building these recommendations we were limited most significantly by time. To build our surveys, we could not spend as much time as was necessary to ask all of the right questions or to compile a more accurate list of variables to base our quantitative results on. We were also limited by technology. A mistake was made during the online survey launch and an important question which categorized respondents was left out. In consequence, the sample sizes for our data were affected and some data had to be thrown out. These limitations could have been overcome by creating a more comprehensive data collection strategy prior to action, spending more time with vendors prior to the survey launch, and dedicating more time to online survey development.

CONCLUSION

All of our recommendations directly contribute to improving vendor sales and relationships with customers, management, and each other. Improvement in these areas ultimately impacts the most immediate and influential social and economic factors affecting vendor participation at Lonsdale and Ambleside markets. Greater participation in these markets from vendors will improve these markets' profitability; allowing them to continue to grow the local economy (Connell, 2012), support small businesses, and provide local communities with access to fresh and healthy foods.

As this project is only a beginning, we recognize that our findings will have significance for the next group that tackles the customer impacts on the markets' successes. The next group's research will be able to build on our finding and further improve on an approach to target the right types of customers and vendors through marketing.

REFERENCES

desLibris - Documents, Canadian Electronic Library (Firm), & British Columbia Association of Farmers' Markets. (2012). *British columbia farmers' markets sector strategic plan 2011-2016* BC Association of Farmers' Markets.

Why Shop Local? (2017). Retrieved December 04, 2017, from <http://www.bcfarmersmarket.org/fresh-market/why-shop-local>

Connell, D. J. (2012, November 26). *Economic and Social Benefits Assessment Provincial Report*(Rep.). Retrieved December 02, 2017, from BC Association of Farmers Markets website: [http://www.bcfarmersmarket.org/sites/default/files/files/BCAFM%20Market%20Benefits%20Final%20Report%20PROVINCE%20Merged\(2\).pdf](http://www.bcfarmersmarket.org/sites/default/files/files/BCAFM%20Market%20Benefits%20Final%20Report%20PROVINCE%20Merged(2).pdf)

APPENDIX

Vendor Survey

Vancouver Artisan Farmers Market Survey 2017

Circle the farmers market that you sell at: Lonsdale Ambleside Both

Circle the category(ies) of goods that you sell: Farmer Meat/Fish Liquor

Plants/Flowers Prepared Foods Crafter Body Products

Food Truck Entertainer Massage Non-profit group

Other (please state what product you sell): _____

If you sell at multiple farmers markets, rank your top three favourite markets to sell at:

First Choice: _____
 Second Choice: _____
 Last Choice: _____

How often do you sell at Lonsdale or Ambleside farmer's market? _____

How long have you been in business? _____

How long have you been participating in Lonsdale, Ambleside, or both of these markets? _____

What do you consider your average daily revenue at this market? _____

What was your highest daily revenue at this market? _____

What was your lowest daily revenue at this market? _____

Are you satisfied with your average daily revenue at this market? (If **g**, Does your average daily revenue meet your expectations?): Yes No

Please indicate with **check marks** what most attracted you to participating in this market:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Type of customers who come to the market
<input type="checkbox"/>	Number of customers
<input type="checkbox"/>	Amount of sales
<input type="checkbox"/>	Relationship with the market's management
<input type="checkbox"/>	Relationships with other vendors
<input type="checkbox"/>	Location of the market (eg. transportation, parking, accessibility)
<input type="checkbox"/>	The market has changed locations and affected sales
<input type="checkbox"/>	Feeling supported by the Artisan Farmers' Markets Society
<input type="checkbox"/>	City policies
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify): _____

Please indicate with **check marks** what you enjoy **most** about this market:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Type of customers who come to the market
<input type="checkbox"/>	Number of customers
<input type="checkbox"/>	Amount of sales
<input type="checkbox"/>	Relationship with the market's management
<input type="checkbox"/>	Relationships with other vendors
<input type="checkbox"/>	Location of the market (eg. transportation, parking, accessibility)
<input type="checkbox"/>	The market has changed locations and affected sales
<input type="checkbox"/>	Feeling supported by the Artisan Farmers' Markets Society
<input type="checkbox"/>	City policies
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify): _____

