
2019 Peach Festival Survey Report



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Data were collected from Peach Fest attendees using an online survey. Volunteers handed out cards with instructions and a link to access the survey. Additionally, the survey link was advertised via flyers, cards given to festival attendees, and social media. A total of 178 responses were used in the analysis. Because most of the sample was recruited via social media (e.g., Facebook) and the small size of sample, the accuracy of the economic, demographic, and attitudinal estimates may be inaccurate.

Spending Results

Estimates of spending were derived using our sample to calculate the spending of different demographic groups (e.g., visitors and locals) and making estimates based on **26,223** attendees at the Peach Fest (data provided by the Ruston Chamber of Commerce).

Visitors are estimated to have spent **\$728,246** in Lincoln Parish during their Peach Fest visit. This number was calculated using the totals below plus the cost of admission per person.

Visitors Data	
Food and Drinks at PF	\$86,621
Alcohol at PF	\$12,852
Retail at PF	\$83,579
Entertainment at PF	\$26,922
Gas/Transportation	\$118,866
Food and Drinks outside PF	\$100,462
Entertainment outside PF	\$21,218
Retail outside PF	\$53,996
Hotels	\$147,620
Total (plus Admission)	\$728,246

Locals are estimated to have spent **\$767,434** during Peach Fest.

Locals Data	
Food and Drinks at PF	\$200,888
Alcohol at PF	\$54,923
Retail at PF	\$257,201
Entertainment at PF	\$68,142
Total (plus Admission)	\$767,434

Total spending related to the Peach Festival is estimated at **\$1,495,620**.

Composition of Survey Respondents

Local attendees were identified using the zip codes (those close to Ruston). Of the surveyed sample, 29% of respondents were not from local area. Using this percentage, we estimate that 7,605 visitors (not from local area) and 18,618 locals (from the Lincoln Parish area) attended Peach Fest.

The “Average” Survey Respondent

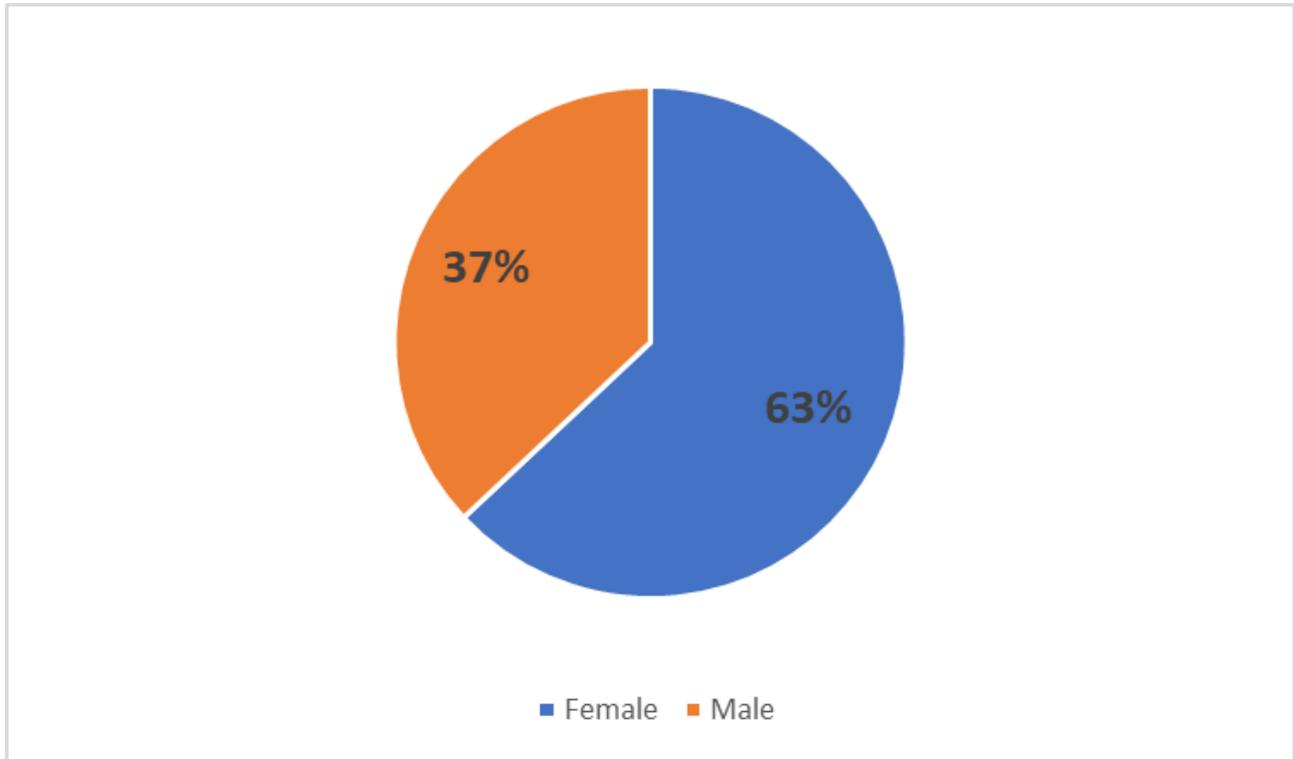
The table below provides the most common characteristics in our sample. Because the sample was small compared to total attendance (178 people), we cannot be certain that these characteristics are true of all other festival attendees.

