

2024 CALIFORNIA FARMERS MARKET

“WE SELL ONLY WHAT WE PRODUCE”

VENDOR RULES

I. MARKET SPONSORSHIP/GOVERNANCE/MISSION

The California Farmers Market is sponsored by the St. Mary’s County Department of Economic Development (DED) and governed by the California Farmers Market Board (CFMB or “Board”), which is composed of representatives of the DED, vendors and community.

The market’s mission is to provide the St. Mary’s County (SMC) community access to locally-grown and produced products, provide producer-only direct retail market venues for local farmers and producers, support local, sustainable farms and farmers, and enhance connections between local farms, businesses and healthy communities.

II. GENERAL RULES

- A. Producer-Only Market.** The California Farmer’s Market is a producer-only market, with the exception explained in “B” following. A producer is defined as a farmer, employee, business partner or family member who is directly engaged in the growing, raising, and production of products sold. Producers may include agricultural and horticultural producers, home bakers, and small family-owned commercial bakeries. All products sold at the market must be grown, raised, or produced by the vendor. The resale of purchased items from another producer/business is prohibited. Produce must be fresh and of the best quality.
- B. Single Item Producers.** The one exception to the requirement that vendors must only sell his/her own produced products is where a “single item producer” wishes to have an approved CFM vendor sell his/her product. In this case, the arrangement must be approved by the CFMB, and the vendor must clearly label the source of the product so that shoppers are made aware that the vendor did not grow the product. Value added products would also be allowed under this exception, again, with the approval of the CFMB. Vendors shall not sell more than one single item product at a time. Single Item Producers need to submit an application that must be reviewed and approved by the CFMB. Single Item Producers will also pay the Annual Vendor Fee and must comply with these Vendor Rules.
- C. Locally-Produced Requirement.** All items must be grown, raised or produced on land or in a facility that is owned or leased by the vendor within St. Mary’s County, first and foremost, followed by the other southern Maryland counties: Calvert, Charles, Prince George’s and Anne Arundel.
- D. Eligible Products.** Eligible products are fresh/raw and value-added vendor produced-only products; and locally-produced, made from scratch foods, with a preference for locally-sourced farm ingredients, when available. Value-added products are defined as the processing or modification of a raw agricultural product to add value to it. Eligible products include, but are not limited to, fruits, vegetables, herbs, meat, eggs, dairy, berries, nuts, plants, flowers, ornamentals/wreaths, fiber, soaps, baked goods, home-made candies, honey, jams, jellies, and wine. Additional items may be allowed for sale, but only with explicit authorization from the CFMB and, if applicable, with approval from the Health Department or Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) (submit copies of approved permits).

- E. Application Process.** All persons (including Single Item Producers) intending to sell at the California Farmer’s Market must, prior to selling at the market, be approved by the CFMB. To be considered, mail a completed application to the DED (address on application). The application will be reviewed at the next available CFMB meeting, and a decision will be made at that meeting. The following considerations are taken into account by the CFMB when reviewing applications: producer-only, eligible products, current and preferred vendor/product mix, physical site capacity and desired annual growth, farm or business location (locally-produced), and the number of St. Mary’s County Farmer’s Market locations at which the applicant is a current vendor (see Board Policies and Procedures for more information regarding preferences).

Upon review of the new vendor application by the CFMB, the applicant will be notified of their status:

Approved – The application has been approved by the CFMB and the applicant may begin selling at the following market day once any additional outstanding forms and fees are submitted.

Rejected – The application has been rejected by the CFMB, who will note the reason for the rejection.

Hold – The application has been approved by the CFMB, but the applicant may not become a vendor until a future date, as determined by the CFMB. As an example, a “hold” application may be based on the applicant proposing to sell a product that is currently being sold by a sufficient number of current vendors.

It is recommended that anyone interested in becoming a new vendor visit the California Farmer’s Market to look at the mix of vendors and products sold to determine if their offering would be a good addition to the current mix.

- F. Compliance with County, State, and Federal Laws.** All producers and growers participating in the California Farmers Market must comply with the sanitary rules and regulations imposed by the Health Department and are responsible for complying with, or obtaining whatever licenses and/or permits are necessary to comply with, County, State and Federal rules and regulations. Sellers may use only certified scales to weigh and sell products at the market. Vendors may sell pre-weighed items as long as proof of scale certification is documented. In addition, vendors are responsible for declaring and paying any applicable state and federal sales tax on value-added items they sell at the California Farmers Market.
- G. Certifications & Licenses.** All items sold as “organic”, “organically-grown” or “containing organic ingredients” must meet the requirements of the USDA National Organic Program. Only USDA certified organic producers may display signs or describe their product using the word “organic.” Organic and all other certifications or licenses that are in association with the products that vendors intend to sell must submit proof of certification/licensure with their application and, if accepted, must have a copy of their certification and licenses with them at market.
- H. Farm/Operation Inspection.** All producers and growers are obliged to agree to inspections of their farms/production facilities by CFMB members or designee with prior notice and proper identification made at the farm. Inspection will be solely for the purpose of verifying that vendors are producing items they sell at the market. Before participating in the market, an initial inspection must be completed unless waived by the CFMB. Vendors are subject to subsequent inspections if deemed necessary by the CFMB. Value-added vendors are also subject to inspection at the discretion of the CFMB.