+ Please indicate with **check marks** what you find the **most challenging** when selling at this market:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Competition between vendors
<input type="checkbox"/>	Type of customers who come to the market
<input type="checkbox"/>	Number of customers
<input type="checkbox"/>	Amount of sales
<input type="checkbox"/>	Relationship with the market's management
<input type="checkbox"/>	Relationships with other vendors
<input type="checkbox"/>	Location of the market (eg. transportation, parking, accessibility)
<input type="checkbox"/>	The market has changed locations and affected sales
<input type="checkbox"/>	Feeling supported by the Artisan Farmers' Markets Society
<input type="checkbox"/>	City policies
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify): _____

Please indicate with **check marks** whether any of the following factors have ever made you consider ending your participation at this market:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Competition between vendors
<input type="checkbox"/>	Type of customers who come to the market
<input type="checkbox"/>	Number of customers
<input type="checkbox"/>	Amount of sales
<input type="checkbox"/>	Relationship with the market's management
<input type="checkbox"/>	Relationships with other vendors
<input type="checkbox"/>	Location of the market (eg. transportation, parking, accessibility)
<input type="checkbox"/>	The market has changed locations and affected sales
<input type="checkbox"/>	Feeling supported by the Artisan Farmers' Markets Society
<input type="checkbox"/>	City policies
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify): _____

Please share any other comments you wish to inform the Artisan Farmer's Markets: _____

Vendor Consent Form

UBC PROJECT: ARTISAN FARMERS' MARKETS CONSENT FORM

I volunteer to participate in Artisan Farmers' Markets project conducted by UBC. I understand that the project is designed to gather information about Farmers' Markets in North shore location.

1. My participation in this project is voluntary. I understand that I will not be paid for my participation. I may withdraw and discontinue participation at any time without penalty.

2. If I feel uncomfortable in any way, I have the right to decline to answer any question or to end it.

3. Participation involves answering a survey and talking to the students. This will last approximately 10-15 minutes. Notes will be written during the conversation with vendors. An audiotape and subsequent transcript might be made. If I don't want to be taped, I will make a note of it.

4. I understand that the students will not identify me by name in any reports using information obtained from this interview/survey, and that my confidentiality as a participant in this project will remain secure. Subsequent uses of records and data will be subject to standard data use policies which protect the anonymity of individuals and institutions.

5. Faculty and administrators from UBC and other vendors will not have access to survey or transcripts. This precaution will prevent my individual comments from having any negative repercussions.