	Visitors	Locals
Gender	63% Female	63% Female
Ethnicity	91% Caucasian	86% Caucasian
Income (median)	Average = \$98,000	Average = \$88,000
Days Spent at the Festival	Fri Only: 6% Sat Only: 56% Fri/Sat: 38%	Fri Only: 16% Sat: 27% Fri/Sat: 57%
Satisfaction with Festival	Satisfied	Satisfied
Satisfaction with Events	Satisfied	Satisfied
Satisfaction with Food and Drinks	Satisfied	Satisfied
Satisfaction with Alcohol	Satisfied	Satisfied
Satisfaction with Concerts	Very Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Most Attended Event	Arts and Crafts Show	“A Peach in Time” Parade
Most Attended Concert	Bag of Donuts	Bag of Donuts, Battle of the Bands
Advertisements	Facebook, I have attended Peach Fest in the past	I have attended Peach Fest in the past

Demographic Information

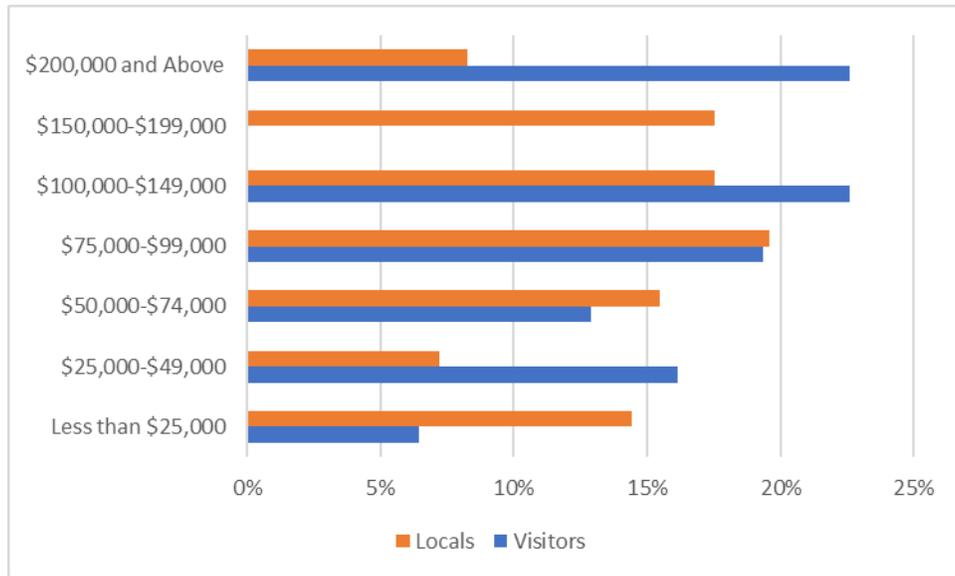
Gender Composition

The most frequently reported gender for both locals and visitors was female (63%). The composition of all attendees is shown in the graph below.



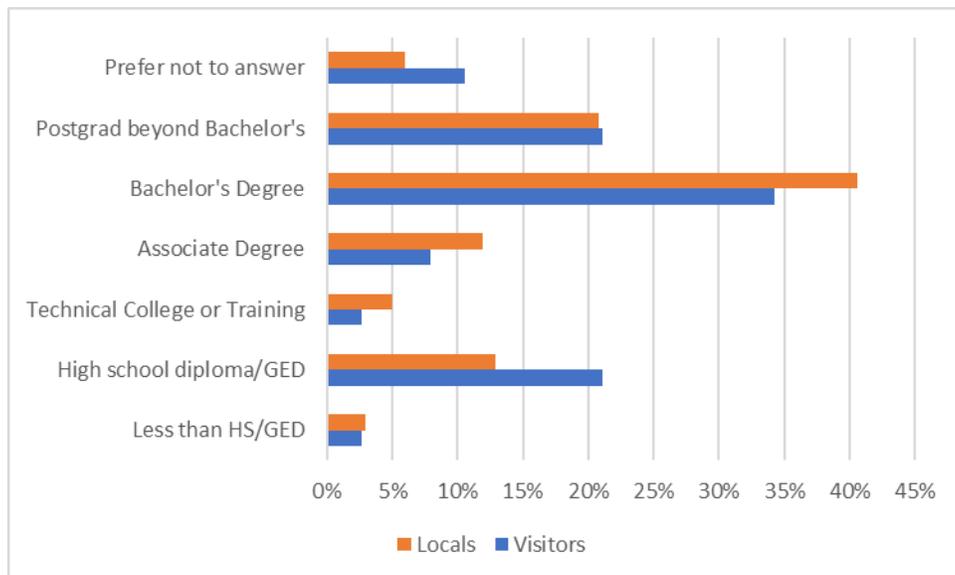
Respondents' Annual Income

Of the 178 respondents, 128 indicated their annual income. The overall average (Mean) annual income was \$107,156.



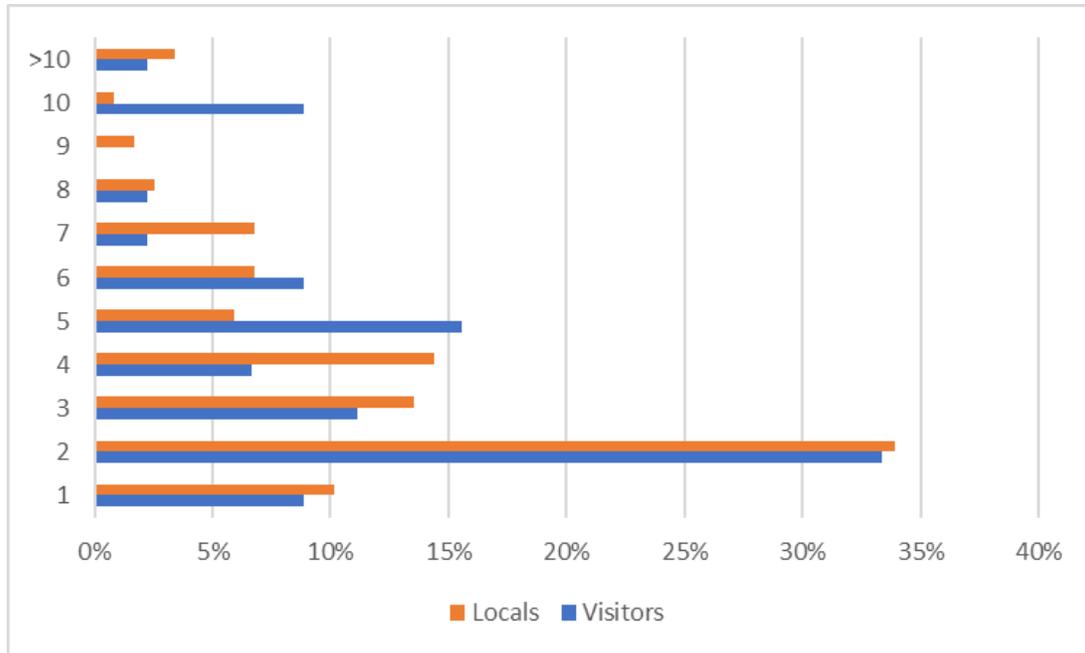
Respondents' Levels of Education

130 respondents reported the highest level of education they have achieved.