- I. Items for Sale List.** Vendors are responsible for submitting with their application all items they intend to sell during the market year. The vendor can sell only those items in their submitted list that have been approved by the CFMB. If the producer wants to sell new items that are not on their submitted list, they must submit an updated application, with new items, to the CFMB for approval prior to selling any new items at the market.
- J. Market Location/Season Dates/Days/Hours.** The California Farmers Market will operate at the parking lot located at BAE Systems, 22801 Three Notch Road, California, MD 20619. The market will operate beginning **Saturday, 27 April 2024 until Saturday, 23 November 2024.** Market days will be **Saturdays only from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.**
- K. Market Management.** DED's Agriculture and Seafood Division Manager is the CFM Market Manager. The Market Manager shall designate a vendor who will act on the Market Manager's behalf as the on-site manager during market days. This designee will oversee and record the daily activities at the market and generally be responsible for handling issues that arise during the market.
- L. Vendor Conduct at the Market**
- **Set-up Time.** The setting up of vendor stands may begin 90 minutes before opening time on the market day. The setting up process should not block or impede access of neighboring vendors to their spaces. All vendors must be open for business at 9:00 a.m.
 - **Space Assignment.** Each vendor is assigned a space by the Market Manager on behalf of the CFMB. Vendors shall set-up stands and stage products within their assigned spaces without interfering with customers' ability to access neighboring vendors' products.
 - **Selling Time.** Selling shall not begin before the official opening time, when the market bell is rung. Customers may begin bagging items prior to market opening, but no money shall be exchanged until the market opening bell has rung.
 - **Signage.** Each grower or producer at the market will display a sign identifying the name and location of their farm or business. They shall also display a price for each item for sale.
 - **Space Clean-up.** All vendors shall be responsible for the cleanliness of their selling space. All vendors agree to keep the market area reasonably free of any debris generated by market activity, and to remove all debris from the market premises at the end of each market day.
 - **Attendance.** Each vendor will specify in their application the dates of the first and last markets that they intend to start selling at the market. Vendors who will be unable to attend on a day they are scheduled to sell shall notify the Market Manager in advance to allow the Market Manager the opportunity to re-assign spaces so that gaps are minimized. A vendor with excessive absences may be suspended or expelled from the market by the CFMB. No fees will be refunded.
- M. Complaint/Rules Violation Resolution.** Any citizen or vendor who has a complaint regarding a vendor shall complete a Complaint Form. The CFMB shall review any complaint forms and determine if further review and investigation is necessary. The level of review and investigation shall be determined by the Board and may consist of personal interviews, site visits at the market, and/or site visits to a farm or business operation location. All complaints shall be resolved within 30 days of receipt of complaint. The CFMB has the discretion to sanction a vendor by removing

the vendor from the market for the rest of the season. The CFMB may use its judgement regarding other remedies that are deemed applicable and reasonable. Complaint forms must be signed and will not be considered confidential.

III. ANNUAL VENDOR FEE

Upon receipt of approval of the vendor application by the CFMB, the vendor shall submit payment of the Annual Vendor Fee to the **Commissioners for St. Mary's County**. The fee is \$40.00 for the market season. **The fee must be paid in advance of selling at the market.** All fees paid by mail secure your previous vendor space. Fees are used for advertising/signage aimed at promoting the market. If you are a returning vendor from the previous market year, you may submit your payment with the application. If you are a new vendor applying to the market for the first time, or if you are a vendor returning to the market who did not participate in the previous year market season, please do not submit your payment until you have been approved by the board.

IV. LIABILITY INSURANCE

MDA will provide a certificate of liability insurance for the market, which does not provide vendor product liability insurance. It is recommended that each vendor obtain product liability insurance.

V. MODIFICATIONS

The CFMB or the County may revise the Market Vendor Rules at any time, in accordance with Board Policies and Procedures.

Current as of 02/1/2024

**2024 CALIFORNIA FARMERS MARKET
VENDOR MARKET APPLICATION FORM**

Producer Name _____ **Name of Business** _____

Address _____

City _____ **State** ____ **Zip** _____ - _____

Address of Business (if different) _____

Phone (if applicable): Home () - _____ **Work** () - _____

Email address: _____

Sales Tax Number: (for nonfood items) _____

Range of Dates at market: START: _____ **END:** _____

Total acreage in production: _____

Crop/Product to be Sold	Quantity Produced (count/number, lbs, ea., dozen, rows, acres)	Availability (Month(s))

Growers: Prior to selling any item not included on this application you must update your application.

PRODUCER ONLY PLEDGE & MARKET AGREEMENT

I hereby acknowledge that I am the actual grower/producer of the produce/goods that I or my family intends to sell at the California Farmers Market. I will not attempt to resell any items produced by another business. If I or my family member does not sell at the Farmers Market, then (list) _____ is/are my employee(s) who may sell on my behalf.

I am responsible for complying with all county, state and Federal laws and regulations that are applicable to the sale of my products at the California Farmers Market.

I have read the California Farmers Market Rules and agree to abide by them. I understand that if I or anyone representing me (family member or listed employee) fails to so abide, the CFMB can withdraw my application or cancel my approval. I also understand that these guidelines and terms may be revised by the CFMB; and I must abide by the new guidelines and terms in order to continue my participation in the Farmers Market.

I certify that the information I have provided in this application is accurate and complete and any additional information I have submitted with this application is accurate and complete.

Signature

Date

Application Checklist: Please check all documents that you are submitting.

- Completed application
- Range of dates that you plan on selling at the market
- Copy of any applicable certifications/licenses/permits
- List of proposed products for sale
- List of employees that may sell for you at the market
- Signed Producer Only Pledge & Market Agreement

Please return application to:
St. Mary’s County, Dept. of Economic Development
ATTN: Agriculture and Seafood Division
P.O. Box 653, Governmental Center
Leonardtown, MD 20650-0653

Priscilla Leitch, Agricultural Manager
240-309-4021