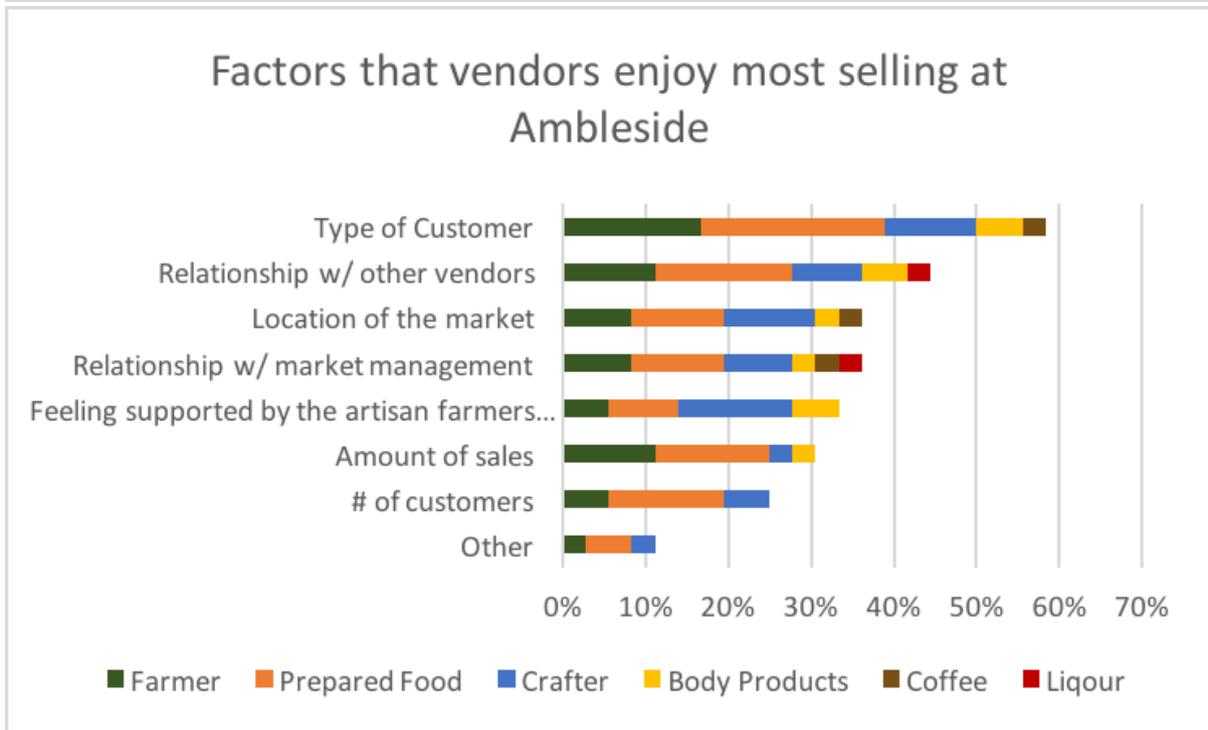
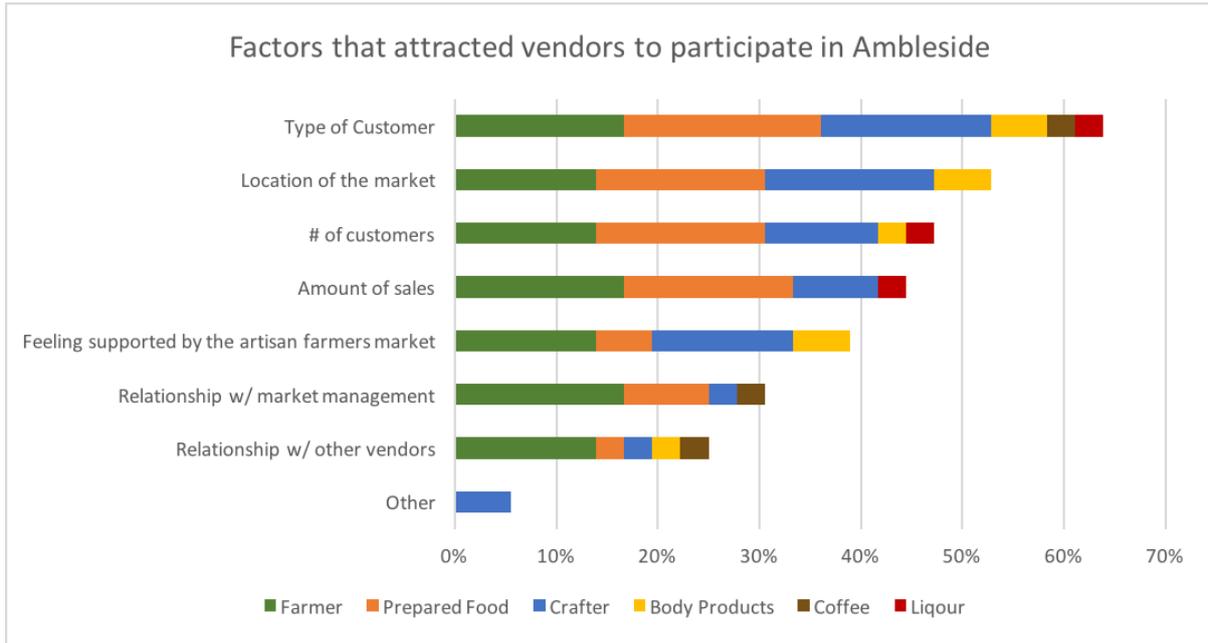
6. I have read and understand the explanation provided to me. I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction, and I voluntarily agree to participate in this project.

