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Farmers Markets and Social Cohesion in a Post-COVID-19 World

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Farmers Markets and Social Cohesion in a Post-COVID-19 World

Daniel Falknor

A Project Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of
GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY

In

Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

Master of Arts in Social Innovation

Integrative, Religious, and Intercultural Studies (IRIS) Department

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SI 693 Master's Project Approval Form

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Farmers Markets and Social Cohesion in a Post-COVID-19 World

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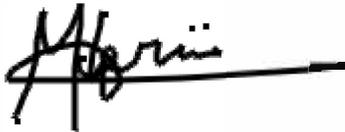
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Abstract

The sense of belonging to a community, or social cohesion, is established in food spaces enabled by three separate and unique mechanisms: proximity, frequency, and interactions. This study looks specifically at the Fulton Street Farmers Market in Grand Rapids and the effects the COVID-19 pandemic had on the social benefits derived from the mechanisms of social cohesion, in an attempt to identify and discover new ways to leverage social cohesion in food spaces. Three populations were identified at the farmers market: customers, vendors, and market staff. Surveys and informal interviews provided evidence that proximity to and within the market, higher frequencies of attendance, and greater instances of interactions indicate a trend towards stronger feelings of belonging and connectedness (social cohesion) at the farmers market. Data on COVID-19 shows the market became a space where social cohesion was possible and may have even increased in part due to higher attendance, supported by higher food assistance transactions.

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Introduction

Social cohesion is defined by health.gov (n.d) as the strength of relationships and the sense of solidarity among members of a community. Social cohesion can be seen as formed around three specific mechanisms: proximity, frequency, and interactions. This study looks at these three mechanisms in action specifically within the Fulton Street Farmers Market in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The mechanisms that drive social cohesion at the farmers market can be viewed through the following lenses. The geographical proximity of a customer's residence to the farmers market, and with respect to vendors, refers to the location of their booth in relationship to customer traffic and other vendors. The timeframe frequency is determined by seasonality, i.e., winter season versus the main summer season, and in turn, determines how often a customer or vendor can attend the farmers market. Lastly, the social interactions demonstrated by customer loyalty, or the repeated customer patronage to the same vendor, and the exchanges between the two. These exchanges not only include the monetary transactions that come standard with the business model of buying and selling goods, but they also include interpersonal exchanges such as dialogue around food information, for example, recipes or growing practices, and conversational small talk. By gauging customers' and vendors' sense of belonging to the Fulton Street Farmers Market community, and the rate and essence of interpersonal relationships, this study suggests a social innovation framework to recognize and unearth ways in which social cohesion can be leveraged in food spaces. The research question that guides this study is: What practices take place at the Fulton Street Farmers Market that contribute to social cohesion, in light of COVID-19? Past studies have shown evidence of the social benefits that come from attending a farmers market (Azavedo & Walsh, 2018; Bomba, 2018; Farmer, et. al. 2011; Gerbasi, 2006; Kaiser et. al. 2020; Market Umbrella, 2008; Radcliffe

et. al. 2021; Zhao & Wise, 2019). It is important to reestablish that the market still facilitates social cohesion in food spaces and to determine new ways in which these benefits can be utilized in a post-COVID-19 world. The following literature review looks at sources that establish the existence and importance of ancillary social benefits present at farmers markets leading up to early 2020, and how those benefits can be reimagined and exploited in a post-pandemic setting.

Literature Review

The Role Farmers Markets Play in Social Cohesion

Farmers markets have established an important role in growing social cohesion in communities where they are present and providing social benefits outside of the traditional foodstuffs (Azavedo & Walsh, 2018). Aside from attending the market for procuring fresh produce or purchasing ready-to-eat foods, a motivational contributor to market attendance by patrons is the social interactions that come about as part of the leisure activities available at a farmers market (Azavedo & Walsh, 2018). Additionally, the social interactions not only benefit customers but also the vendors selling at the market through their interaction with customers and other vendors alike (Gerbasi, 2006).

