

Mad River Valley Local Food Market Study



Local Community Initiatives

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1st Meeting



Goals of Our Study

“The purpose of this study is to develop a better understanding of the local market for locally produced food”- Valley Future Network Agricultural Committee

Ultimate Goal- To gather information that would enhance the Mad River Valley Agricultural economy

Achieving our Goals

Farmer Interview-

-Six farms

Consumer Survey-

-Waitsfield and Warren

Confidentiality

Farmer Survey

- Bridging the Gap
- Beginning
- Purpose



Google.com/
images

Survey

- Six farms
- Eleven questions
- Questions addressed...
 - Product Distribution
 - The Market
 - Necessary changes
 - Unfilled niches
 - Consumers

Results and Findings

- Expansion
 - Past, present, and future
 - Diversity of crops
 - Lack of knowledge
- Product Distribution
 - Demand for local food
 - Farm stands and Farmers markets
 - Grocery stores, restaurants, and the food shelf

Market Constraints and Restrictions

Results and Findings

- Economy
- Competitive Market
- External Restrictions
- Poor Infrastructure

Market Competition

Results and Findings

- Locally
- Larger corporations
- Convenience
- Suggestions of cooperation

Marketing Strategies

Results and Findings

- Hospitality
- High Quality Products
- Advertisements
- Analyzing costs
- Hours of operation
- Competitive pricing

Farmer Suggestions

- Promote awareness
- Community Education
 - Health benefits
 - Impacts on the local economy
- Time
- Capital

Unfilled Niches

- Fruit and Berries
- Apple Orchards
- Seasonal Availability

Information from Consumers

“What can I do for you to make you come to me?”

- Convenient hours
- Type of product
- Feedback on prices
- Family Demographics

Trends

- Desire to expand and ideas for improvement exist but there is a lack of information and resources
- Frustrating Market
- Marketing strategies exist, but could be improved
- Need information from consumers

Methods

What kind of survey did we use?

- Online versus in person
- Time constraints
- Format of the survey

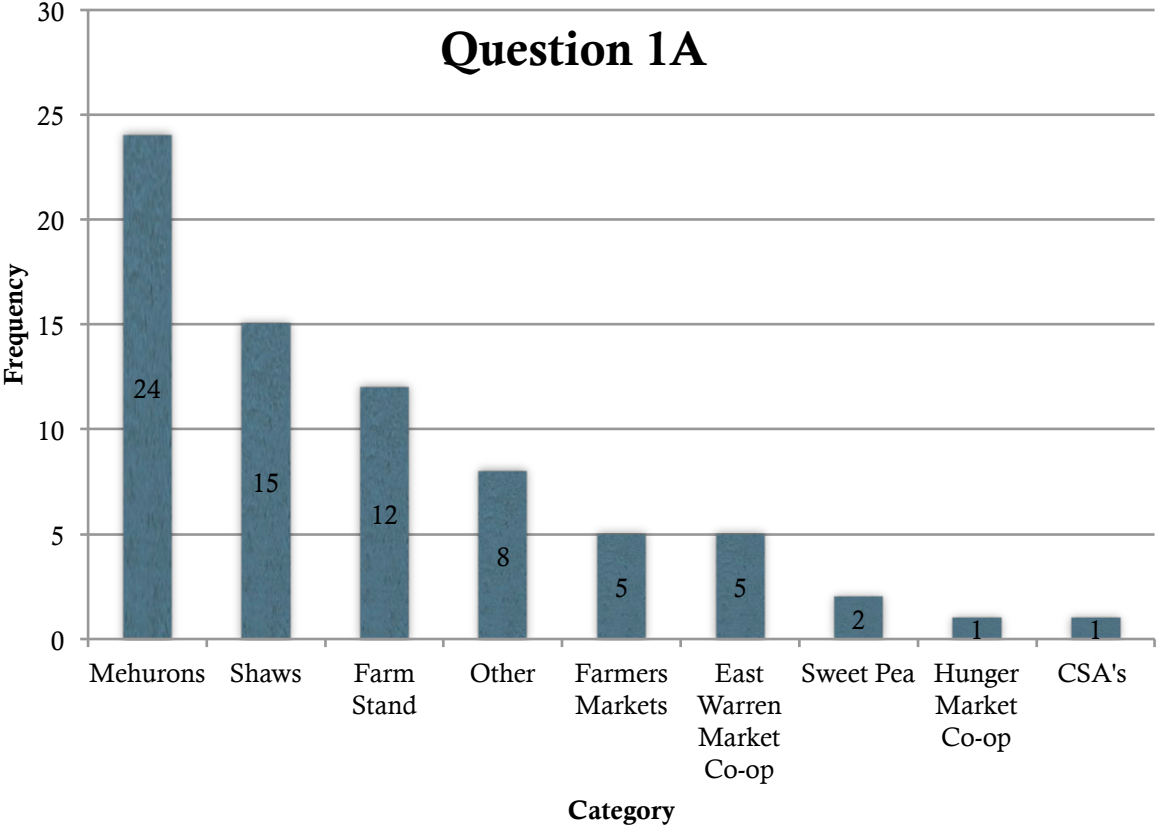
Where did we survey?