Full Name _____

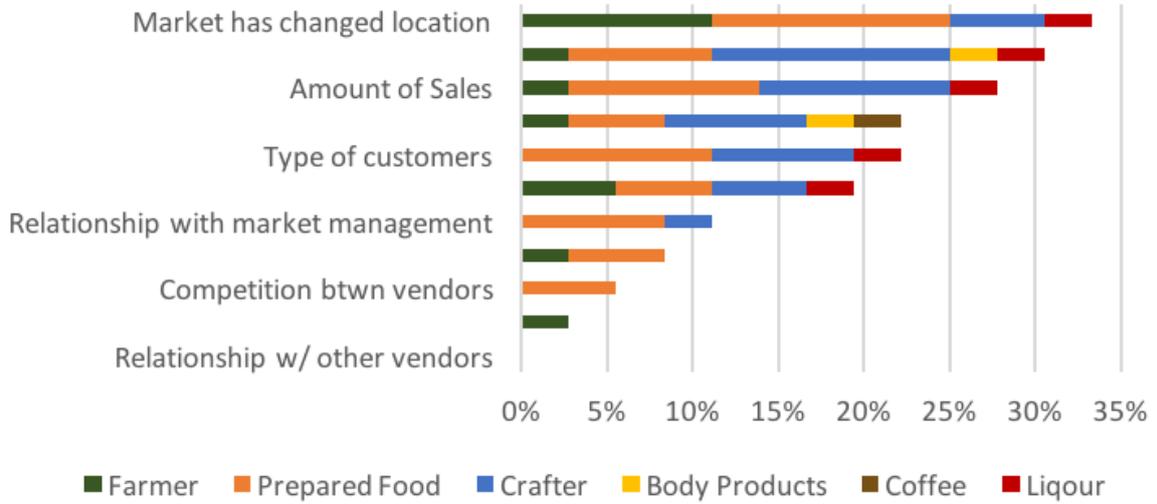
My Signature _____

Date _____

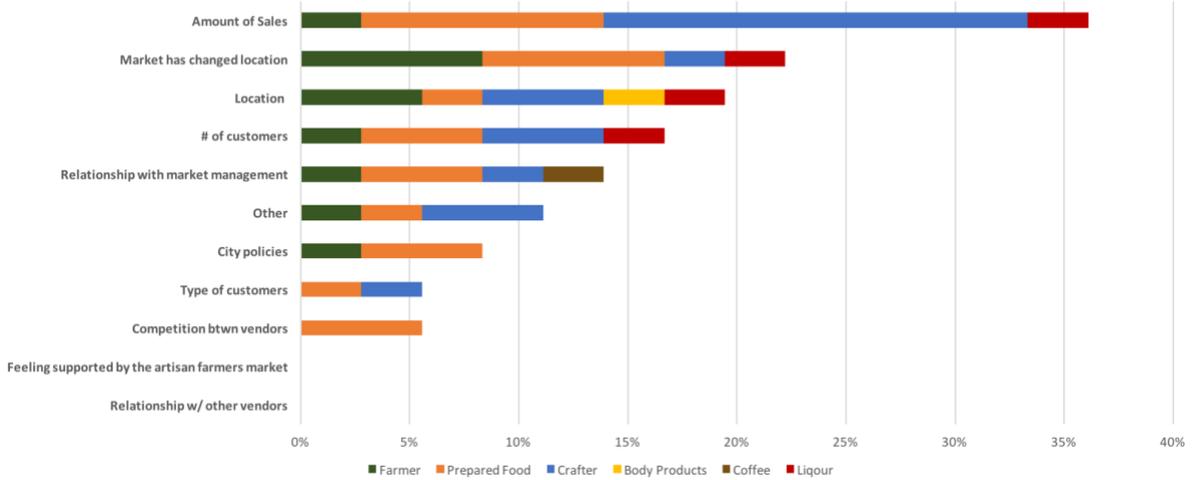
Survey Results for Ambleside



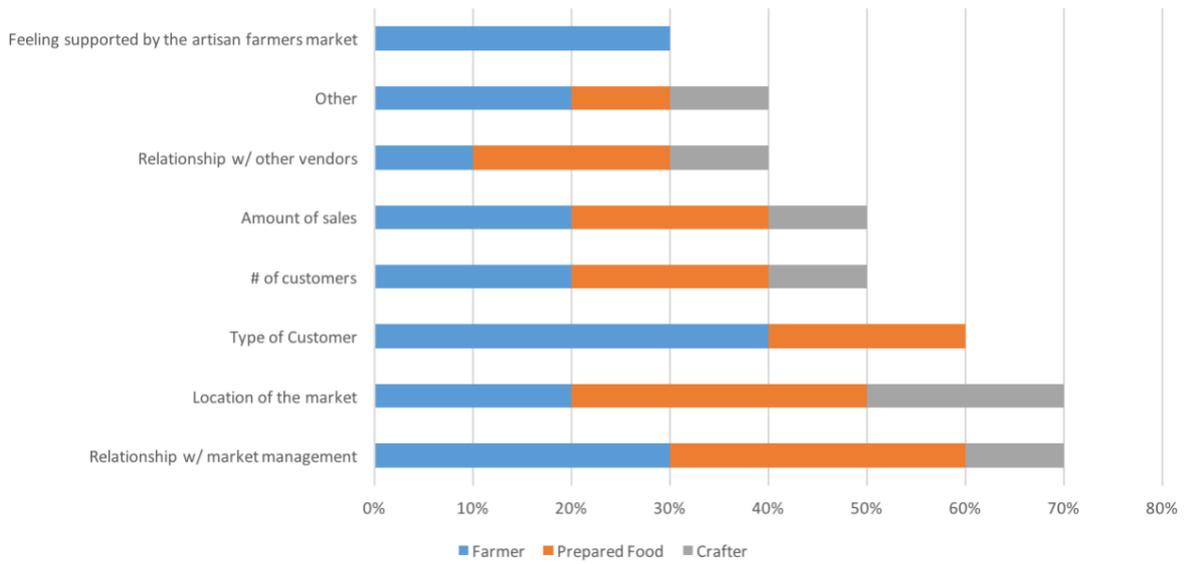