A study by Azavedo & Walsh (2018) on the Bardon Farmers' Market in Brisbane, found out that "social interactions/meeting people" was the second out of six categories ranked as a motivator by patrons to attend the farmers market. In research conducted by Bomba (2018) at farmers markets in Los Angeles customers, managers and vendors expressed the importance of the social element and connections made from attending a market. Their findings reinforced the idea of the market as a space where social connections can thrive based on comments that the market "comes alive" and describing the "vibe" (Bomba, 2018, p 22). A separate study conducted at farmers markets in L.A. showed of the respondents surveyed "75% came to the market to do more than shop, 55% felt the market increased their connection to the community, 99% felt the market improved the health of the community, and 53% believed the market improved perceptions of the neighborhood" (Market Umbrella, 2008, p 3). An applied ethnographic study conducted at multiple farmers markets in Indiana by Farmer et. al (2011) also showed greater significance towards recreation/leisure by receiving the highest frequency of

response from attendees. One study by Gerbasi (2006) approached the theme of social cohesion from the perspective of the farmer/vendor and found similar motivators regarding leisure, connectedness, and conversational interactions. One source utilized a cross-sectional assessment survey and frameworks such as Community Food Security (Kaiser et. al., 2020) while another looked through the lens of Community Psychology using observations and semi-structured interviews (Zhao & Wise, 2019) to gain a better understanding of the contributions farmers markets make to social cohesion, community, and connectedness.

Immediately before the pandemic (publication date 19 March 2021), one meta-study goes on to say:

Farmers markets are social events that build, support, and link urban and rural communities by fostering economic opportunities, creating public space, and vitalizing neighborhoods. More specifically, markets connect citizens as neighbors, consumers, producers, and community groups to the food system, providing opportunities for social interaction, commerce, entertainment, and information transfer. (Warsaw et. al., 2021, p 4)

In addition to the economic contributions in the form of monetary transactions, farmers markets have demonstrated to be contributors to communities in non-monetary ways. These non-monetary social transactions are just as valuable to the health and growth of the community as their monetary counterparts. Data since 2008 has shown that “[farmers] markets foster social interactions between diverse community members, [and] act as a multipurpose gathering space” (Warsaw et. al., 2021, p 5).

The Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic:

Because of the pandemic in early 2020, the landscape of social interactions has inarguably shifted and as a result the themes previously mentioned have suffered from the limitations on socializing. COVID-19 impeded the ability of farmers markets to continue in the traditional role of providing a space for conversation and relationship building (Radcliffe et. al.,

2021). Some markets turned to online spaces while others chose to preserve the face-to-face interactions by adopting social distancing measures and mottos such as “shop, don’t stop” (p 10) that discouraged mingling between customers and vendors (Radcliffe et. al., 2021).

Online farmers markets or markets able to pivot towards an online platform were positioned well for a pandemic; however, some markets choose to reject the virtual model and keep the face-to-face experience (Radcliffe et. al., 2021). One such market was the Yellowknife Farmers Market (YKFM) located in the Northwest Territories of Canada. When customers were surveyed using the dot-survey method they listed the “atmosphere” (p 8) at YNFM, so much so that 20% of those surveyed did not plan to make any purchase at the market whatsoever (Radcliffe et. al., 2021). The outlook for farmers markets to still play a vital role in social benefits, despite the COVID-19 pandemic, does not need to be bleak. Knezevic (2021) identifies this post-pandemic time as an opportunity to reframe how we think of “more-than-market” (p. 1) or “more-than-monetary” (p. 4) contributions within food systems. We can reverse the damage done to social cohesion in part by the Industrial-scale production of food through growing and labor practices (Knezevic, 2021).

