

## SUMMARY OF THE MCFARM SURVEY WINTER 2009

(Pg. 1-2 included in January 2010 Newsletter; Pg. 3-6 addition for website)

The survey was mailed to the **180 memberships** and **39** responded before the first week of January of 2010, which is **22%** of the memberships. The sampling is very small to be a statistically accurate reflection of the majority of members attitudes. Nevertheless much of it is useful information to analyse how we are doing, what MCFARM's strengths are, and how we can improve.

The participants represented **27 agriculture producers, 8 non-agriculture, and 3 unknown designations**. The average number of years that these participants had been members of MCFARM averaged 5.9 years. The overwhelming majority of participants have been members for 1-5 years as shown by the following chart. Perhaps this is a good sign that our membership has been growing and that new members might become active participants.

**1-5 years of membership =25 members**  
**6-10 years of membership = 5 members**  
**11-15 years of membership =2 members**  
**16-20 years of membership =2 members**  
**20 plus years of membership = 2 members**

The instructions directed participants to circle responses 1-5 or N/A:

1-Poor, not acceptable

2-Below Average

3-Adequate

4-Good

5-Excellent

N/A-No applicable, No opinion; Don't have enough information to know

Surveys for **INDIVIDUAL MARKETS** averaged **3-5 points** in all areas. Some averages may have been lowered in error, as comments didn't always match the scores and it's easy for some respondents to reverse the numbering. Some markets only had two respondents. A few craft members gave their markets lower scores because they were unhappy that they couldn't be out on the street with the certified vendors, not knowing that state regulations prohibit this (written in MCFARM's Rules and Regulations). Nevertheless, these scores were kept and the comments will assist the Market Managers and the Operating Committee in decision making. In order to save on paper in this newsletter, the specific scores and comments for the evaluations will be available soon at [www.mcfarm.org](http://www.mcfarm.org) by clicking on "Roots" to get to the member's section. If you need this mailed to you, contact Angela Harney, Office Manager at 964-6718.

The **MCFARM EVALUATION averaged out at 4** for the following four areas:

1. Your overall satisfaction with the association
2. The application form for membership is clear and reasonable
3. The membership process is reasonable and easy to access
4. How was the advertising?

Most of the comments regarding the above were specific to the application form. Several members have requested that this be available on-line for filling out and to have less copies sent. These ideas are being investigated in order to streamline the process, improve our efficiency, and reduce paper usage.

The **Annual Meeting Attendance** was the subject of part of the survey in order to acquire useful information for improving this situation. Although this is a cooperative association whose

members are the governing body, it is clear that the annual meeting is not attended regularly when major decisions are made that affect member rights, financial decisions, and how the association operates. **24** of the respondents who have been members for more than one year answered **no** to the question of regular attendance and **8** respondents answered **yes**.

**Comments from members** regarding what would encourage more **attendance** included: Time, Date, Locations, Catered lunches, Improvement in personal finances, More meetings, Less BS and yelling, Learning activity/workshop, Phone call reminders.

### **Response to Suggestions:**

Thanks for the feedback. While we can't please everyone, we are always open to suggestions from members. We especially try to accommodate members' needs when selecting the time and date and attempt to rotate the location in fairness to members from many areas of our county. Hopefully, this year's selection of Willits will be more centrally located for more of you. Unfortunately, we can't afford catered lunches anymore. We encourage car pools to decrease the affect on your personal finances.

Regarding Less BS and yelling, we're grateful that most members don't like it either. A concerted effort has been made by Operating Committee members to set an example of respectful decision making the last few years so that our meetings reflect the positive spirit of our markets. Members have been provided with additional rights and many appropriate forums for communicating their suggestions and concerns in order to reduce frustrations and increase participation. Your president can assure you that she will set a positive tone for the meeting and keep it rolling so that your time will be respected as well.

The suggestion for a Learning Activity/Workshop has been part of our plans for several years. With the major changes in the bylaws behind us from last season, we hope to move quickly through the agenda items this year and utilize our afternoon in a Member Showcase. We look forward to the morning Member Forum of brainstorming suggestions, which is always more uplifting than bylaw haggling. If members have any ideas on a workshop with specifics on who to contact and how we can fund it, the Operating Committee encourages your input.

