



RETHINKING
MARKET
STUDIES

Toolkit for Cooperators



NATIONAL
BLACK FOOD
& JUSTICE
ALLIANCE

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7 Tools to Amplify the Rethinking Market Studies Research Project



We're so excited to share the recommendations and strategies from our *Rethinking Market Studies Research Project* with the Black cooperative community and beyond. Below, we've provided 7 different tools to engage with to share our report, recommendations, and materials. Please email leeann@blackfoodjustice.org if you have any questions on how to share or use these tools.

- Check out our **Resources & Links** on page 3, which include our **Template Emails** to send to funders, researchers, and cooperators, a **Press Release** to share with media outlets, and our **Cooperator & Funder Presentations** for community presentations or events.
- What is a market study? Check out our **One Pager** on page 4 to learn more. **A shareable and downloadable PDF can be found [here](#).**
- Read and make use of our **Talking Points** on page 5, which you can **pair with our Cooperator & Funder Presentations**. These are also useful points to use in regular conversations, and underscore the most important pieces of the project.
- We need your support amplifying our report on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. Check out our **Social Media Post Template Designs** and captions on page 7. Tag [@blackfoodjustice!](https://twitter.com/blackfoodjustice)



Fannie Lou Hamer (center) and members of the Freedom Farm Cooperative in 1969 (still captured from [Fannie Lou Hamer's America](#) documentary 2022).

1-4: RESOURCES & LINKS TO SHARE

1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For a summarized version of the report, with key insights & findings, principles for Black-led co-op development, and recommendations for moving this work forward, check out our [Executive Summary](#).

2: TEMPLATE EMAILS

It's critical that we get these recommendations into the right hands so they can be adopted. Check out our template emails to [funders](#), [researchers](#), and [cooperators](#). Click the underlined words to access each of the templates. Then, copy and paste the text of the documents into your preferred email client.

3: PRESS RELEASE

Our [Press Release](#) can be used to share with media outlets during any community presentations, events, etc. To access a pdf version, [click here](#).

4: PRESENTATION TEMPLATES

Explore our [Cooperator](#) and [Funder](#) Presentation Templates. Our [Talking Points](#), which start on page 5 of this toolkit, provide a guide to presenting.



WHAT ARE MARKET STUDIES?

With the recent release of our *Rethinking Market Studies Research Project*, **an effort to produce culturally relevant market study strategies**, removing barriers to entry for Black cooperative development is paramount. The current market research field is heavily reliant on **data that diminishes the value of Black spending and demands** for localized, community-operated food options in our communities. Consequently, **Black co-ops often receive market research that fails to convey their full worth.**

So, **what are market studies, how do they function, and why could they be vital to co-op development?** In this one-pager, we're breaking it down:

What are market studies?

Market research is a process that analyzes **consumer behavior, economic trends, and competition** for a given co-op or business.

When conducted thoroughly, **market studies can provide co-ops** (prospective & existing) **with critical answers necessary for investors**, including but not limited to:

How much money could I make next year? ● How beneficial is my product/service to the community? Is there a need? ● What customers should I target? Who in the community will benefit? ● What are customers buying the most? ● How are similar businesses/co-ops in the area performing? ● What threats could make my co-op fail? ● Where are areas for growth?

How are they conducted?

Market researchers **collect quantitative and qualitative data through various methods** to better understand a co-op's potential for financial success, growth, and impact on the community. **However, biased data historically has not adequately captured Black spending habits or community needs/wants.**

Researchers largely use two research types, which include but are not limited to:

Primary: interviews, surveys, focus groups, and customer observation from a wide range of customer personas/backgrounds, the co-op, and competition in the area

Secondary: propensity modeling (probability customers return) & running economic databases, government/financial records, and censuses through GIS (geographic information system)

Why do they matter?

Whether a co-op is seeking private or public funding, **market research can tell investors whether their investment is worth it.**

Like in the show "Shark Tank," investors may pose businesses/co-ops several questions during a pitch; **market research can provide the answers.**

Finally, market research can be valuable to cooperators themselves. By fully understanding their market and potential for growth, they can not only maximize returns and **better serve** their investors, but **their communities too.**



TALKING POINTS CAN BE USED WITH PRESENTATIONS FOR COOPERATORS & FUNDERS

Click the links above to explore more.

WHAT?/WHY?

INTRODUCE you, your organization, & your involvement in the Alliance.

INTRODUCE the National Black Food & Justice Alliance: “The National Black Food & Justice Alliance (NBFJA) is a coalition of Black-led organizations working towards cultivating and advancing Black leadership, building institutions for self-determination, and organizing for food sovereignty and land justice.”

ELABORATE on your organization’s personal involvement/stake in market research and/or Black cooperative development and sustainability. Why would equitable market research be personally beneficial to your co-op?

EXPLAIN why we conducted this project: The National Black Food & Justice Alliance along with representatives from Black-led co-ops decided to initiate a project to challenge the **existing anti-Black, capitalist standards** around market research to **make funding sustainable, Black-led co-ops more possible**.

EXPLAIN what are market studies: Market study research is a process that analyzes consumer behavior, economic trends, and competition for a given co-op or business.

HOW?

EXPLAIN how market studies are conducted: Market researchers collect quantitative and qualitative data to better understand a co-op’s potential for **financial success, growth, and impact on the community**. This is data required by a financial institution before determining **whether or not to invest**.