- Finding somewhere with enough foot traffic
- Most random sample of MRV residents

Improvements in the methodology

- What improvements could we have made?

Question 1A: Where do you buy your meat, vegetables, and dairy?

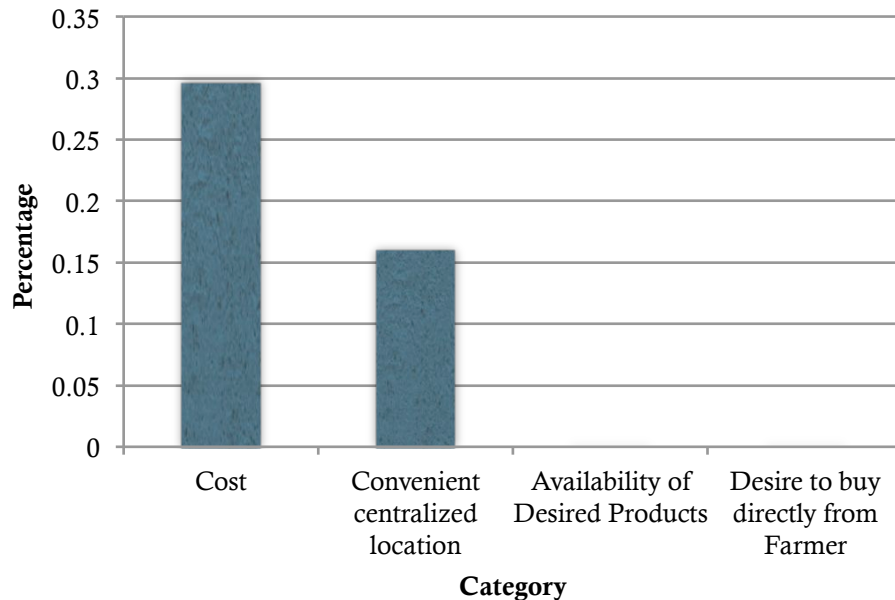


Other responses:

- Home gardens
- Other stores:
 - Middlebury Co-Op
 - Kenyon's

Question 1B: What influences your decision of where to shop?

