



## Visitor Count Week 2019

A 2019 VAFMA goal is to have a state-wide visitor count week during National Farmers Market Week. This will give us all a better understanding of how many people Virginia's farmers markets serve. It will also help us to amplify the preliminary economic contribution findings from our Metrics Program.

We ask that you commit to conducting a visitor count during National Farmers Market Week in 2019. Visitor counts are an easy way to get started in data collection and this packet explains how to do it. We appreciate your participation and are available to answer any questions you may have.

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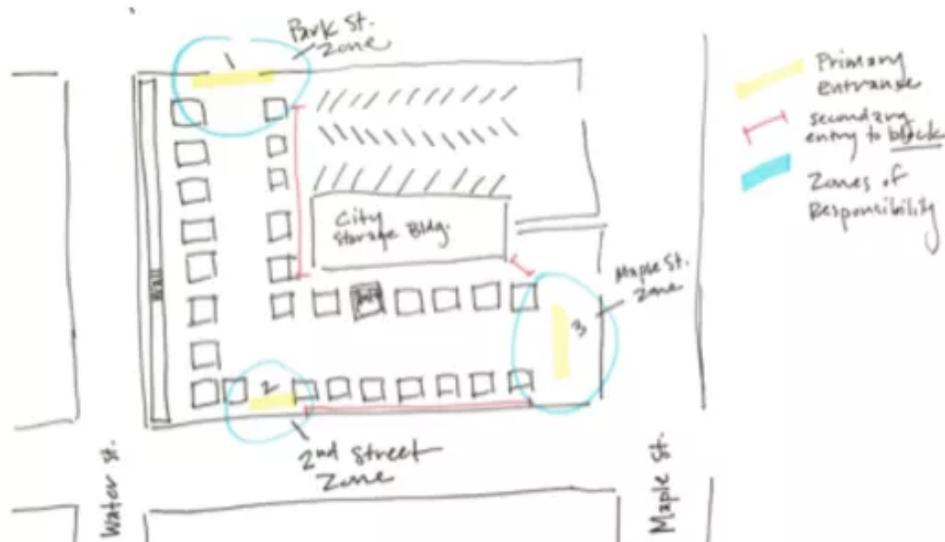
## Data Collection Method Workbook: Visitor Counts

A workbook incorporating your market's mission, goals, and impact into effective promotions using FMC's Farmers Market Metrics data collection and communication protocols

**Before you Start:** Counting visitors entering your farmers market requires planning and adequate personnel. The number of people needed depends on how many entry points your market has. Identify how many data collectors you'll need, as well as how to prepare them for data collection by following the steps below.

**Map Your Market:** Create a map of your market by sketching its physical features. Include vendor booths, seating areas, buildings, and other structures. Then mark all entrances. Draw a line at each entrance, which classifies people as 'in' or 'out' of the market. Identify any secondary entrances (between booths, through an alley, etc.) that could be blocked off on counting days. If you can move a garbage can, chairs or even use caution tape to block off a secondary entrance, it will help guide visitors to the primary entry points, and decrease the number of data collectors you'll need.

Once you have identified the entrances, give each one a name (i.e., the street name, food court, etc.) so that everyone on your team is clear about which entrance is which. Ideally, you will have one person assigned to each market entrance. However, if multiple entry points (especially primary and secondary) exist within the same field of vision, they can be monitored by one data collector. Create 'zones of responsibility' on your map which outline the areas (including one or multiple entrances) that can be monitored by one person.



*Sketch of a Market Map with zones of responsibility and entry points defined.*



# Visitor Count Instructions

**How to Do It:** On to the counting! We encourage markets to try to do full counts, meaning counting everyone entering all day, whenever possible. Since the market will only be counting a few times per season, this will allow for a much more accurate count and mean the other metrics that depend on this number to be calculated will also be more precise. In some cases, however, this is not tenable given market resource constraints. The secondary method used within FM Metrics is a sample count or timed entry count, which means to count everyone entering the market for a set period of time. Please scroll below for additional instruction on the Sample Count.

**Prepare Collection Materials:** Complete the top portion of the Visitor Count Record with your market's name and map. Add any other information for the data collectors to know. Print copies for each data collector. Provide data collectors a Visitor Count Record and a hand-held clicker. Hand-held clickers are inexpensive, subtle, and improve the accuracy of these counts. If no clickers are available, instruct data collectors to keep a tally of visitors on the back of their Visitor Count Record. If tallying by hand, data collectors may require clipboards.

**Implementation:** Assign one person to keep an eye on the clock, and to make sure that all entrances are staffed at the designated times. This person should also collect all Visitor Count Records at the end of the day. Give each data collector a Visitor Count Record, and highlight the instructions:

- Count only adults.
- Count individuals.
- Do not count visitors that re-enter.
- Do not count vendors.

