



## Visitor preferences to the Outeniqua Farmers' Market in George, South Africa

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### Abstract

This paper investigates visitors' preferences to the Outeniqua Farmers' Market (OFM) in George in the Western Cape Province of South Africa. The OFM is a typical farmers' market that takes place every Saturday morning on the outskirts of the town, where stall owners and visitors congregate. Whilst it presents an opportunity for stall holders to sell their goods, it is also a platform where visitors to the event can have a meal and socialize. Using a quantitative research approach, 332 self-completion questions were analyzed. The results indicate that about 40 percent of the visitors attended the OFM at least once a month and the visitors were highly qualified – 41 percent had a post-graduate qualification. As was expected, most (64 percent) of the visitors were local and from the Western Cape Province (71 percent). As for the visitors' preferences, most (59 percent) of the visitors were keen to purchase fresh products and 70 percent of the visitors were comfortable paying higher prices, if the products were of superior quality - this may be attributed to a more well-heeled clientele visiting the market. What was notable is that there was not a strong drive for organic products with 40 percent of the visitors being neutral about any preference towards organic products. Overall, there seem to be a preference for locally produced farm products. The variety of products on offer at the market, also seems to be very positive. Based on the outcome of the study, several recommendations are proffered.

**Keywords:** authenticity, organic products, sustainability, stall holders, visitors' appeal.