Question 1B

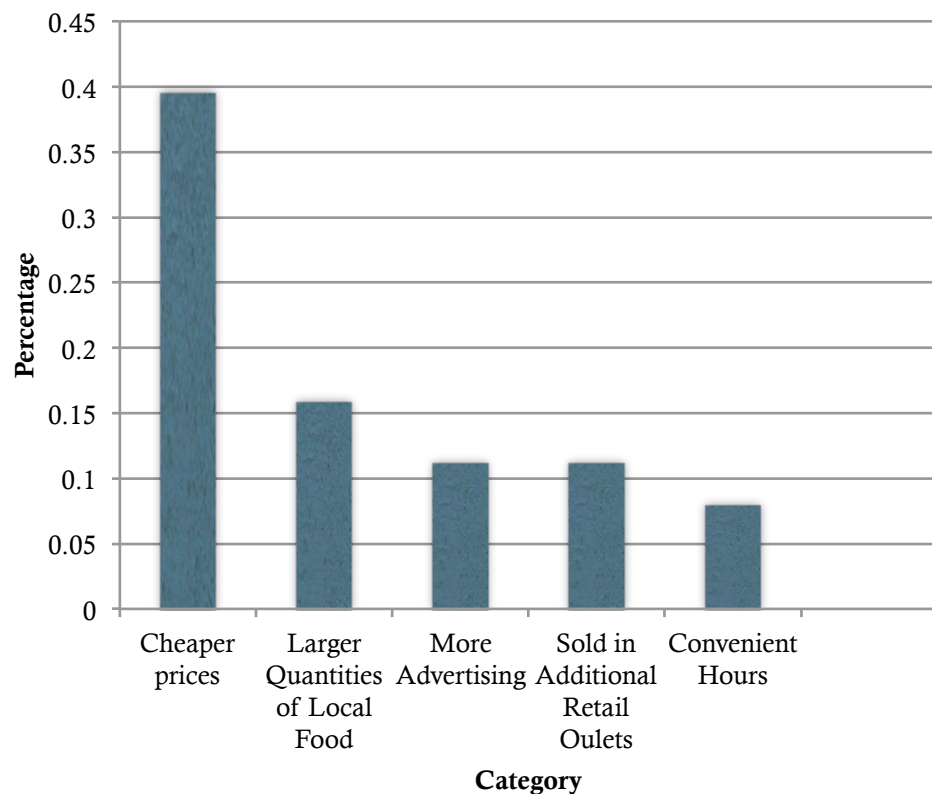


Other responses: 55%

- Locally owned/grown
- Customer service
- Small scale
- Organic/healthy
- Character
- **Quality**

Question 2: What would encourage you or make it easier for you to buy food that was grown or raised in the Mad River Valley?