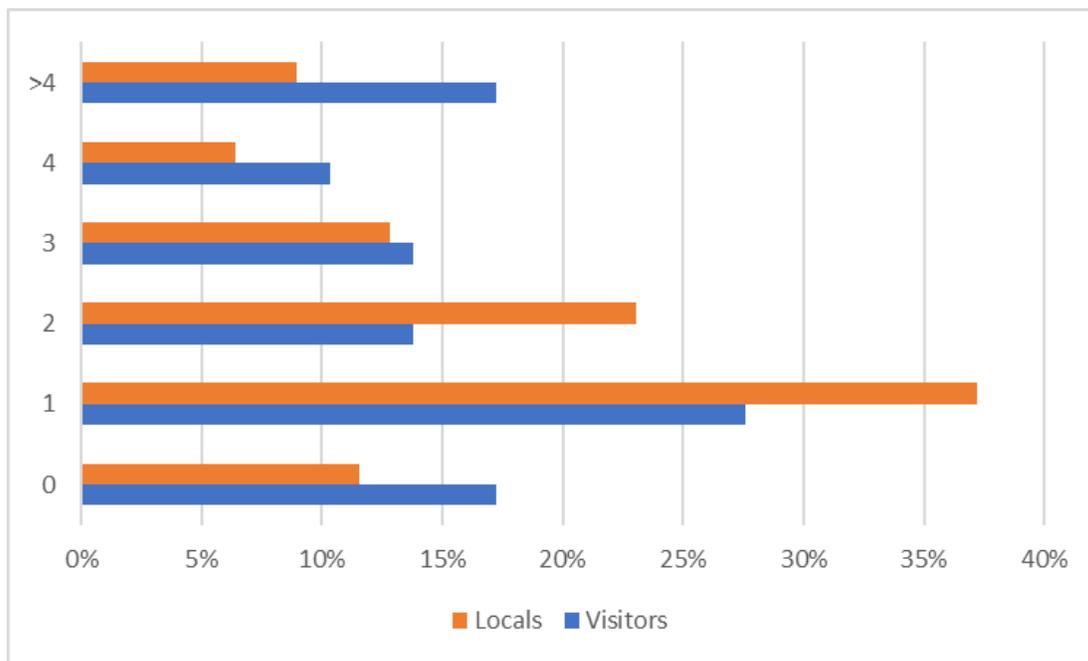
Number of People in Group

Respondents were asked how many people were in their Peach Fest party.



Number of Children in Group

Respondents indicated how many people under the age of 18 were in their group.



Respondents' Activities

Events Attended at Peach Fest

Respondents indicated the events they attended at Peach Fest. Of the 137 respondents who reported attending an event, 39 (29%) were visitors, while 98 (72%) were locals. Many respondents attended more than one event. These are presented in order of local attendance.

Event	Visitors	Locals
A "Peach in Time" Parade	43%	76%
Arts and Crafts	44%	61%
Concerts	43%	49%
Antique Car Show	30%	40%
Peach Art Exhibit	30%	40%
Ruston Farmers Market	3%	25%
Carnival Zone	15%	24%
Chainsaw Carver	15%	19%
Peachy Play Zone	35%	28%
Rodeo	12%	17%
Diaper Derby	13%	16%
5K Run/Dawg Dash	5%	8%
Chill Garden	5%	8%
Peach Cookery Contest	3%	8%
Cobbler Gobbler Eating Contest	12%	7%
Kids' Fishing Tournament	0%	6%
Hula Hooper, Stilt Walker, and Juggler	12%	6%
National Guard Video Gaming Trailer	0%	5%
Tennis Tournament	0%	3%
Nighttime Bass Tournament	2%	1%
Call of Duty Competition	5%	1%
Madden 17 Competition	5%	1%

Participation in Events

Of the 55 respondents who reported participating in an event, 17 were visitors (31%), while 38 were locals (69%). Many respondents participated in more than one event. These are presented in order of local attendance.

Event	Visitors	Locals
A "Peach in Time" Parade	18%	66%
Arts and Crafts	29%	16%
Antique Car Show	18%	11%
Ruston Farmers Market	0%	11%
Rodeo	6%	11%
Diaper Derby	6%	11%
5K Run/Dawg Dash	0%	8%
Kids' Fishing Tournament	12%	8%
Carnival Zone	12%	5%
Chainsaw Carver	6%	5%
Peachy Play Zone	12%	5%
Peach Cookery Contest	0%	5%
Peach Art Exhibit	0%	3%
Hula Hooper, Stilt Walker, & Juggler	0%	3%
Nighttime Bass Tournament	0%	3%
Tennis Tournament	6%	1%
Chill Garden	6%	0%
National Guard Video Gaming Trailer	0%	0%
Call of Duty Competition	6%	0%
Cobbler Gobbler Eating Contest	6%	0%
Madden 17 Competition	6%	0%

Visitors' Activities in Ruston

51 respondents reported that they lived outside of the Ruston area (determined by zip codes of all parishes adjacent to Lincoln Parish). Of these, 39 visiting respondents participated in several activities other than Peach Fest when they visited Ruston. The chart below provides the percentage of visitors in each activity.