Methods

The methods by which the data was collected included surveys and interviews of three research populations from within the market. Customers and vendors comprised the first two populations and completed voluntary, anonymous surveys while the third population, market staff, were informally interviewed. Findings for the benefit of social interactions were supported in pre-pandemic (Azavedo & Walsh, 2018; Bomba, 2018; Farmer, et. al. 2011; Gerbasi, 2006; Kaiser et. al. 2020; Market Umbrella, 2008; Zhao & Wise, 2019) and post-pandemic (Radcliffe et. al. 2021) studies through several types of surveys and interviews of customers, vendors, and staff alike. Customers and vendors have distinct experiences when they attend the farmers market as well as different motivations, thus a survey was created individually for each population. Questions were tailored on each survey to fit the particularities of the surveyed populations. Refer to Appendix C for the full list of survey questions completed by customers and Appendix D for the corresponding survey completed by vendors.

The survey delivery method to customers was through a QR code that was presented at two locations within the farmers market for customers to scan and complete the questionnaire. The first QR code was located in the market office and solicited to any who entered. The second QR code was located within the market space near the entrance, on a sandwich board. Any customer who entered the market and possessed the initiative could scan the code and complete the survey. Vendors were emailed an anonymous link to their survey through the market listserv. The link was distributed twice throughout the study by the market director who agreed to participate in the study (IRB # 22-153-H). Market staff members were emailed a list of interview questions about their experience working at the farmers market (refer to Appendix E) to

complete and return at their leisure. No identifiers were collected for either customers, vendors, or staff to ensure anonymity.

Results

A total of 39 vendors and 95 customers consented to take and complete the surveys. A total of two staff members participated in the interview process.

Customers:

When asked along five choices, what specifically was liked about attending the farmers market customer responses for “supporting local initiatives represented at the market” and “social interactions/meeting people” ranked 2nd and 3rd from a total of 295 responses. When asked directly whether they felt like they were a part of a community at the Fulton Street Farmers Market 65.26% (n62) strongly agreed, 31.58% (n30) somewhat agreed, 2.11% (n2) somewhat disagreed, and 1.05% (n1) strongly disagreed.

Frequency

When asked how frequently customers attended the market during the main summer season the most common response was one day a week (n40) followed by; every other week (n20), less frequently (n16), two days a week (n10), and three days a week (n1). Eight respondents indicated that they have never attended the main season and only have attended the second winter season.

Proximity

45.19% of customer responses indicated that they live in the neighborhood or surrounding community.

Interactions

Business interactions among customers showed 87.24% came to the farmers market to interact with people who produced their food or made the products they bought. Responses for

repeated business interactions were reported as very frequently at 51.06% (n48), somewhat frequently at 27.66% (n26), occasionally at 17.02% (n16), rarely at 3.19% (n3), and never at 1.06% (n1). Interpersonal interactions by customers, out of 244 responses, indicated 31.15% with members from their own party, 21.72% with staff, 18.44% with other shoppers, 17.21% with booth attendants representing local organizations, and 9.02% with musical or other performers. 2.46% of customers responded that they did not interact with anyone else while attending the market.

COVID-19 Data

30.36% of customers reported no effect on their experience due to the COVID-19 protocols of the market. 52.63% of customers reported no effect on their attendance due to the COVID-19 pandemic. 22.11% stated they attended more because the market was a safer, open-air option.

Vendors:

When asked specifically whether or not vendors felt like they were part of a community at the Fulton Street Farmers Market no responses were marked in disagreement or feelings of neutrality. 76.92 % (n30) of vendors responded they strongly felt like they were part of a community and 23.08% (n9) somewhat agreed.

Frequency

The vendor response for the frequency of attending the farmers market to vend indicated the highest attendance at one day a week (n13) followed by; two days a week (n10), less frequently (n6), and three days a week (n4). No vendors indicated they attended every other week and six had only attended as vendors during the second season.

Proximity

38.46% of vendors indicated a preference for stall location within proximity of customer food traffic. 33.33% of vendors opted to describe their preferences for stall location in their own words. Their responses included themes such as consistency, customer psychology, customer spatial recognition, building relationships with other vendors, factoring weather conditions, and foot traffic logistics.