Factors most challenging for vendors selling at Ambleside



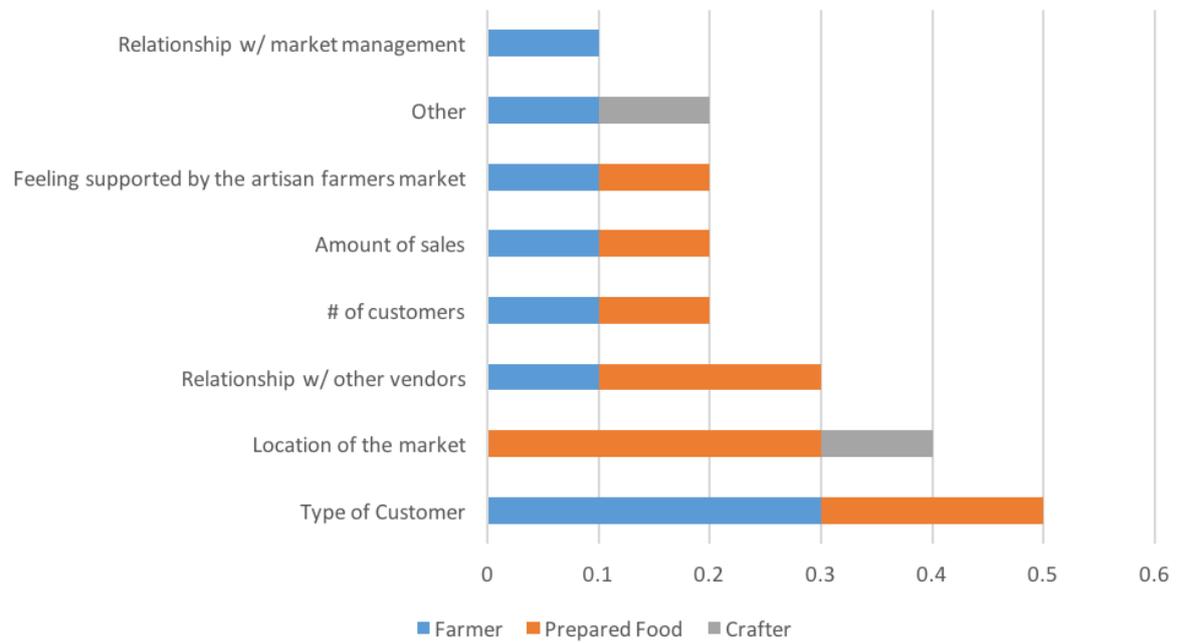
Factors making vendors consider ending participation in Ambleside