Activity	Percentage of Visitors
Shopping	53%
Visit Relatives or Friends	46%
Other Activities	31%
State Park/Lincoln Parish Park	21%
Movie at Celebrity Theater	13%
Louisiana Military Museum	2%
Lincoln Parish Museum	0%
Autry House Museum	0%

Lodging

19 visitors indicated they spent the night in the city of Ruston, and 5 rented a hotel room. An estimate of **\$127,630** was spent on hotel rooms during the Peach Fest. Respondents reported that they stayed in the following hotels:

Relax Inn
Sleep Inn
Hampton Inn

Advertising

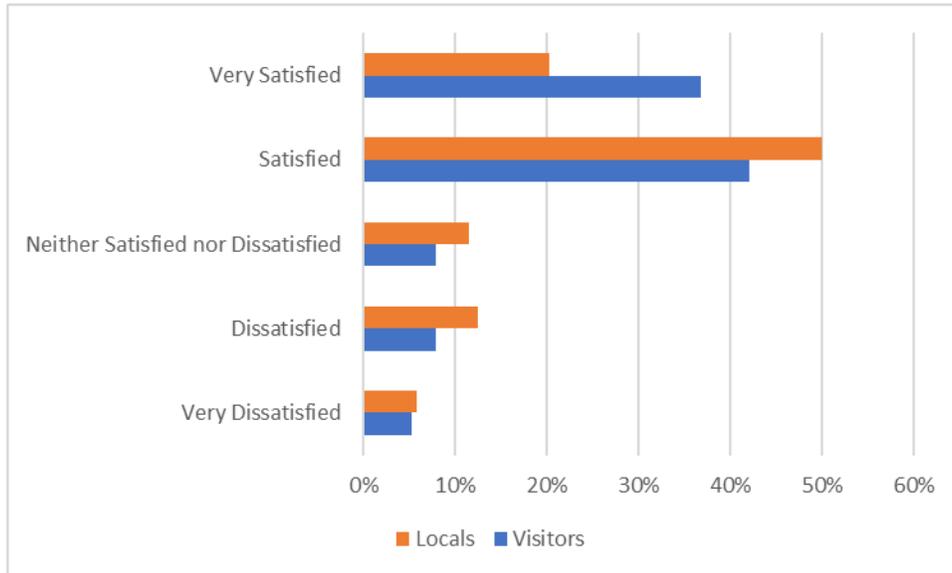
The following chart illustrates how respondents learned about Peach Fest. Many respondents observed more than one type of advertisement.

Type of Advertisement	Percentage of Attendees who Saw This Type
Facebook	39%
Family or Friends	26%
Yard Signs	13%
Instagram	10%
News	10%
Local Resident	8%
Radio	9%
Other	7%
Billboard	5%
Twitter	1%
Magazine	1%
Poster	0%
TV	0%

Attitudes about the Festival

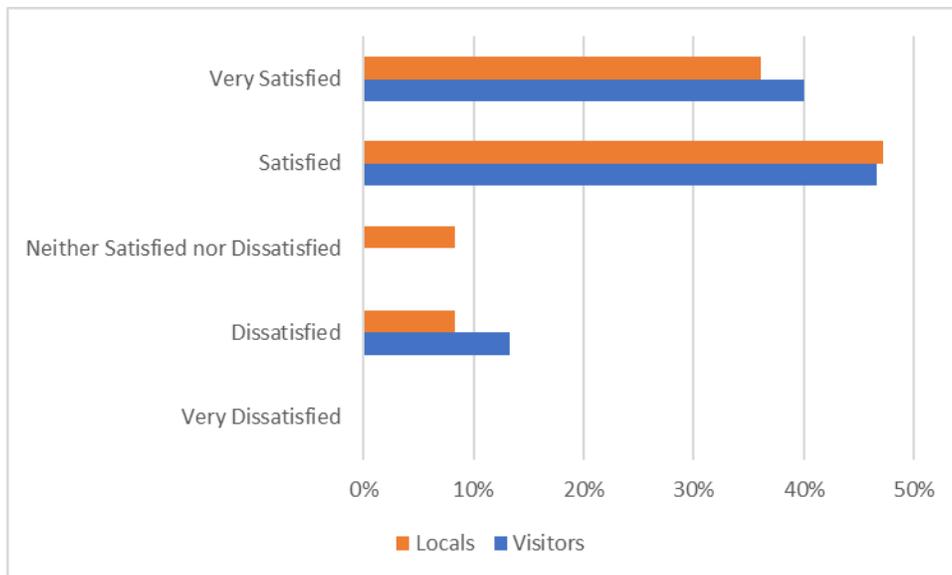
Satisfaction with Festival

Respondents were asked to rate how satisfied they were with Peach Fest, and 142 responded. In total, approximately 73% of respondents (local and visitors) reported they were either satisfied or very satisfied.



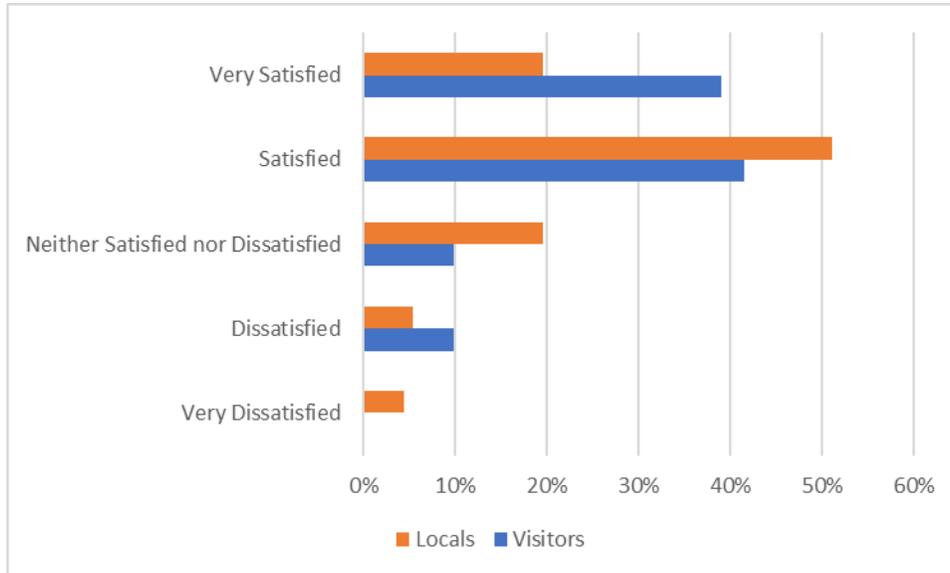
Satisfaction with Event Participation

Respondents were asked to rate how satisfied they were with the events in which they participated, and 51 responded. In total, approximately 84% of respondents (local and visitors) reported they were either satisfied or very satisfied with the events in which they participated.