A sample of vendor quotes (from additional comments in surveys):

1. "I prefer the vendors to my sides to be consistent. Customers have visual and product associations and I believe that it builds relationships with vendors stronger."
2. "I just like to be at the same stall so my customers can find me easier."
3. "A corner of an intersection, BUT not up top next to the building. Customers race right past to get to the rest of the market, and never come back."
4. "Stall with specific market location for consistency, weather, and traffic."
5. "Our stall is near the Fulton Street entrance, I like that because it's easy for people to find us and they tend to be less overwhelmed when they first enter the market versus after having walked through much of it, combined with being near the more open end of the market I think that helps get us some additional foot traffic."

Interactions

Vendor interactions were also broken down into two separate categories. Repeat business interactions with customers were established as commonplace to a varying degree among all vendors except for one. 4.26% of the 94 vendor responses specified customer interactions as purely transactional and 38.30% enjoyed educating customers on the products being sold. Out of 123 responses regarding non-monetary exchanges, 23.58% shared market-related info with other

vendors and 18.70% talked about growing practices with customers. Out of 88 responses, 37.50% indicated a preference for exchanging business practices with other vendors, and 18.18% indicated a penchant for observing competition practices. There were no vendor responses indicating zero interaction with other vendors. Interpersonal interactions were present between both customers and other vendors. Out of 123 responses, 24.39% talked with vendors and 30.08% talked with customers about things outside of the market. Regarding customer interactions, vendors showed a proclivity towards getting to know customers on a personal level and small talk at 29.79% and 22.34% respectively. 37.50% of the 88 vendor responses stated they enjoyed getting to know other vendors on a personal level.

COVID-19 Data

42.86% of vendors reported no effect on their experience due to the COVID-19 protocols of the market. 64.10% of vendors agreed to a certain degree that COVID influenced customer interactions.

Staff:

The staff members were asked questions ranging from practices engaged to increase social cohesion and feelings of belonging, to the implemented COVID-19 protocols and the effects on attendance. The self-reported themes for practices included a focus on food security, normalizing food assistance by removing the stigma surrounding such programs, and creating a space for diverse groups of people to gather and interact. The market adopted COVID protocols that mandated masks for customers and vendors, limited the number of customers within the market space, encouraged behaviors such as social distancing and “shop and leave,” and increased sanitation measures and frequency. With the effects of the pandemic and the resulting protocols, staff witnessed an attendance increase due to the open-air nature of the market and a

shift in buying practices, like shopping local. This is evidenced by a 462% increase in food assistance totals from \$68,838 in 2019 to \$318,580 in 2021 (Fulton Street Farmers Market, 2022).

Analysis

In addition to the social motivations identified by Azavedo & Walsh (2018), food spaces such as farmers markets facilitate social cohesion through the ancillary benefits of market attendance as evidenced by vendor and customer survey results. Proximity, frequency, and interactions are the three mechanisms identified at the Fulton Street Farmers Market that show a correlation to feelings of belonging to a community or as this study described, social cohesion.

Market attendance has business and interpersonal advantages as demonstrated by vendors' identical response rate of 37.50% preferences for exchanging business practices and getting to know other vendors. Vendors also have individual techniques to leverage the proximity mechanism to maximize interactions with other vendors and customers alike. The interactions between customers and vendors also show a high prevalence of socializing as Gerbasi (2006) found that benefits vendors as much as customers. These mechanisms contribute to the sense of belonging that all vendors indicated they felt to some degree at the Fulton Street Farmers Market.

A correlation was identified between customer responses and customer attitudes surrounding feelings of belonging to the Fulton Street Farmers Market community. An increased rate of attendance, higher rates of repeated patronage with the same vendors, and a broader scope of interaction with market actors are associated with greater feelings of belonging to the community at the market.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The primary goals of this research were to measure social cohesion at the Fulton Street Farmers Market currently as well as to identify and discover ways in which social cohesion can be leveraged in food spaces. One could conclude that for some customers and vendors the motivating factor for attending the farmers market was the experience they had at the farmers market.

