

## Case Histories: Local Authorities

### Horsham District Council

#### Food and Drink Festival Evaluation

The Council initiated the annual Food Drink Festival in 2003 to boost food and drink-related businesses in the rural areas and encourage people to buy more local produce. The Festival concentrates on raising awareness among consumers of the diversity, quality and availability of locally-produced food and drink to increase demand and stimulate business success.



Since 2004, Abacus Insight has been evaluating the success of the Festival through a survey of participating businesses and interviews with a sample of the consumers who had attended events. The results of our research are used to monitor the effectiveness of the Festival in meeting its objectives year-on-year, to attract funding for future years and to assist with planning future events.

#### Farmers' Market

Horsham aims to attract shoppers to the town centre; one of the ways in which they are doing this is by encouraging a range of markets which will draw people in from the town and surrounding areas.

A local produce market has been operating in the Carfax for several years on Saturdays but traders expressed a wish for an additional Friday market which would give people in Horsham during the working week an opportunity to visit and shop. The Council agreed to trial a Farmers' Market on alternate Fridays and that this could continue if it demonstrated the generation of additional trade for Horsham - as opposed to spreading the same trade over the two separate markets.

Abacus Insight interviewed traders and shop-keepers in the Carfax area and people shopping in both these and other Horsham markets on Friday and Saturday.; The aim was to identify the impact of the Farmers' Market on shopping patterns and the income generated. The results gave the Council the information needed to make a decision on the future of the Farmers' Market, along with many facts and figures that could be used to publicise local markets - to traders as well as to their potential customers.