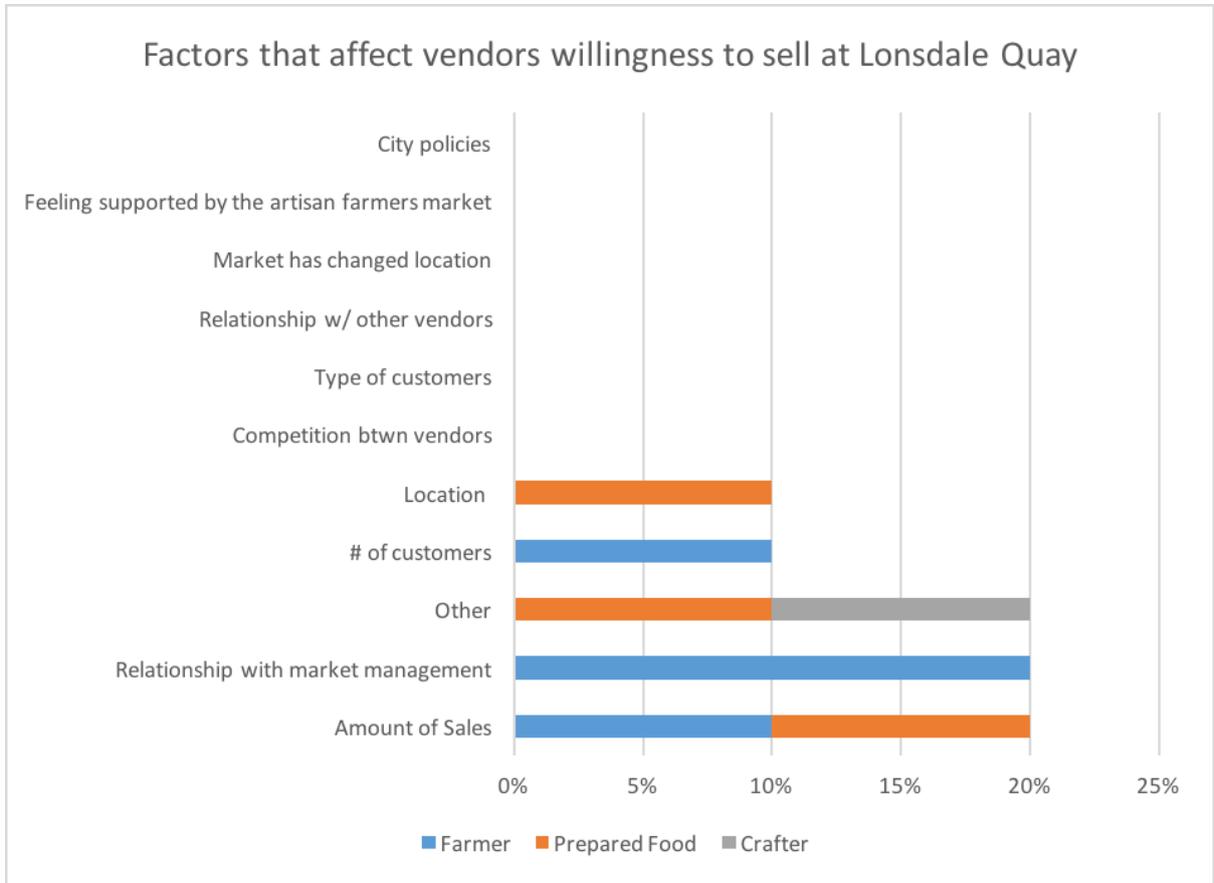