Thanks for reminding us that we plan to do phone call reminders!

### **Stall Fee Comments:**

Most respondents indicated that they would be willing to accept a small fee increase if it can be shown that it is necessary. The majority of respondents commented that it should be fair and affect all vendors by raising the minimum and raising the cap and increasing the percentage based on gross sales. A number of vendors also prefer a flat fee, based on stall space. Suggestions also included recruiting more vendors and fund raisers such as farm tours.

### **Long Distance Growers:**

- 12 respondents indicated that they wanted to stick with growers from Mendocino and adjacent counties only. One additional respondent suggested a mile limit. One more participant wanted to exclude growers from the Sacramento Valley. Another respondent suggested that we limit growers from outside of N. CA to reduce the chance of introduction of ag. pests.
- 15 respondents indicated that they are willing to include long distant growers only when local supplies are non-existent or insufficient so that local growers won't be subjected to unfair competition.
- 18 responses indicated that there should be stricter guidelines if long distance growers are permitted, to ensure legitimate farming, honesty in growing practices, that the farm is small, that members of the mkt. agree to the participation, that they are limited to one space, that there will still be room for local growers, that they might only be allowed to participate a short period of

time depending on space/products.

- 4 members responded that current out of county growers should be grandfathered in if there are any exclusions written into the bylaws.

### **INDIVIDUAL MARKET SURVEYS (1=poor/5=excellent)**

#### **Overall Satisfaction:**

Boonville	4,2,5,5,5, Average=4
Gualala	5,5 Average=5
Fort Bragg	5,4,4,5,2,4,4,4,3,5,3 Average=3.9
Mendocino	5,5,2,5,4,4 Average=4.2
Laytonville	5,5,5 Average=5
Willits	5,4,4,3,5,2,4,4,5,5,5,4,5 Average=4.3
Redwood Valley	5,4,3,1,3,3,4 Average=3.3
Ukiah Tuesday	4,4 Average=4
Ukiah Saturday	5,4,4,4,5,2,4,4,4,2,5,5,5,3,3,3,5,4,5,5,4 Average=4

**Mkt. location, dates, and times** (as dates, times, and location were combined, it's not always obvious what the concern is unless there was a comment; should consider changing survey)

Boonville	5,5,5,5,4,5 Average=4.5
Gualala	5,5 Average=5
Fort Bragg	5,4,1,5,1,3,4,3,1,5,1 Average=3
Mendocino	5,5,3,5,4,5 Average=4.5
Laytonville	4,3,5,5 Average=4.1
Willits	5,4,5,4,3,5,1,4,4,4,5,5,5,4,5,5 Average=4.3
Redwood Valley	5,5,3,1,5,4 Average=3.8
Ukiah Tuesday	4,4 Average=4
Ukiah Saturday	2,5,3,4,4,5,1,4,3,5,2,5,5,5,3,4,4,4,3,5,5, Average=4

#### **Positive ambience and active promotions**

Boonville	5,5,3,5,5,5, Average=4.7
Gualala	4,5 Average=4.5

Fort Bragg	5,4,4,5,1,5,4,5,3,5,2 Average=3.9
Mendocino	551544 Average=4
Laytonville	5,4,5,5 Average=4.8
Willits	5,4,4,4,4,3,4,3,5,5,4,4,5,5 Average=4.2
Redwood Valley	5,5,5,4,1,4,1 Average=3.6
Ukiah Tuesday	3,2 Average=2.5
Ukiah Saturday	3,5,4,4,5,5,1,4,5,4,2,5,5,5,5,4,5,5,5,5 Average=4.3