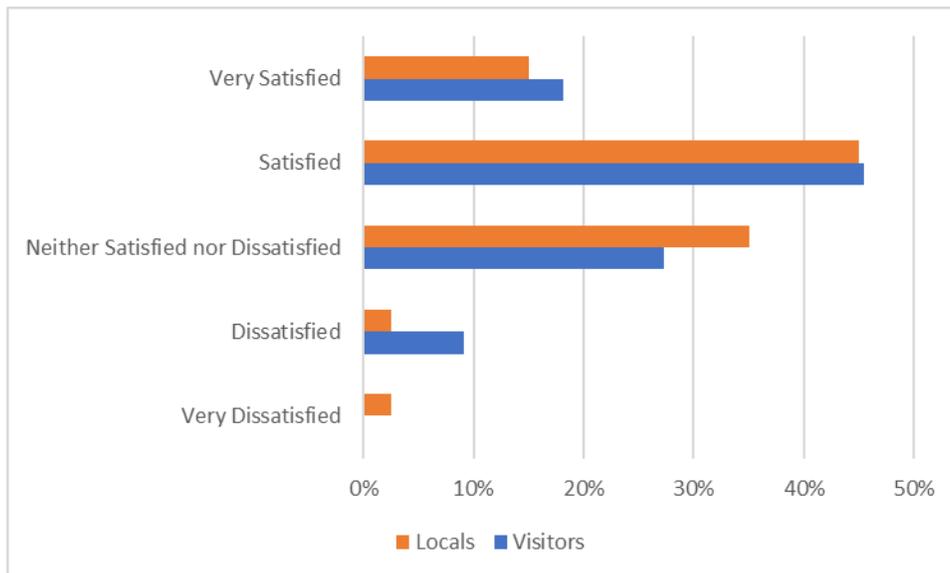
Satisfaction with Festival Food and Drink

Individuals were asked how satisfied they were with the food and drinks at Peach Fest, and 251 of 282 responded. Approximately 74% of respondents indicated being either satisfied or very satisfied with food and refreshments.



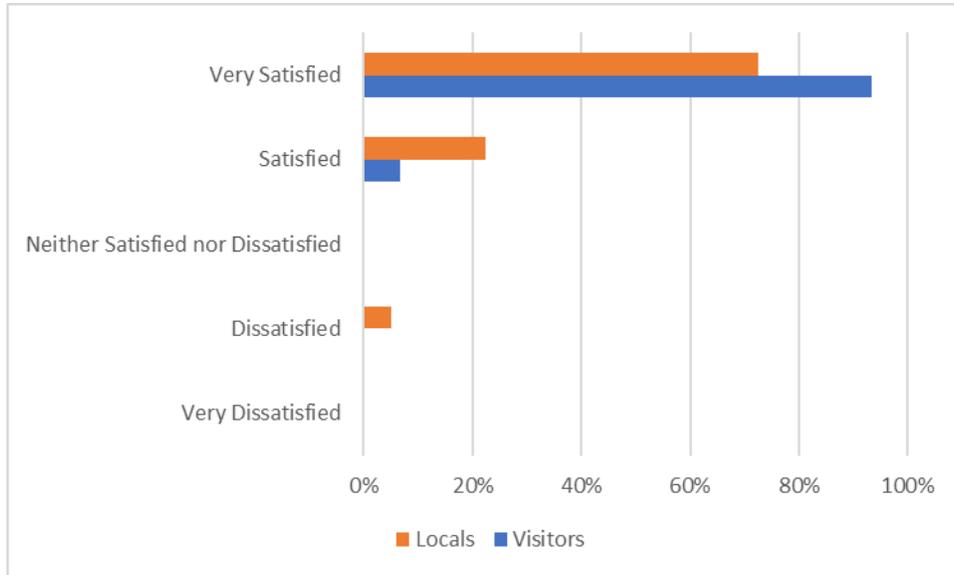
Satisfaction with Alcoholic Beverages

Individuals were asked the extent to which they were satisfied with concerts they attended, and 51 responded. 61% indicated being either satisfied or very satisfied with the alcoholic beverages.



Satisfaction with Concerts

Individuals were asked the extent to which they were satisfied with concerts they attended, and 55 responded. 96% of respondents who attended concerts indicated being either satisfied or very satisfied with the concerts they attended.



Spending Calculations

Attendee Spending

Spending data was collected by asking respondents to select the amount they spent on activities or items. The spending tables below illustrate the spending for each category. Though data for both local and visiting respondents are given for Peach Fest spending, funds generated from locals' spending will not have the same impact visitors' funds have. This is because visitors' funds are brought into the parish, whereas local funds are already being spent in the parish. Local data were collected so that locals' spending and visitors' spending could be compared.

Similarly, for the amounts respondents spent in the city of Ruston, only visitors' data was collected and presented because only visitor spending brings new funds to the area. Locals would spend money on these things in Ruston regardless of the festival, and thus no new funds are generated by locals.

The estimated total amounts spent in each category are also provided below. The estimated spending per respondents for each category is also provided.