Question 2

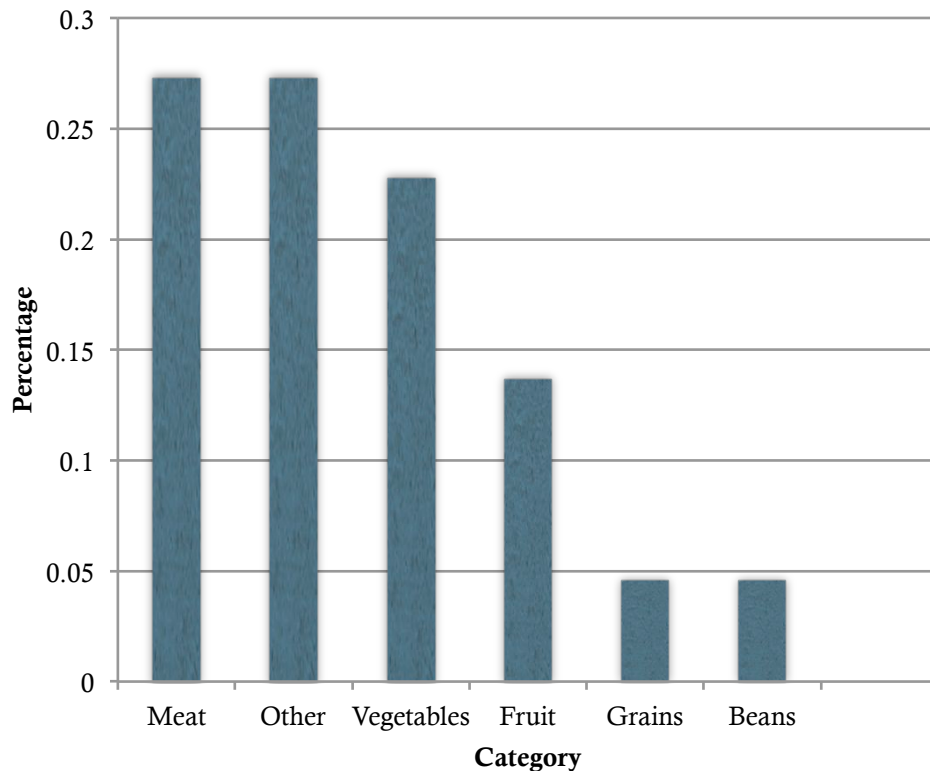


Other responses:

- More farmers markets
- Home delivery
- More information to consumers

Question 3: What foods do you wish to see grown, raised or produced in the Mad River Valley? In other words, what would you like to see more of in the Mad River Valley food system?

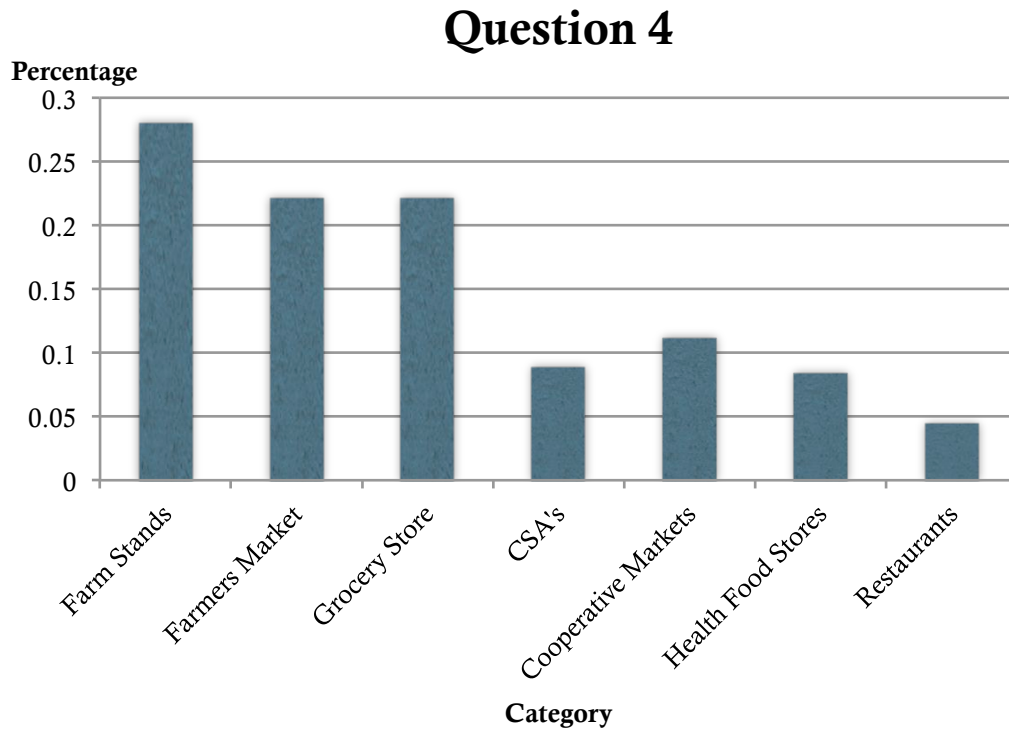
Question 3



Specific responses:

- Vegetables: romaine lettuce, sweet potatoes
- Meat: turkey
- Grains: hops
- Beans: soy beans