EXPLAIN how market research limits Black co-ops: The current market research field is heavily reliant on data that diminishes the value of Black spending and demands for localized, community-operated food options in our communities. Consequently, **Black co-ops often receive market research that fails to convey their full worth**.



ELABORATE on how market research can be improved based on our recommendations:

- There is a need for a **clear understanding of structural racism in institutions and systems** as market research metrics can be racist and not the greatest predictors of success.
- It is imperative to **expand the data points that are collected and for Black-led institutions** to support the development of innovative data collection methods while retaining ownership of proprietary information.
- **Cultural understanding and humility from market study researchers are crucial** for successful collaboration with the Black community. Researchers should commit to **gaining an understanding of historical cooperative models** and their relevance to Black economic advancement.

ELABORATE on how cooperators can take advantage of market research:

- Market research can be incredibly expensive. It was recommended by researchers and funders that co-ops **save at least \$11,000 before requesting a study**.
- Cooperators can save some money and time by **performing their own initial pro forma analysis**, or projections of next year's sales.
- Develop a standard **metric to define** and measure what we agree is the meaning of Black-led. Would a metric include member-owners, staff, and shoppers? What do we agree on?
- **Build partnerships with other ethnic communities** to help validate any potential biases in the market study process and possibly expedite outcomes.

ELABORATE on how Black co-ops can build support:

- Develop a level of **support metric for funders** that have racial equity objectives to measure tangible improvement.
- **Create a public conversation** about your co-op. Public discourse gets people in power to behave differently. This could be considered a civic engagement activity.
- **Tell narratives** about the intricate history of Black cooperative development.
- **Map out Black cooperatives' support network**. We can only survive if we work with each other particularly starting from a place of being under-served.

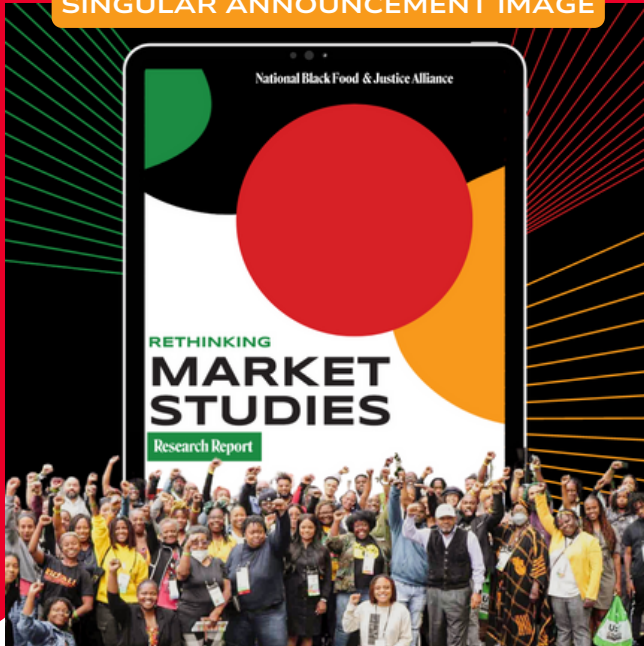
7: SOCIAL MEDIA TEMPLATES

PLEASE TAG @BLACKFOODJUSTICE

Click the photos to access the designs.

Copy the captions into social media or use our text to start crafting your own.

SINGULAR ANNOUNCEMENT IMAGE



Caption: The Rethinking Market Studies Research Project, led by the National Black Food and Justice Alliance, is a continuation of many conversations within Black-led co-op spaces, in which cooperators discussed the need for culturally relevant market studies and principles that support Black cooperative development.

Through research, analysis, and interviews with cooperators, market researchers, and public and private funders, we found that Black co-ops often receive market research that fails to convey their full worth to investors.

We seek to challenge the existing anti-Black, capitalist standards around market research and provide strategies to aid Black co-ops in obtaining the funding necessary to advance community development and Black food systems.

Read the full report at the link in bio.

CAROUSEL W/ INFO, QUOTES, ETC.



Caption: "We believe that a critical step towards dismantling systemic anti-Blackness lies in challenging the norms of market research," explains Dr. Jas Jackson, Co-Executive Director of the National Black Food and Justice Alliance. "The Rethinking Market Studies Research Project not only addresses the glaring gaps in understanding Black spending patterns but also equips our communities with the tools to reshape funding dynamics. By developing culturally relevant market studies, we aim to help Black cooperatives build power to create lasting change and forge pathways toward food sovereignty and economic justice."

Learn more about the market studies project at the link in bio. #RethinkingMarketStudies #Blackfoodcoops

Short Caption: "We believe that a critical step towards dismantling systemic anti-Blackness lies in challenging the norms of market research," explains Dr. Jas Jackson, Co-Executive Director of the National Black Food and Justice Alliance.

Learn more about the market studies project at the link in bio. #RethinkingMarketStudies #Blackfoodcoops

National Black Food and Justice Alliance (NBFJA) is a coalition of Black-led organizations aimed at developing Black leadership, supporting Black communities, organizing for Black self-determination, and building institutions for Black food sovereignty & liberation.

Research was completed by Angela Sayles, member of the NBFJA, For further information about the Rethinking Market Studies research, please reach out to info@blackfoodjustice.org.