Average Attendee Spending by Category

	Visitors	Locals
Food and Drink at Peach Festival	\$13.08	\$13.74
Peach Festival Entertainment	\$3.54	\$3.66
Peach Festival Retail	\$10.99	\$13.82
Average Peach Festival Spending	\$27.61	\$31.22

Ruston Spending Averages for Visitors

	Visitors' Total
Food in Ruston	\$13.21
Gas and Transportation	\$15.63
Ruston Entertainment	\$2.79
Ruston Retail	\$7.10
Average Ruston Spending	\$38.73

Average Spending for Peach Festival Weekend

	Visitors	Locals
Average Spending	\$66.34	\$31.22

Visitor Spending Estimates

To calculate the “**average spending**” numbers in each cell below, the total amount that visitors spent on Peach Fest-related activities (food and drink spending, entertainment spending, and Peach Fest retail), Ruston-related activities (food and drink, entertainment, and retail bought in Ruston, but not at Peach Fest, as well as gas and transportation spending to get to Peach Fest), and all spending (Peach Fest-related and Ruston-related categories combined) was summed and then divided by the number of visitors that provided spending information.

To calculate the **number of visitors**, we first calculated the percent of the sample which consisted of visitors (29%). We then multiplied this percentage by the total number of festival attendees (26,223). This gave us the **estimated 7,605 visitors**.

To calculate the **total spending for each category**, the amount of average spending was multiplied by the number of visitors.

Per visitor estimates were calculated by dividing the estimates for each category by the number of visitors. This provided a single-number estimate of average spending per visitor.

Hotel spending estimates were done using the estimate of the number of nights visitors stayed in a hotel room and multiplying times the average room rate in Ruston.

	Spending at Peach Festival	Spending in Ruston	Hotel	
Average Visitor Spending	\$27.61	\$38.73	\$110	
	x 7605	x 7605	X 1342	Estimated Total
Total Visitor Spending	\$209,974	\$294,542	\$147,620	\$652,136

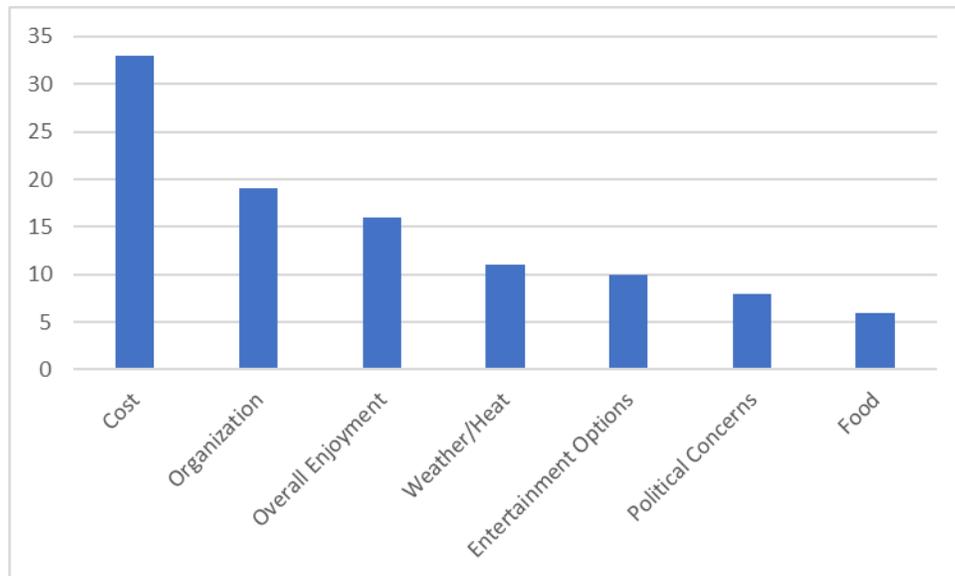
Local Spending Estimates

The average spending, number of locals, total spending, estimate, and per local estimates were calculated in the same manner as the corresponding figures in the visitors’ table were calculated. However, Peach Fest spending alone was estimated for locals as their spending is already present in the parish. Counting their spending in Ruston would not calculate any added impact on Ruston’s economy. The total spending estimate also contains the cost of admission.

Average Local Spending	\$31.22
	X 18618
Total Local Spending	\$581,254
Total Spending Estimate	\$1,495,620

Respondent Comments and Suggestions

74 respondents provided comments or suggestions for improving the festival. All comments addressed one of the topics listed in the chart below. Occasionally, there were multiple suggestions per response. All responses are included below the graph.



Cost

Continue allowing Friday at no charge. Make entry prices affordable for large families.

Cost too much for a family to go in the gates to see or do anything!

The price is too high to get in.

Not charge for entrance. It's fine to charge for the concerts individually, but everything else should be free admission

Not charge as much to get in

I felt it very stupid to pay to get into the actual events of the Peach festival. That's not a festival because you can basically only attend if you have money. I could have spent that \$10 with a vendor!

It's too expensive for entry

It is outrageous that it costs so much for a family to attend.

Stop charging for people to go to the Civic Center and RR park

I don't think you should charge \$20.00/person to enter railroad park for the daytime events. With my kids over the age of 5, I would have spent \$80.00 just to enter. It seems like you would make enough off the food vendor rentals rather than charge for entrance.

I was shocked to find out the costly to attend

The entrance fee is CRAZY we haven't been to the festival in almost 4 years because it's too expensive

I think the only feedback I received was regarding the Chill Garden. I do not think we need to charge an additional fee for this space.

Consider charging \$5 to get in arts and crafts at civic center and \$10 downtown. It keeps a lot of people from going in the civic center that don't plan to go thru the whole festival.

Less expensive

The vendor over charging for shrimp/fries needs to not be invited back! Highway robbery!

I would have attended peach fest more if the admission wasn't so expensive. I only went on Friday for the short period of time that it was free

Reduce the entry fee on Saturday. It is expensive for families. Especially if you are just there to enjoy and browse. A huge festival in Franklin, TN, that encompasses the entire town, cost nothing to go to. Check out the Dickens Festival!!! The entire town participates as well as craftsmen from everywhere!! They make revenue from sales tax of items sold as you do. An amazing festival , families can come and enjoy. \$5 entry fee is enough for the crafts that you have!!! Check out the Dickens Festival!!!