### **Effective organization of market**

Boonville	5,5,3,5,5,5 Average=4.7
Gualala	4,5 Average=4.5
Fort Bragg	5,4,4,5,1,5,4,5,5,3 Average=4.1
Mendocino	5,5,1,5,4,4 Average=4
Laytonville	5,5,5 Average=5
Willits	5,5,4,4,3,5,2,4,4,4,4,5,3,4,4,5 Average=4
Redwood Valley	5,5,4,4,1,5,2 Average=3.7
Ukiah Tuesday	3,3 Average=3
Ukiah Saturday	5,5,4,4,4,5,1,5,4,4,1,5,4,5,5,4,5,5,5,5 Average=4.2

### **Sense of fairness and respect at the market**

Boonville	5,5,4,5,5 Average=4.8
Gualala	5,5 Average=5
Fort Bragg	5,5,4,5,1,5,5,5,4,5,3 Average=4.3
Mendocino	5,4,1,5,3,4 Average=3.7
Laytonville	5,5,5 Average=5
Willits	5,4,4,5,3,4,2,4,4,5,4,5,5,5,4,5 Average=4.3
Redwood Valley	5,5,5,5,1,5,5 Average=4.4
Ukiah Tuesday	4,4 Average=4

Ukiah Saturday 3,5,5,4,4,5,1,4,5,4,2,5,5,5,5,5,4,5,5,5,5 Average=4.3

## COMMENTS:

### Boonville

- Too small population gives overall satisfaction less than excellent. All managers were wonderful to work with.
- Boonville is still very iffy. Do we have a population to support it?
- It would be nice if Ukiah and Boonville were not the same days

### Gualala

- Donna does a great job!

### Fort Bragg

- Hard working managers. Hate the location & our particular spot in the mkt.
- How about 3:00-6:00, no later
- Needs a porta pottey, surface management, needs dedicated parking lot (consider moving sellers into street & parking on lot), consider adding weekend mkt.
- Bad location-too many near misses on Main St. Had downtown shops say they wish it was on Franklin St. still. Too far to toilet!!!
- Outstanding management!! Location is great BUT terrain is treacherous & uneven from gophers. Time is fine but could be longer so after work locals can make it.
- Prefer downtown location. Current location dangerous and dirty. Dangerous intersection/gopher holes, uneven ground. Not handicap accesible. Difficulty for elderly. Vendor spots unclearly marked. Would like opportunities/invitation for input. Suggestions: Food Stamps at mkt.! A diversit of music would be appreciated. A vendor mtg. at beginning of season to discuss layout /events/ music etc. would be helpful.
- Terrible filthy location too far away from community.

### Mendocino

- Good vibe except for the "outside vendors" on the street.
- More visible location with dedicated parking.

### Laytonville

- Location 5 / Date & Time 2. I think the market would do better on Sunday afternoon than on Monday afternoon. Excellent organization and ambience.

### Willits

- Combine Willits and Ukiah on Saturdays for winter only. Makes locals and others cost effective to make two markets in one day. Same attendance, more vendors
- There has been a problem with too many vendors with same items. I'm not sure how to fix this.
- Very good market.
- Great community. Market will reach its potential.
- Sellers on grass should move back making larger customer walkway.
- Excellent.
- It was absolutely beautiful this year. Better than ever!
- Winter mkt. needs more advertisement.

### Redwood Valley

- Jen is very welcoming to participants. She did a great job with promotions all season.
- Jen is very good. Beautiful location. It would be very nice if more customers would attend.

Nice vendors.

-I would always like to see this tiny market get bigger. Times: It goes too late and should start 30 min. earlier (temperature is so much nicer in the morning)

#### Ukiah Tuesday

(no comments submitted)

#### Ukiah Saturday

-Crafters are too separate and carrying all my equipment instead of being able to park by vendor location was a BIG JOB and prevented me from participating regularly. It's also too long-should be 3 hours.

-The winter mkt. schedule has been a challenge which is being addressed. Very good mkt.

-Scott is a pleasure to work with, very fair and respectful. THANK YOU!

-Overall, a very good mkt. Good vendors. Scott is very good.

-It would be nice to not have cars on the craft side of the street or have wider access (crafter).

-Scott does a great job!

-We need more growers, more ready to go food.

-Should start at 9 a.m.