In addition to rebuilding the social cohesion that was tested during the COVID-19 pandemic, the mechanisms present in food spaces can also be applied as tools for remediation of social benefits damaged and lost by the industrial-scale food production as Knezvic (2021) argues, by reducing the distance between producers and consumers.

The Principal Investigator (PI) acknowledges the existence of limitations within the course of the conducted research. The study was conducted during the second season which fell within the winter months. As a result, customer and vendor representation may not have been fully actualized due to the difference in attendance between the timeframe of the study (second winter season) and that of the main summer season. The wording of some questions may not have provided the intended context and as a result, influenced the way participants responded to the survey or interview questions. There was a “neutral” response added to four questions in the surveys, which had varying degrees of agreeance as options, approximately 3 weeks after the study began. This was done after a partial review of the data showed a participant did not respond to a question, and it was assumed this may have been due in part to the lack of “neutral” as an option. The PI specifically excluded demographic questions for vendor and customer surveys. The logic behind this choice was intended to avoid subjects from being placed in a mindset where they were prone to think of their demographics and thus subconsciously separate

themselves from others in the farmers market community. This limits the potential for results to be analyzed for trends of social cohesion along with demographics such as age, race, nationality, gender, marital status, education, etc. As evidenced in the Fulton Street Farmers Market annual report, a large number of food assistance is provided. This data shows the presence of a lower-income population; however, this data may also be influenced to some degree due to the Grand Rapids Public Schools system issuing a “Pandemic EBT” card to all parents of enrolled students.

Future studies should be considered on measuring social cohesion at the Fulton Street Farmers Market in correlation with the previously mentioned demographics to better identify trends and opportunities to improve the social benefits of the farmers market. Additionally, further research could be useful in comparing the original study and subsequent demographic studies to analyze the effects of demographic questions on the sense of belonging to a community within a food space setting.

Appendix A – Informed Consent for Surveys



1. **TITLE:** Farmers Markets and Social Cohesion in a Post-COVID-19 World
2. **RESEARCHERS:** Principal Investigator: Daniela Marini, Brooks College of Interdisciplinary Studies, Integrative, Religious, and Intercultural Studies Dept. Co-investigator: Daniel Falknor, Graduate Student, Professional Master of Arts in Social Innovation.
3. **PURPOSE:** This research study is being conducted to see how Fulton St Farmers Markets contributes to social cohesion post-COVID-19?
4. **PROCEDURES:**
 - You are being asked to voluntarily complete a brief survey on your experience at the Fulton Street Farmers Market.
 - This survey should take approximately 5-10 minutes to complete.
 - There is no out-of-pocket cost to yourself completing this survey.
 - This survey is completely anonymous and confidential.
5. **RISKS:** There are no known or foreseen risks to participants from participating in the research itself. No identifying information will be collected. Electronic data will be collected and/or stored for this research project. As with any use of electronic means to store data, there exists a minimal risk that data could be lost or stolen.
6. **POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO YOU:** The potential benefit for a participant in this study is an improved, future experience at the Fulton Street Farmers Market.
7. **POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SOCIETY:** The potential benefit of this research for society is an improved experience at the Fulton Street Farmers Market.
8. **VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION:** Your participation in this research study is completely voluntary. You do not have to participate. You may quit at any time without any penalty to you.
9. **PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY:** All information collected from you is for the sole purpose of this research study and will be kept confidential to the fullest extent allowed by law. In very rare circumstances specially authorized university or government officials may be given access to our research records for purposes of protecting your rights and welfare or

to make sure the research was done properly. This study will not collect any personal identifying information.

10. **AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE:** By filling out and completing the survey you are agreeing to the following:
- The details of this research study have been explained to me, including what I am being asked to do and the anticipated risks and benefits.
 - I have had an opportunity to have my questions answered.
 - I am voluntarily agreeing to participate in the research as described on this form.
 - I may ask more questions or quit participating at any time without penalty.
 - I give my consent to participate in this research project.

