**Burnaby Artisan Farmers’ Market Project Proposal**Katie Bartel, Emma Burger, Hongpu Gu, Rachel Mah
University of British Columbia

**Introduction:**

The purpose of this project is to determine the aspects of the Burnaby Artisan Farmers’ Market (BAFM) that attracts farmers, as well as the reasons vendors stay and leave. The Artisan Farmers’ Market Society operates the Burnaby market, as well as Lonsdale and Ambleside markets. BAFM has operated since 2008 at Burnaby City Hall. Although modest compared to some of the bustling Vancouver markets, BAFM offers a relaxed experience creating opportunities for patrons to converse with farmers. BAFM has recently faced challenges in retaining its vendors. This is due to unusually poor weather conditions, and potentially a result of disorganized bookkeeping (T. Immell, personal communication, September 20, 2017). The intent of this project is to discover the assets and limitations of BAFM through data analyzation, vendor interviews and a nominal-style survey; thus, understanding the market through the eyes of farm vendors. This understanding is paramount to helping farmers’ markets further develop and thrive (Campbell, 2014).

**Significance:**

Last year the Artisan Farmers’ Market Society reported a $17,000 operational loss. That means $17,000 more was spent than what was earned in stall fees for that year. That is a significant deficit for the nonprofit organization that relies on fundraising initiatives, grants and vendor fees for operating. It is believed that the society’s bookkeeping practices are part of the problem (T. Immell, personal communication, September 20, 2017). Since BAFM started operations, its vendor application forms have been done solely on paper, and over time became disorganized. If left as is, the administrative neglect could result in an even further downward trajectory. When market operations are managed efficiently and effectively, markets are able to thrive (Stephensen, Lev, & Brewer, 2008). Without adequate bookkeeping, market personnel cannot completely know a vendor’s commitment: their duration of selling; reasons for staying; or reasons for leaving. That knowledge is imperative for growing the organization and the farmers’ market community as a whole (Campbell, 2014).

Smaller markets are often the second choice for farm vendors (Stephensen, Lev, & Brewer, 2007). Trout Lake, one of Vancouver’s busiest farmers markets, brings in approximately 70 vendors each week, in comparison to BAFM, with an average of 35 vendors. Farmers are more likely to sell at markets where they can be assured they will have a solid customer base and will be able to sell the majority of their product in the time provided (Stephensen, Lev, & Brewer, 2007). But is that the thought process of those selling at BAFM? This project will set out to uncover that.

**Objectives:**

**Objective 1:** Conduct six in-person interviews and distribute an email survey that was developed by BC Association of Farmers’ Markets (BCAFM) to 20 past and current farm vendors. Email interviews will also be conducted with 6 past vendors to understand why they stopped selling at BAFM.

**Objective 2:** Analyze data from 2014-17, as well as survey and interview results, and create graphs categorizing vendors based on responses.

**Objective 3:** Produce a report that outlines the assets and limitations of BAFM through the perspective of its farm vendors.

**Methods:**

Transcribing vendor applications to Excel will provide an overview of the variation of vendor participation from 2014-2017. Conducting interviews with past and present vendors will bring about further understanding of those variances. Interviews will be conducted in person and through email. Interview questions will include:
 - Why did you choose BAFM?
 - Why do you continue to sell at BAFM?
 - What elements of the BAFM do you enjoy?
 - Are there any aspects of the BAFM you would like to see improved?
A web-based survey will also be distributed to vendors. Customer counts and car counts will be conducted at the market visit on Oct. 7, 2017.
 Qualitative data will be analyzed and categorized based on strengths and limitations of BAFM, as well as priorities for vendors. Categories will include reasons for choosing BAFM, continuing to sell, or not. The 2014-2017 quantitative data will be used in graphs and tables, as well as the infographic. Researchers will discuss their findings with project partner Tara Immell to best identify the assets of the market, the constraints potentially limiting growth, and ways in which the organization can continue to attract, retain, and support its vendors.

**Ethical considerations:**

The Tri-Council Policy Statement (TCPS) emphasizes value and respect for human dignity, which is expressed in its core principles: respect for persons, concern for welfare, and justice (Government of Canada, 2015). The researchers will use TCPS2 as its framework throughout the project.
 Five minute interviews will be conducted on-site, as well as through email. Permission will be requested for each interview. Surveys will be responded to freely and anonymously unless the respondent expresses otherwise. All documents will be kept confidential.

**Outcomes**

1. **Student Report:**

The student report will provide a history of BAFM to create an understanding of what the non-profit organization is about. The report will discuss the objectives of the project and why those objectives are significant. It will describe the methodologies used to collect and analyze data, as well as note the ethical considerations made in achieving the objectives. Photographs of the market visits will be included for visuals. Quantitative and qualitative data obtained will be presented in figures and tables to compliment the report. Findings will be discussed, along with any related meaning or connections. Limitations of the project will be provided, as well as potential modifications for improvement. Conclusions will be presented on how the results may influence the current market operations, and potential suggestions for BAFM moving forward.

1. **Infographic & Presentation:**

 The infographic will be a concise visualization of the project from start to finish. It will state the issues and significance of the project, so viewers are aware of why this community project took place. It will briefly outline the objectives and the methods used. The team will define and make note of its use of asset-based community development in the infographic. Important findings, including data from past and present market vendors, will be included to exhibit results and conclusions that are found. A summary of suggestions will be included. The infographic will be displayed at the project presentation, which will be viewed by community partners, faculty members and the general public. During the presentation, the infographic will be used to educate viewers about the project. The presentation will follow the *What? So What? Now What?* format in a succinct, 2-3 minute summary.

**Timeline:**

* Input data: Completed Sept. 27
* In person interviews: Completed Oct. 7
* Email interviews: Completed Oct. 14
* Surveys: Distributed Oct. 21
* Data analysis: Completed Oct. 28
* Graphs: Completed Nov. 4
* Student Report: Completed Dec. 3
* Infographic: Completed Nov. 26
* Presentation: Nov. 29

**REFERENCES**:

Campbell, J. (2014). Cooperate or compete: the relationship of strategic orientation and firm
performance for farmers’ market vendors. *Journal of Small Business & Entrepreneurship. 27*(1), 27-42. doi: 10.1080/08276331.2014.932965

Government of Canada. (2015). Core Principles. In *Tri-Council Policy Statement - Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* (Chapter 1). Retrieved fromhttp://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/pdf/eng/tcps2-2014/TCPS\_2\_FINAL\_Web.pdf

Mathie, A., & Cunningham, G. (2003). From clients to citizens: Asset-based Community
Development as a strategy for community-driven development. *Development in Practice, 13*(5), 474–486.

Stephenson, G., Lev, L., & Brewer, L. (2008). ‘I'm getting desperate’: What we know about farmers' markets that fail. *Renewable Agriculture and Food Systems, 23*(3), 188-199. doi:10.1017/S1742170507002153