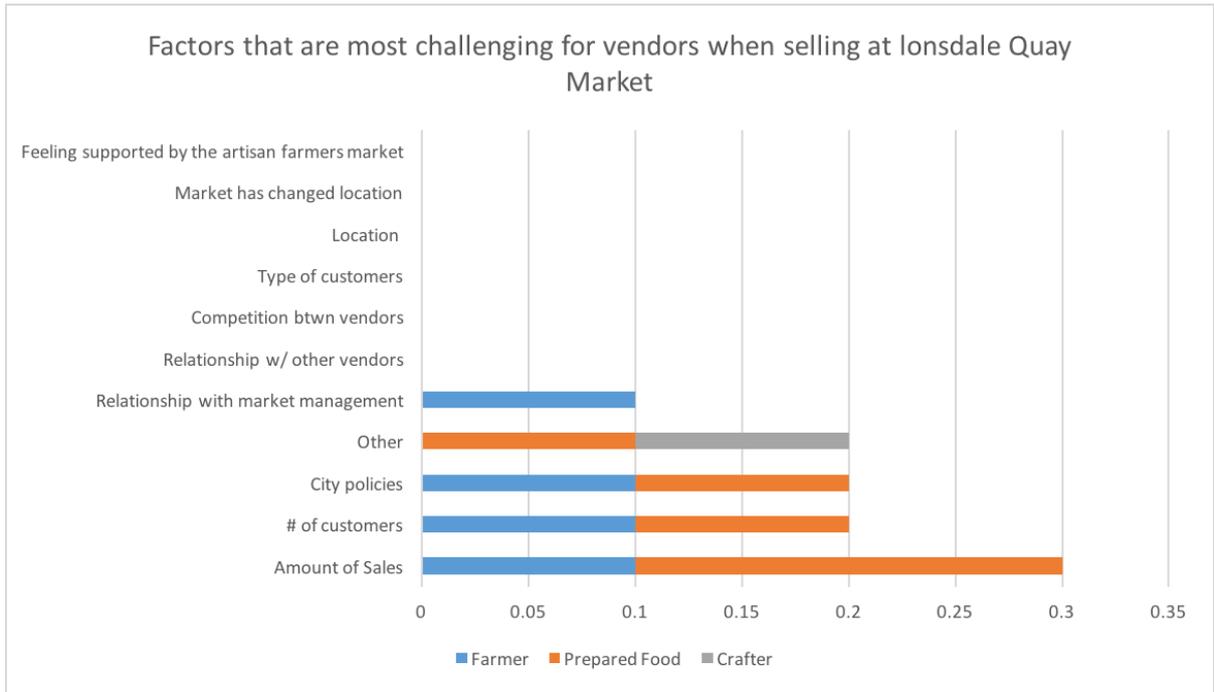