11. **CONTACT INFORMATION:** If you have any questions about the study, you may contact

NAME: Daniel Falknor

PHONE: (520) 204 - 5988

E-MAIL: falknord@mail.gvsu.edu

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the **Office of Research Compliance & Integrity** at Grand Valley State University, 1 Campus Drive, Allendale, MI. Phone: 616-331-3197. E-mail: rci@gvsu.edu.

This study has been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board at Grand Valley State University (Protocol #22-153-H).

Appendix B – Informed Consent for Interviews



1. **TITLE:** Farmers Markets and Social Cohesion in a Post-COVID-19 World
2. **RESEARCHERS:** Principal Investigator: Daniela Marini, Brooks College of Interdisciplinary Studies, Integrative, Religious, and Intercultural Studies Dept. Co-investigator: Daniel Falknor, Graduate Student, Professional Master of Arts in Social Innovation.
3. **PURPOSE:** This research study is being conducted to see how Fulton St Farmers Markets contributes to social cohesion post-COVID-19?
4. **PROCEDURES:**
 - You are being asked to voluntarily participate in a short, informal interview about your time as a staff member at the Fulton Street Farmers Market.
 - This interview should take approximately 30 minutes to complete.
 - There is no out-of-pocket cost to yourself for participating in the interview.
 - This interview is confidential, and notes will not include any information that identifies you.
5. **RISKS:** There are no known or foreseen risks to participants from participating in the research itself. No identifying information will be collected. No direct quotes or verbiage will be recorded. Electronic data will be collected and/or stored for this research project. As with any use of electronic means to store data, there exists a minimal risk that data could be lost or stolen.
6. **POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO YOU:** The potential benefit for a participant in this study is an improved, future experience at the Fulton Street Farmers Market.
7. **POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SOCIETY:** The potential benefit of this research for society is an improved experience at the Fulton Street Farmers Market.
8. **VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION:** Your participation in this research study is completely voluntary. You do not have to participate. You may quit at any time without any penalty to you.
9. **PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY:** Your name will not be given to anyone. All

information collected from you is for the sole purpose of this research study and will be kept confidential to the fullest extent allowed by law. In very rare circumstances specially authorized university or government officials may be given access to our research records for purposes of protecting your rights and welfare or to make sure the research was done properly. This study will not collect any personal identifying information.

10. **AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE:** By participating in this interview, you are agreeing to the following:
- The details of this research study have been explained to me, including what I am being asked to do and the anticipated risks and benefits.
 - I have had an opportunity to have my questions answered.
 - I am voluntarily agreeing to participate in the research as described on this form.
 - I may ask more questions or quit participating at any time without penalty.
 - I give my consent to participate in this research project.

11. **CONTACT INFORMATION:** If you have any questions about the study, you may contact

NAME: Daniel Falknor

PHONE: (520) 204 - 5988

E-MAIL: falknord@mail.gvsu.edu

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the **Office of Research Compliance & Integrity** at Grand Valley State University, 1 Campus Drive, Allendale, MI. Phone: 616-331-3197. E-mail: rci@gvsu.edu.

This study has been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board at Grand Valley State University (Protocol #22-153-H).

Appendix C – Customer Survey Questionnaire

1. How did you hear about the Fulton St. Farmers Market? *Select all that apply*
 - Friend(s)
 - Family
 - Grand Rapids Public Schools P-EBT card
 - Other food assistance programs such as Bridge EBT, WIC, or Nottawaseppi Huron Band
 - I live in the neighborhood or surrounding area
 - Media (tv, flyer, newspaper, social media, news, etc.)

