

2008 Countryside Farmers' Markets Guidelines

About the Countryside Farmers' Markets

Welcome

The Countryside Farmers' Markets (CFM) are unique, producers-only farmers' markets established and managed by the Countryside Conservancy (CC). Our markets are unique in that they are located on the grounds of two remarkable properties of incomparable beauty: at Heritage Farms in Peninsula, nestled in the middle of the Cuyahoga Valley National Park; and Stan Hywet Hall & Gardens, a mansion and country estate of historical significance to the greater Akron area.

A Brief History

In 2004 the Countryside Conservancy opened its first 'Countryside Farmers' Market' in partnership with Heritage Farms in Peninsula. We had a respectable start that season with roughly 25 high quality vendors and were well received by the surrounding community. Since that time we have grown to include nearly 40 vendors, weekly cooking demonstrations, music and activities for children.

In 2005, the Countryside Conservancy was invited to open a second market in downtown Akron. In partnership with University Park Alliance, the Akron Beacon Journal, and Summa Health Systems the market set up at South Broadway and East Exchange. The following year, in an effort to increase foot traffic the market shifted its location to High Street and East Exchange and in 2007 the market was moved from downtown Akron to its current home at Stan Hywet Hall & Gardens. Here in the midst of a large residential population the market has begun to flourish, and meets the needs of both vendors and shoppers alike.

Our Purpose

The purposes of the Countryside Farmers' Markets are three-fold:

Provide a venue where local farmers, producers, artisans, and to a lesser extent, artists, can sell their high-quality products directly to the consumer.

Connect consumers with a wide array of locally grown and produced foods and goods in a setting that allows them to interact directly with the grower or producer, thereby re-connecting them directly to the source of their food.

Create a space that allows for community interaction and enjoyment, informal public education and civic engagement.

2008 Market Dates

Countryside Farmers' Market at Heritage Farms, 6050 Riverview Road in Peninsula, will operate every Saturday from May 31st until October 4th, from 9am until noon. We will also hold three Winter Markets at Heritage Farms on November 15th, November 22nd, and December 20th.

Countryside Farmers' Market at Stan Hywet Hall & Gardens, 714 N. Portage Path in Akron, will be open to the public every Thursday from June 26th until October 16th from 4pm until 7pm.

Criteria for Vendor Selection

General Acceptance

Countryside Conservancy is dedicated to creating a diverse market with only the highest quality products. Although we reserve unconditional discretion to accept or refuse anyone as a Countryside Farmers' Market vendor, we consider many factors when evaluating applications to sell at our markets.

Agriculture

Priority is given to those regional farmers and producers who bring product to market that is 100% grown and harvested on farmland that they own and/or operate

Preference will be given to the most local producer when a space becomes available at the market, without compromising quality

Farmers have priority over processed or on-premise prepared foods

Producers who use environmentally responsible growing practices and animal husbandry will be given priority

Product Quality and Presentation

Consistently high product quality: fresh, flavorful and ripe

Clean and attractive displays

Courteous, customer service oriented, and knowledgeable staff

Foster a connection between the producer and the consumer

Conduct and Compliance

History of compliance with market rules and federal, state and local regulations

Vendor conduct toward customers, fellow vendors, market staff and volunteers

Timely submission of application, licenses and other market correspondence

Diversity and Balance of Products

Unique, unusual or unrepresented products

Duplicate products may be denied entry

Food Safety

Adheres to the highest standards in safe food production and handling practices

Seniority

Number of years vendor has sold at CFM

Number of CFM in which vendor participates

Attendance record

Space availability

Admission to CFM is subject to space availability

Processed Foods

For the purposes of these guidelines, processed foods are defined as value-added farm foods, non-farm processed foods, and on-premise prepared foods.

In addition to the factors and criteria under General Acceptance, processed food and on-premise food must be submitted for product jury. This includes growers with value added products. The products are evaluated on the following factors:

Ingredient Sourcing (in order of priority) Products available locally are expected to be sourced locally **and** directly from their producers

- Grown by processor
- Sourced from CFM vendors
- Sourced locally and directly

Production

Priority will be given to products processed by the vendor over products produced by a second party or co-packer

Artisan Quality

- Flavor
- Smell
- Texture
- Unique and handmade of the highest quality

Market Needs

Market product balance and space availability

Labeling/Packaging

- Legal requirements (weight, ingredients, etc.)
- Low environmental impact
- Aesthetics (does not resemble commercial-style packaging)

Art

In addition to the factors and criteria under General Acceptance, artwork must be submitted for product jury. Second hand (flea-market type products) will not be permitted. The market will allow not more than 15% of spaces to be taken by artists.

Vendor Categories

Farmers are persons actively involved and invested in the planting, growing and harvesting of agricultural product on owned, rented, leased or share-cropped land.

Producers are persons actively involved and invested in the growing, raising, harvesting, fishing, wild-crafting or producing of the product sold at the market. A producer may sell fish and seafood products, wild-crafted/foraged products.

Processors are persons actively involved in the processing of product sold at the market. A processor may sell processed farm foods, value-added processed foods, and on-premise prepared foods.

Artists are persons actively involved in the creation of unique, hand-crafted products not meant for consumption.