Factors that attract each type of vendor to the Lonsdale Quay Market



Factors that each type of vendor enjoys when selling at the Lonsdale Quay Market





One way ANOVA for Lonsdale Quay for average daily sales

CRITICAL REFLECTIONS

Student #1

Coming into LFS 350, the first class already scared me. Will Valley asked “why are we here?” There were questions I could not answer. The content was daunting. The uncertainty made me feel uncomfortable. I felt uneasy throughout the course, but the uncertainty opened my mind and prepared me for a growth mindset. I knew I was up for the challenge because I knew growth and comfort do not coexist. Concepts were debatable and the learning experience you get is what you put into it. The social support from my groupmates made my learning experience more valuable as there is so many more learning opportunities beyond the classroom and I found it within my groupmates, in my community project, academic papers, and more! I’ve always seen myself as a social and hands-on learner and this results in me learning unknowingly. When Will revealed the learning objectives of the course at the last lecture, I noticed that from my experience in this course, I was able to hit most of them without any awareness. This is why I loved this course. From the work and involvement with my groupmates and the community, I was able to learn so much professionally, and contribute to the knowledge of professional development beyond LFS concepts. This also involved the development of teamwork skills, communications skills, design skills, presentation skills, writing skills, and probably a lot more that I am unaware of.

Student #2

This term has been a struggle for me, from moving out from my family to having to fly international 12 hour flights almost every weekend to deal with the passing of a family member. Through all of this, the CBEL project has been a refreshing experience where class time was used to connect with our community partners and better our project (flexible learning). With the support of my group mates, I was able to enjoy each tutorial session and even the trips we made to the markets. One of the biggest surprises for me was how naturally the aim of our CBEL project was determined once we started working on it. In this course as a whole, I learned not only the lecture material, but also the operational component of farmers’ markets and how to create an infographic. Something I am definitely interested in is seeing the results for next term’s Artisan Farmers’ Market

group because they will be working on customer participation. Overall, this project has given me insight on community and local businesses that I was unaware of before and really taught me how to balance my personal life with school life under tremendous stress to the best I can.

Student #3

The more and more that I learn about food justice, the more and more confused I become, and the less and less I feel that I actually know. Nothing is straightforward, nothing really has one answer, and there is never just one solution - or really any solution at all. The term Food Justice was new to me, but the concepts of power imbalances in any system was not. In the spirit of honesty, I didn't feel like the class material gave me very many aha! moments about the food system. I remember how completely changed I felt after my LFS 250 class, but this being my 4th year in LFS now means that it is a lot harder to trigger shocking moments. Instead, much of the material we covered reinforced how important recognizing power imbalances in our food system is. Exploring race, gender, and class in the context of the food system reminded me about the sensitivities and challenges in creating culturally appropriate food systems. However, we already learn so much about race, gender, and class in many of our other courses at UBC. The indigenous food systems component is the area that is most often least touched by students. I think a greater focus on this area, spread out throughout the course (rather than just covered in a section), would have been more likely to trigger an aha! moment than anything else.

Student #4

By encouraging us to step out of our comfort zones and work on a project with a ton of uncertainty, this course has given me a different perspective on food justice issues. Working on our project has shown me that in solving food justice challenges, there is no single right answer. Instead, the solution involves just as many components as the issue it's addressing. One of the most significant realization that I've had during this course is the level of complexity that exists for food justice issues. Prior to this course, I did understand that food justice challenges are extremely complex and this was due to the fact that such issues are existing on such large spatial scales that it was difficult to find a starting point. By working in a community-based project, it was eye-opening to see the complexity that exists even after finding a starting point. My understanding of issues of food

justice has shifted in that I was able to experience being a part of the process to achieving better food security in my community. This has inspired confidence as my knowledge was transformed into action and by setting tangible goals (that may seem minuscule to the end goal), it made the end goal of solving food justice issues feel tangible. Thus, despite my understanding of food justice issues as more complex challenges, I have never felt so hopeful that our generation is capable of using our enriched understanding of food justice issues to advance solutions on different spatial levels.

Student #5

The best part of the LFS 350 course was the CBEL project component as it provided such a unique and invaluable experience. More specifically, I love the idea of working with all of my group members who each had something unique to offer in getting the project done. I loved applying the knowledge and skills learned from other courses into a real life project where the community can benefit. I was lucky enough to have such a sincere, genuine, and “on-the-ball” industry sponsor who was there every step of the way and was passionate about helping us succeed. My favourite part of the CBEL project was overall engaging with different people, whether it was my group members, industry sponsor, or talking to different vendors at the farmers’ market. Another component of the LFS 350 course that I learned a lot from were the lecture discussions on Wednesdays. I gained insightful perspectives on controversial topics such as feminism and colonialism that I never expected to have learned in this course. This has shown me how relevant these issues are in our food system and brings awareness on the social issues that we, as a society, need to work to come to consensus with in order to improve food sovereignty for all groups of people.

Student #6

In the lecture part of the course, I had the chance to learn about food injustice and food insecurity in different form of material (such as podcasts, videos, etc.). The flexible learning session after the lectures helped me to connect the dots with information in the lecture and our objectives for the project. I really enjoyed the part we worked with the community of artisan farmers market and were able to apply our knowledge outside of classroom. It was a great opportunity to learn about the issues in food system throughout the project. I also realized that many factors cause problem in the food system; so there is not one solution that can help, many strategies are needed

to make a difference. We were also able to keep maintaining a good communication among group members and our community partners. All in all, this was an amazing learning experience and I am very grateful for this opportunity.