The entrance fee was too much!!

My only suggestion is there needs to be a place for people to go inside that doesn't cost money so they can get cooled down. I heard a lot of complaints about having to pay to enter a tent and refused to spend more.. especially for air. I would suggest a VIP pass or a family pass.

It costs too much just to see the craft vendors.

Enjoyed free admission to arts and crafts on Friday. I was surprised at how crowded it was.

Put on your website that Veterans needed a special pass to get in for free.

I do not think I should have to pay to go inside the gates by the civic center to shop. I think you should absolutely charge for the entertainment (concert), but not to shop. I did all my shopping at local stores who support Peach Festival. I took advantage of Friday's free admission but there's no way I'd pay \$10 to go shop on Saturday. That's ridiculous. What does the T-shirt money help pay For???

I don't think you should have to pay \$10 to eat at food trucks or get in the craft show . If people do not go to concert I think it should be free or \$5 fee . Lots do not want to pay \$10 to get in if not going to see the bands which I think makes the crowds smaller for the vendors trying to sale stuff . I think money should only be taken for the concerts

Do not like having to pay \$10 to enter food vendor area. Could not enjoy walking around due to limited access.

I am from South La and I have never heard of paying to go to a festival. You had to pay to get to the food vendors and activities. Then you had to pay again for kids to do activities. This festival is a money grab and you can tell by the lack of people inside the 'paid areas'.

Reduce the cost to get in to \$5

Less expensive bottled water options

It was an expensive festival. The bungee jump cost \$10.00 per person and the bull ride was the worst \$6.00 I've ever spent. Overall it was just too expensive to take your grandchildren to.

If you wanted to shop in the arts and crafts area, you had to buy a \$10 wristband which I think is overpriced given that you are actually shopping and helping the vendors anyway. The vendors inside could have possibly gotten more sales had the event not charged people to shop and I saw people leaving when they were told they had to pay to get into the various areas.

Need family admission options.

Admission needs to be less and more people could attend.

Admission into RailRoad Park and to vendor area should be free and not closed off. Only charge for special event areas like Jurassic and butterfly, etc.

Come down on entrance fee. More people would go if there was not a high charge. Cheers to you for not charging 12 and under. (study other festivals)

Overall Enjoyment of the Festival

Keep this up

It was great this year.

This was the best Peach Fest by far!

The parade is always our favorite! We are never disappointed with it!!

Excellent event with a variety of activities to include many ages and sectors. Great idea for restaurants to serve variety of peach food offerings.

Keep Peachstock on Friday!!!! Such a great use of the Friday entertainment slot

Loved the chain saw carver!

Peach fest was great!

Peach Fest is a wonderful event for the entire family. Overall, it's getting better and better every year.

Keep up the great work!

The events that I went to, and all the events that I watched or saw from a distance, seemed to run very smoothly this year.

Enjoyed free admission to arts and crafts on Friday.

Loved battle of the bands!!!

Please bring back piano jack!!

The last two bands inn Saturday were amazing! Well worth the money paid!! Need more seats for the last two shows!! I don't know the last band but they helps really set it off for Bag of Doughnuts!! You should make sure you have both of them back next year!! The highlight of the festival for me!!

It was good.

Peach fest is the highlight of my summer. I love how the community is involved in this event including all local restaurants serving peach themed food items

I had the best time. I have never had more fun in Ruston. The best part was definitely Bag of Donuts.

Entertainment Options

A few more free things in the Sexton lot for kids would be nice.

There is no activities to bring customers to the front lawn.

Need more kids stuff.

I wouldn't bring back the butterfly garden.

More fun activities to do

More booths to sell stuff

Maybe sell animals? People would come for that for sure.

Better rides; safer rides (watched two of the 'rides' break as kids were on there).

Street 'performers', such as maybe local "magicians", 'metal mans'. Kids petting zoo?

Every year its the same vendors and that gets old. Would like to have bought some cute handmade clothes for my 2 and 8 year old girls.

Have more Country and Western music. Bring back the Pet Show.

Maybe a large indoor event since it is usually so hot. Concert, comedian, family event at the Thomas Assembly Center at low charge or free of charge. Could sell concessions.

Make both nights popular bands that are on the radio!

Wine bar...Better Announcer at Rodeo....more kids activities

Organization of the Festival

Extending the dates. I would have loved to attend events Thursday-Sunday. There is so much going on. It's hard to fit it all in.

The Civic Center was so crowded after paying you could not move to see what was in there. Our family turned around and left! Several friends who went had the same complaints!

I just feel there needs to more tables or chair la set up!!

The parade is the only thing worthwhile. It costs so much to go into the civic center and it is so crowded you can't enjoy it or even see the he exhibits. Why not do something to improve that It used to be an enjoyable experience but not anymore

Thank you for making the play area for the children across from the arts and crafts.

I would suggest finding a safer location with the traffic issue. Most festivals are held on public owned open lands that can be also used to hold a fair or other event.

I normally participate in the peach hunt (where you normally go get stamps on your passport) every year but I didn't like how it was on your phone this year. I don't do the technology crap and neither do a lot of others. And when I looked into it, some of the answers were WRONG how were you supposed to answer them.

Only issue with the peach festival were the quality of the la peach festival shirts. Mine had a hole under the arm after the first wear. Shirts were too thin.

More restrooms in Railroad Park.

Though traffic is rough, it would be helpful to have a shuttle driving back and forth between the civic center area and Railroad Park. The Saturday lunch-afternoon concerts were not well attended at Railroad Park, which was a little embarrassing. The artists had driven a long way to be here, and were all really great performers. Perhaps the crowds would have been larger if there was a shuttle to get people from their parking spots to the park!

Enjoyed free admission to arts and crafts on Friday. I was surprised at how crowded it was.