2. How often do you attend the market during the main season? *Select One*
 - 1 day a week
 - 2 days a week
 - 3 days a week
 - Every other week
 - Less than once a month
 - I have never attended the main season, only the winter season

3. How did COVID affect your attendance at the market? *Select One*
 - I attended less out of precaution
 - I attended more because it is open-air and a safer option
 - I attended more because other options were closed
 - I started to attend because I or my student received the GRPS P-EBT card
 - My attendance was not affected

4. Who do you interact with other than farmers and vendors at the market? *Select all that apply*
 - Staff
 - Other Shoppers
 - People in your party that came with you
 - Musical or other performers
 - Booth attendants representing local organizations
 - I do not interact with anyone else

5. I attend the farmers market to interact with the people producing my food or making the products I buy. *Select one*
 - Strongly agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Strongly disagree
 - Neutral

6. How often do you shop at the same vendor(s)? *Select One*
- Very frequently
 - Somewhat frequently
 - Occasionally
 - Rarely
 - Never
7. Besides food or products what else do you receive from vendors? *Check all that apply*
- Recipes or cooking instructions
 - Growing practices or other product information
 - Talk about things outside of the market
 - Other (enter below) _____
8. What do you like about attending the market? *Check all that apply*
- The fresh food, such as produce
 - Social interactions/meeting people
 - Ready to eat foods, such as food trucks
 - Watching musical performances or acts
 - Supporting local initiatives represented at the market
9. I feel like I am part of a community when I attend the Fulton St. Farmers Market. *Select one*
- Strongly agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Strongly disagree
 - Neutral
10. How did the safety protocols during COVID affect your experience at the market? *Select all that apply*
- Limited my interactions with others
 - Provided a safe space for socially distanced interactions
 - Limited the time I spent at the market
 - Limited me to only buying fresh food
 - There was no effect on my experience at the market
11. Is there anything you would suggest for improving the sense of belonging or community at the market? *Fill in the blank below*

Appendix D – Vendor Survey Questionnaire

1. How often do you sell at the Fulton St Farmers Market during the main season? *Select one*
 - 1 day a week
 - 2 days a week
 - 3 days a week
 - Every other week
 - Less frequently
 - I have only been a vendor during the second season

2. How many repeat customers do you see? *Select one*
 - None
 - 1-5
 - 6-10
 - 11-15
 - 16-20+
 - Almost all my customers are repeat

3. What things do you exchange with others besides the monetary customer transactions? *Select all that apply.*
 - Talk about growing practices with customers
 - Share market-related info with other vendors
 - Talk to customers about things outside of the market
 - Talk to other vendors about things outside of the market
 - Other (enter below) _____

4. Covid affected my interactions with customers. *Select one*
 - Strongly agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Strongly disagree
 - Neutral

5. How did the safety protocols during COVID affect your time as a vendor at the market? *Select one or all that apply*
 - Limited the number of customers I saw
 - Limited the time I spent with each customer
 - Limited my interactions with other vendors
 - All the above
 - There was no effect

6. I feel like I am part of a community when I vend at the Fulton St. Farmers Market? *Select one*
- Strongly agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Strongly disagree
 - Neutral
7. What do you prefer in a stall location? *Select One*
- I prefer a stall that has the most customer traffic
 - I prefer a stall that is next to a specific vendor
 - I do not have a stall location preference
 - Other (enter below) _____
8. What do you like about interacting with other vendors? *Select all that apply*
- I like exchanging business practices
 - I like getting to know them on a personal level
 - I like seeing what the competition is doing
 - I do not interact with other vendors
 - Other (enter below) _____
9. What do you like about interacting with customers? *Select all that apply*
- My interactions with customers are purely transactional
 - I like getting to know them on a personal level
 - I enjoy educating customers on the things I am selling
 - Small talk
 - Other (enter below) _____
10. My interactions with staff are? *Select one*
- Only basic-business-related
 - More than basic-business-related
 - Business and personal related
 - Only personal related
11. Is there anything you would suggest for improving the sense of belonging or community at the market? *Fill in the blank below*

Appendix E – Staff Interview Questions

1. What practices does the market employ to contribute to social cohesion?
2. Did you change any practices when the COVID pandemic struck?
3. What feedback have you received from vendors or customers surrounding community or belonging?
4. Are there any differences between pre-COVID and post-COVID market attendance?
5. What do you like about working at the FSFM?
6. Is there anything you would like to see done at the market?

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