**Enter the Data:** Visitor count data is entered into the FM Metrics site under the Tally and Survey tab of your market.

## Sample Count: Additional Instruction

The second 20-minute window of each hour is the recommended window for counting. This method was chosen because it is generally agreed to be the most precise and the most doable for most markets.

**Identify Your Counting Periods:** Counts will be conducted for 20 minutes of each hour that the market is open. The first counting period should begin 20 minutes after the market opens, and the counting periods should remain consistent. So, if your market opens at 9:00am, counts will take place from 9:20am to 9:40am, 10:20am to 10:40am, and so on. Enter the time of the counting periods into the Visitor Count Record.

**Implementation:** Consider these tips along with the ones mentioned above. Record the total from each 20-minute counting period on the Visitor Count Record. If you can, set an alarm on your phone or watch for reminders to help maintain accuracy.



# Visitor Count Prep Exercise

**Directions:** Only complete this page if you intend to do Visitor Counts at your market next season. Refer to [www.farmersmarketmetrics.guide](http://www.farmersmarketmetrics.guide) for in-depth instruction.

Enter the dates of your visitor counts for your season in the blue bar at the top of the table. Metrics requires that you do at least two visitor counts per season, but more is always better! Use the white fields below to enter due dates for each step, and possibly a point person, too. The grey bar is to check off each step as you complete them.

| Visitor Counts Dates:       | Date 1: |  | Date 2: |  | Date 3: |  | Date 4: |  |
|-----------------------------|---------|--|---------|--|---------|--|---------|--|
| Prep Materials              |         |  |         |  |         |  |         |  |
| Notify Vendors & Customers  |         |  |         |  |         |  |         |  |
| Data Collection             |         |  |         |  |         |  |         |  |
| Data Entry                  |         |  |         |  |         |  |         |  |
| Thank You's or Compensation |         |  |         |  |         |  |         |  |

**Notes:**

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| Things to Consider:  | Notes: |
|--|--------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Try to do visitor counts on normal market days. Avoid dates that include special events, or dates that are very close to the beginning or end of a season.</li> </ul>                       |        |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Don't forget to make your visitors and vendors aware of your visitor counts. Their awareness will lead to a smoother and more accurate visitor count.</li> </ul>                            |        |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Try blocking off informal entrances to your market in an effort to lead people through counting zones.</li> </ul>   |        |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decide on a full or sample count method now. Be sure to review the Data Collection Methods at <a href="http://www.farmersmarketmetrics.guide">www.farmersmarketmetrics.guide</a></li> </ul> |        |



# Visitor Count Worksheet

**Visitor Count Zone Report:** {Enter Name of Your Market}  
(Date of Count): (Counting Zone): (Name of Data Collector)

**Instructions:**

- Count only adults.
- Count individuals.
- Do not count visitors that re-enter.
- Do not count vendors.
- Depending on your collection method, record the total from each hour, or each 20-minute counting period below.
- If you can, set an alarm on your phone or watch for 5 minutes before the start of each period and 5 minutes before the end of each period, to help maintain accuracy.

**Sample Count Tracking**

Period 1: {XX:20 to XX:40am} \_\_\_\_\_ visitors

Period 2: {XX:20 to XX:40am} \_\_\_\_\_ visitors

Period 3: {{XX:20 to XX:40am}} \_\_\_\_\_ visitors

Period 4: {XX:20 to XX:40am} \_\_\_\_\_ visitors

Period 5: {XX:20 to XX:40am} \_\_\_\_\_ visitors

Period 6: {XX:20 to XX:40am} \_\_\_\_\_ visitors

Total Period Visitors \_\_\_\_\_ X 3 = \_\_\_\_\_ visitors

**Full Count Tracking**

Hour 1: \_\_\_\_\_ visitors

Hour 2: \_\_\_\_\_ visitors

Hour 3: \_\_\_\_\_ visitors

Hour 4: \_\_\_\_\_ visitors

Hour 5: \_\_\_\_\_ visitors

Hour 6: \_\_\_\_\_ visitors

Total Visitors: \_\_\_\_\_

{Insert your Market Map here}

**Directions:** Once you've completed your data collection, be sure to input this data in the "Tally and Survey" section of the Metrics website, so that you can populate your visitor count widgets for sharing.



**\_\_\_\_\_ customers**  
*visit our market on  
an average day.*  
*Visitors have twice as many encounters  
at a market than at a chain supermarket.*

 FARMERS  
MARKET  
COALITION

**How Do You Measure a  
Farmers Market?**

[farmersmarketmetrics.guide](http://farmersmarketmetrics.guide)