Move the larger portajohn closer to activities!!

Volunteers at Civic center (were not wearing purple shirts) were rude to an older woman and her daughter who came in from the heat and needed a seat. Customer service takes people a very long way!

The Peach Hunt was our main excursion. Very dissatisfied! Not only are the 1st 5 clues just random CLUES, they have absolutely nothing to do with where the prize actually could be. Just the same random stuff every single year...and it keeps getting placed in the same place it was a few years before. PLEASE PLEASE make this event better! This is one fun family event 1,000 of local and out of town people participate in! The Chamber of Commerce/ Peach Festival Committee really needs to step it up a notch and spend a little more time or \$ for whoever they use to do this work. VERY DISSATISFIED.

Need clearly marked first aid areas.

improve gate entrance & fencing at the civic center

These are things I overheard tourists and vendors saying.

Vendors need access to ice.

Need to be more spread out.

Tourists: businesses need to offer sales and stay open later.

Vendors were too crowded

The farmers market building was incredibly stuffy. it was very difficult to hear what was being said as the sound system was of poor quality. Also, where are the pictures from this event? All the other events have pictures on Facebook, but there is nothing from the diaper derby.

Activities closer to each other...

Have the entrance to the Arts & crafts well marked - not hidden (Sexton Parking Lot). It worked well last year at the corner of the Civic Center Lot. Have the people selling peaches OUTSIDE the fence of Arts & Crafts. People want peaches but don't want to pay money to get in to buy peaches. Have more knowledgeable volunteers (ones that can answer questions) at the gates. (Not too young) Make it easier to find the shirts, hats, decals, etc. on Saturday.

Weather/Heat

Have it in the fall. brutal heat pushed us away Saturday afternoon (and lots of other folks, too).

PLEASE ADD MISTING FANS ALL OVER THE GROUNDS.

It was so hott sweat was burning my eyes. The parade was fine but by 10:00 at the festival is was miserably hott & my kids wouldnt even play on the bounce houses & begged to leave so we did. If it was in april would be a much better experience but the peaches probably arent ready then

there needs to be more tables set up with shade! When you have kids from ages 2 to 9 they get hot in that sun and want somewhere to sit under shade and enjoy a drink and treat!

Is it possible to move the diaper derby to an air conditioned facility? Perhaps First Baptist?

The diaper derby should be held where it is cooler!

The same with the peach eating contest, need shade, maybe a tent with some bigger fans.

Also some misters scattered throughout the festival will make it a lot cooler, these are relatively inexpensive

For citizens who parked at local businesses nearby, it's hard for them to walk in such extreme heat.

Maybe a large indoor event since it is usually so hot. Concert, comedian, family event at the Thomas Assembly Center at low charge or free of charge. Could sell concessions.

The Corn Hole contest needs to be under a tent. Also, the large garbage cans on Park Ave. created quite an unpleasant stench during the Saturday heat. Maybe need to use smaller ones that are frequently emptied.

more and/or cheaper cooldown areas

Need to install water misting stations to cool off.

Need more shaded places

The farmers market building was incredibly stuffy.

Political Concerns

I noticed that the volunteer peach festival shirts have Randal Hermes for Sherriff on the sleeve. I was shocked to see the city/chamber showing favoritism towards a certain candidate. Other candidates families/friends volunteered at the peach festival and it is unfair to expect them to wear a shirt promoting an opposing candidate. I expected the City of Ruston to have a higher ethical/moral code than this.

I was saddened to see that a person running for Sheriff was allowed to advertise on the Peach Festival volunteer T-shirts. I don't think this should be allowed because it makes it seem as though the Chamber and the City of Ruston is supporting this candidate.

Bias of the Chamber toward political candidates is unacceptable.

Too many politicians in the parade.

Very dissatisfied that the peach volunteer T-shirt's supported a political candidate. Many people in Ruston have jobs who don't allow them to publicly support political candidates as well as not every one who volunteers their time support the same candidate. This left a very poor taste in my mouth as well as many others.

The festival was too politicized this year. I understand candidates riding in the parade and that's fine and expected in an election year. You even expect to see candidates hawking votes. But I saw ads on the official chamber volunteer shirts and people wearing campaign shirts that were working the entry booths to the events. If they want to volunteer that's great but they shouldn't be allowed to wear a campaign shirt while working for the festival. I was raised in Ruston and have lived here most of my adult life and this is the first time I can remember the Committee or

the Chamber taking a stance on political candidates. I suspect it's all part of the whole "anything to raise a buck for the festival" mindset that is currently in power. It was very distasteful on the part of the Chamber/Peach Fest committee in my opinion.

Aside from being completely bombarded by politics, the Peach Fest was fine. I feel the Chamber showed quite a bit of favoritism to certain candidates of various political races. I noticed sponsorship and endorsements by the Chamber at every turn. Shouldn't you be non-bias? From endorsements on Peach Fest T-shirt's, gate workers are wearing political candidates T-shirt's and asking for votes, then the rodeo announcer blatantly favoriting candidates, I felt choked by local politics.

Please review your ethics and consider how you present yourself and bias opinions to the community.

Chamber employees and ambassadors are unfriendly and have their own political agendas.

Food

More peach food choices

Someone selling peach daiquiris would be an awesome addition.

There wasn't many choices on food trucks at all this year and no funnel cakes!?!?

Bigger variety of food options (not just fried food). We have lots of awesome local food vendors. Would like to see more of those!

More food trucks, not many to choose from that aren't the normal local trucks.

Unfortunately, I will not be going back to the Peach Festival again even though I live close. The peaches that I saw being sold were clearly marked in a box that said "GEORGIA PEACHES" on the side. The two peach ice creams that were being sold were: 1) Blue Bell Ice Cream; 2) rolled ice cream that had canned peaches in it. I literally saw them taking out the cans. There were no Ruston peaches to be found anywhere.

More areas to buy peaches since it's a peach fest. More homemade peach items to purchase.