

The main purpose of this report was to estimate the number of visitors who attended the 2023 Highland County Maple Festival and how much money they spent in Highland County during their visit.

In order to do this, both vendors and visitors to the festival were surveyed. Visitors were surveyed using an intercept method during each day of the festival which took place on March 11th, 12th, 18th, and 19th. Vendors were emailed a survey after the conclusion of the festival. Vendors and visitors were both asked to estimate how much money they had spent during their time in Highland County. The surveys given to visitors also included questions intended to determine what aspect of the event drew people to the area, and what non-financial impacts the festival has. Vendor surveys included questions asking about how sales and crowd sizes at the event compared to the vendor's expectations. To help encourage visitors to complete the survey, five gift baskets were created to be raffled off to randomly selected completers. These gift baskets were comprised of items from the Highland County Chamber of Commerce and products from Highland County producers. Each gift basket had a retail value of approximately \$50. Only visitors who appeared to be over the age of 18 were asked to complete the survey. In total, 397 surveys were at least partially completed. Respondents who said they lived in Highland County were not included in the analysis. There were 69 responses to the vendor survey. Not every respondent answered every question on the survey, and questions had slightly different numbers of responses. Nonresponse bias was not analyzed as a part of this research.

The Economic Impact Report for the 2023 Highland County Maple Festival was created by West Virginia State University with support from the Highland County Chamber of Commerce, Future Generations University, and Virginia Tech. This work is funded through a USDA ACER grant: "Accessing South Atlantic markets for US Maple Syrup: educating consumers and enhancing distribution networks". If you have any questions, please contact Meredith Miller at [mmiller70@wvstateu.edu](mailto:mmiller70@wvstateu.edu).