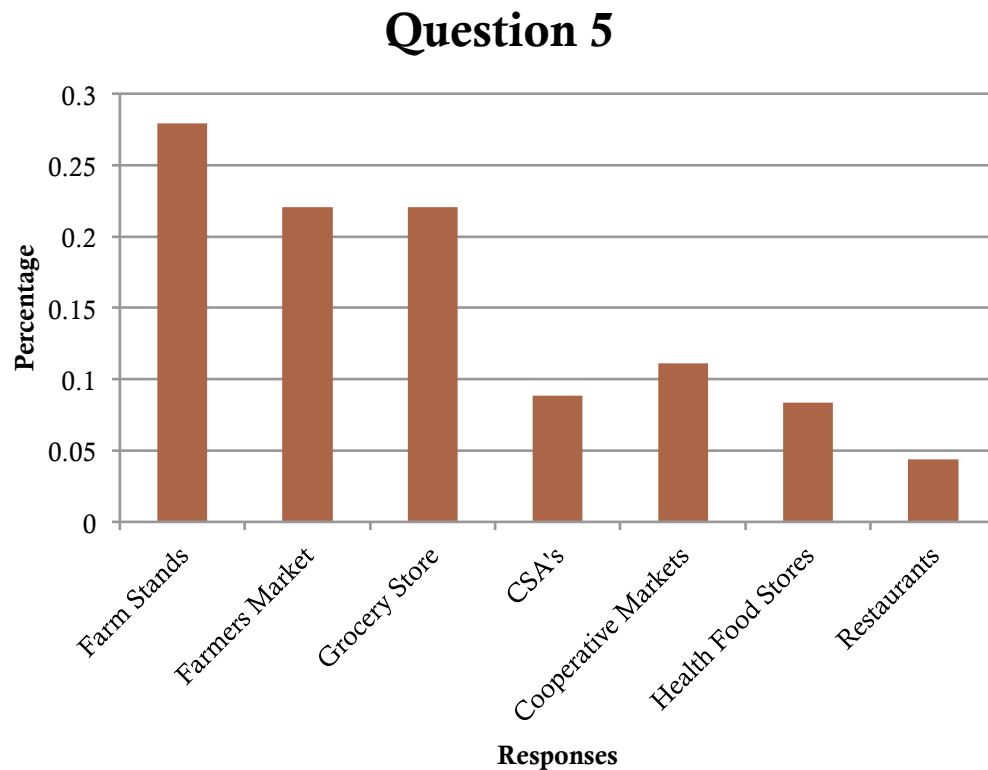
Question 4: Farmers in the Mad River Valley are looking to expand their market, what should they do in your opinion?



Other responses:

- Co-ops
- More advertising
- Get federal grants
- Cooperate between farmers/networking
- Improve demeanor of farmers at markets
- More information to consumers about CSA's
- Let public get involved
- Grocery stores
- Winter farmers markets

Question 5: Which method of purchasing food grown or prepared in the Mad River Valley is most appealing to you?



Other responses:

- Meat in CSA's
- Senior center
- Fresh not packaged
- Prepared food

Trends of Consumer Results

- Most important factors:
 - Cost
 - Local
 - Quality
- Feeling under-informed
 - Advertising
 - CSA's
- Importance of convenience and proximity
 - Local foods at the grocery store
- Untapped market: year-round local food

SWOT Analysis: Strengths

- Production
- “Back to Local” ethic
- Mad River Valley Localvore Project
- Sense of Community and Place

SWOT Analysis: Weaknesses

- Price
- Winter Storage and Availability
- Meat Production Regulations and Facilities

SWOT Analysis: Opportunities

- Cooperation
- Unfilled Niches
 - (e.g. berries, apples, soy, meat, winter crops, storage, value-added farm products, greens, agro-tourism)
- Expanding Market for Local Food

SWOT Analysis: Threats

- Competition from Imported Food
- Stigmatization of Local Food
- Land Policy and Regulation

Recommendations

- Farmer's Network
- Advertising
- Winter Availability
- Outreach efforts

THANK YOU

