

Farmers Market Manager Report for 6/17/2021 Board Meeting

by Charles Reed

1. Vendor News:

- New (Approved): Yallatizers; Jake & Blues Raw; Mt. Hoppe Farms; Kimchi Jon's; Rishikesh Bliss by Liz
- New (Provisional): Jake & Jubi's; Southwest Farm; Bubb's Seltzer;
- Returning: Engel Farms (Seasonal, Fruits); Onion Creek Farm; Brangus Best

Vendor Attendance:

5/19 – 17 (Heavy rain leading up to market)

5/26 – 46

6/02 – 44

6/09 – 49

1. Vendor parking and unloading on the monument side of the Triangle has become an issue. Charlie will inform vendors prior to 6/16 market that this is no longer permitted.
2. Charlie and Johnna measured several park dimensions and determined that the maximum vendor capacity is 52, confirming earlier estimates.
3. With increasing attendance, Charlie will need to begin turning new applicants away.
4. A change of the vendor registration system is needed as well; creating new categories for vendors, with registration limits on each category, will auto-generate waiting lists and eliminate potential of over-booking. There will need to be increased communication and education to ensure vendors pick up new system.

Tracking of Vendor Sales

This will be re-implemented with the 6/16 market. A trial at the 6/9 market showed vendors were receptive. Charlie will be exploring efficient ways to track, analyze, and report.

2. Customer News:

Clicker counts at the last three markets have surpassed 500, though this doesn't come close to representing total visitors, as many enter the market through gaps. This should be alleviated as distance between booths has returned to a closed, pre-COVID position.

For the 6/2 and 6/9 markets, crowds at opening have been 30+. Charlie is soliciting volunteers to help with crowd control and ushering early shoppers out of the market. If the demand is there, we might need to consider opening and closing earlier. The 5-6pm market is noticeably quieter than the 3-4 slot.

Feedback:

Overwhelmingly positive response to increased vendors, energy, and the layout. There has been one complaint passed to a vendor, from a customer who liked it when it was less crowded.

"I love this market and you are doing a fantastic job with it. The results have been quick and dramatic. Along with vaccinations, things are taking off. It's becoming a top Dripping Springs destination!" – Vendor Feedback

3. Market News:

We are still receiving visitors who saw the market featured on Fox7. One gentleman who'd seen the feature called last week, hoping to make a day trip to Dripping from Waco; he asked if we sold hot soups. This seemed very important to him.

Maintenance:

As of the 6/9 market, Charlie and Johnna have taken over transportation, set-up, and take-down of tent, 290 signs, sandwich boards, and all other items. As they are both part-time workers with regulated hours, they have to begin taking down at 5:45.

A circuit tripped at the 6/9 market, cutting power to two vendors. Charlie flipped all fuses and reset, which did not fix the problem. One vendor switched to another outlet. Charlie again flipped switches to no avail. Maintenance promptly came and flipped the switches. This fixed the problem.

Music:

Unfortunately, we lost long-time musician Jon Parmantier due to insufficient pay. His spot in the rotation was filled by newcomer Melvin Brown. This was most likely a one-time performance from Mr. Brown, who also commands higher fees, and the Market is actively seeking an act to fill out the four-musician team.

4. Marketing/Outreach:

Social Media:

Instagram: 1,465 Followers (+115); Reach +3%

Facebook: 4.9K Likes (+70); Reach -38%

Newsletter:

Newsletter Stats: +25 recipients May 19-June 9; Open Rate 31% (industry avg. 20%); Click Rate 11% (industry average 2.5%).

There is a steady exploration of vendor links by users, though the heaviest clicking is on DSFM Social Media accounts, especially Instagram.