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CIS 4150 Project Reflection

The project we worked on in my group was an analysis of all the markets' data put together to analyze and seek answers to the questions of analysis posed by the data provided by Food Access Los Angeles. The experience of working on this project was both educational and fulfilling, as it allowed me to gain insightful knowledge over the course of this class (CIS 4150) and throughout the course of the project. From Zoom sessions with Food Access Los Angeles' representative explaining the data description and what the organization is about to the sessions with my group members going over the data, we collaborated effectively and tested ideas on what we would focus on for the project. These sessions were critical in helping us interpret the dataset and develop a clearer understanding of the project's objectives.

I was able to learn more about farmers' markets and the part they play in the socio-economic setting of the community. This was an eye-opening experience for me because I mostly shop in large chain stores. Through this project, I discovered how important farmers' markets are as places to shop and as platforms for community growth, supporting small businesses, and promoting food accessibility.

Food Access Los Angeles highlighted their program's benefits, including:

- **Supporting Local Farmers and Businesses:** Farmers' markets provide a direct platform for small and mid-sized farmers to connect with the community, creating a sustainable income stream.

- **Providing Nutritional Education for the Community:** Food Access LA educates the community on the importance of healthy eating habits through workshops and demonstrations.
- **Promoting Beneficial Programs:** Programs such as SNAP, Market Match, and EBT acceptance ensure low-income households can access fresh, nutritious food at an affordable cost. (*FEED LOS ANGELES. SUPPORT FARMERS.*, n.d.)

These programs are vital in addressing food insecurity, and understanding them helped motivate me to work on this project. I wanted to contribute beyond fulfilling the class requirements by providing insights that could benefit the community. Although I could not volunteer at the markets themselves, I am satisfied that my work can help the organization gain new insights for the future.

The lessons learned in this class will also be helpful for me in my future endeavors, especially the software tools used for data analysis, such as Tableau and Power BI. These tools provided a hands-on experience with real-world data, enhancing my data visualization and analysis skills. I plan to use this knowledge in other classes and later in my professional career. Additionally, this project improved my ability to interpret datasets and understand how to derive actionable insights that align with organizational goals.

One area where I could have improved is in providing notes that explain my screenshots from the class lab work. Doing so would have made it easier to communicate my ideas and ensure clarity in presenting the context of the visualizations. Clear documentation is essential when working with data, and this is a skill I aim to refine in future projects.

Working on this project also presented its challenges. One of the key challenges was deciding on the best chart type for analysis. For example, determining whether a pie chart, bar chart, or

bubble chart would most effectively convey the insights from a specific dataset required careful consideration. I overcame this by incorporating feedback provided by the professor, which helped clarify the decision-making process.

Another challenge was time management, mainly because my group members and I had other commitments outside the project. Scheduling meetings took much work, as our schedules often clashed. However, we were able to overcome this through constant communication. We prioritized our responsibilities and moved some less urgent extracurricular tasks to free up time for group meetings.

According to Cynthia Dalton, “Prioritizing helps to reduce stress and increases productivity, eventually creating room to check your errors” (Cal Coast University, 2022). This approach improved our productivity and allowed us to identify and correct errors in our analysis, ensuring the quality of our final report.

In conclusion, taking this class and working on the project has been a valuable experience. It deepened my appreciation for the role of farmers’ markets in community development and provided practical skills that will benefit me in my academic and professional journey.

References

calcoast.edu. (2022). *Prioritizing Your Life - The How, What, When, and Why Guide*.

Calcoast.edu. <https://www.calcoast.edu/news/prioritizing-your-life-how-what-when-why-guide>

FEED LOS ANGELES. SUPPORT FARMERS. (n.d.). Food Access LA. <https://foodaccessla.org>