Shared Farm Booths are informal groups of small-scale farmers and/or producers who may or may not share farming resources who apply to share a stall space at the market.

Market Rules

General Requirements for All Vendor Categories

Application & Agreement All prospective vendors must complete and sign a CFM vendor application and agreement.

Application Fee All vendors must submit a non-refundable \$25 check along with their application.

Membership Dues All vendors must submit a separate \$35 for membership at either of our markets, or \$50 for membership in both markets. These fees will be returned if not accepted as a market member.

Documentation All vendors must provide the market manager with copies of all relevant documents, such as licenses, certifications, permits, etc.

Product Declarations Vendors are required to submit a complete list of all products they wish to sell with their application. For farmers this includes listing specific varieties of your products. For processed and prepared food vendors this includes specific flavors and a list of ingredients and where they are sourced. Vendors **must** have pre-approval from the market manager before selling **any** product. **Note:** If vendors wish to add to their original list, they must submit additions to the market manager in writing for approval a minimum of one week before they wish to sell the product(s).

Insurance Requirement CFM is not responsible for any loss or damage incurred by vendors. Liability insurance, naming CFM as an additional insured, is required of all vendors. A copy of the Certificate of Insurance must be provided upon notification of acceptance prior to attending the market.

Approval of Selling Privileges Market's approval of selling privileges for a vendor is always for a specified period and never exceeds one market season.

Exclusivity CFM does not offer exclusive rights to any one vendor to sell any one product. Market customers generally benefit from having choices. However, if CFM believes that the number of vendors offering the same or similar products is excessive, duplicate products may be denied entry.

Reselling Wholesale purchase of items for resale at CFM is not permitted. CFM will operate as a *producers-only* farmers' market (with certain limited, intentional, and purposeful exceptions made at CFM's discretion). Market vendors are the growers and/or producers of the products which they sell.

Transfer of Space Vendors may not sublet stall space to others. Market membership is non-transferable to other CFM markets or vendors. If a vendor sells his or her business, market spaces may not be transferred to the new owner.

Number of Booths At present no vendors may occupy more than two 10x10 spaces.

Specific Vendor Category Requirements

Farmers If a farmer farms on land s/he rents or leases, s/he must provide the market with a copy of the signed lease agreements.

On-Premise Prepared Food Vendor On-premise prepared food vendors must provide CFM with a copy of a Mobile Retail Food Establishment License from the county in which their business is headquartered.

Processors Processors must provide CFM with all applicable copies of licenses as appropriate to their product. Vendors are responsible for knowing and acquiring all necessary licenses.

Shared Farm Booth Each shared farm booth member is required to have their own liability insurance. Each booth member must submit a separate application and pay a separate application fee and separate membership dues. Geographical proximity between farms in a shared farm booth is preferred and will be considered when reviewing applications. Signage at the market must include business names, locations and products of each shared farm booth member.

Products

All products must be grown, raised, produced, caught or gathered by the vendor in Ohio, and must be pre-approved before being sold at the market. Products from neighboring states may be permitted at the discretion of the market management on a case by case basis. The categories and definitions of products to be sold at the market are:

Farm Products are those items grown or raised by the farmer upon land that s/he controls through ownership, lease, rental or other legal agreement. These products are fresh fruits and vegetables, nuts, honey, eggs, herbs, meat and dairy products.

Processed Farm Products are farm products made from raw ingredients, a majority of which are grown and produced by the farmer. These products include all farm products that must in some way be processed including cheeses, dairy, meats, viticulture, dried fruits and vegetables, juices, jam or other processed agricultural and livestock food products. Some processed farm products are not processed by the farmer but are processed products which the vendor made from raw ingredients purchased from a local farmer which have been cooked, canned, dried, baked, preserved, or otherwise significantly treated. Those are referred to as value-added products. Thus, CFM recognizes the distinction between processed farm products made by the farmer and those value added products that are purchased and then processed.

Fish and Seafood Products are raised or caught by the producer in Ohio waters.

Nursery Products are grown or raised by the farmer upon land that s/he controls through ownership, lease, rental, or other legal agreement. Nursery products are fresh cut or potted flowers, bedding plants, seeds, perennials, annuals, trees, or shrubs that are propagated from seed, cuttings, bulbs, plugs or plant divisions.

Wild-crafted/Foraged Products are mushrooms, wild berries, ramps, fiddlehead ferns and other such edibles gathered from public or private land by the vendor.

Processed Food Products are: Processed Farm Products, Value-Added Foods, and On-Premise Prepared Food.

Processed Farm Products (See description above)

Value-Added Foods are processed products which the vendor made from raw ingredients which have been cooked, canned, dried, baked, preserved, including artisan baked goods, spreads, and condiments.

On-Premise Prepared Foods are freshly made foods available for sale and immediate consumption on site.

Processed Non-Food Agricultural Products are agricultural by-products which the vendor has grown/produced that are not edible, have been altered from their raw state, and are handcrafted or processed by the vendor. These items may include milk based soaps, beeswax candles, pelts, and fiber.

General Product Rules

All products must be grown, raised, produced or gathered by the vendor in Ohio, except as otherwise provided in this document, or deemed appropriate by market management.

Products grown or processed using genetically modified seeds may not be sold at the market.

On occasion, to attract particular types of products not otherwise available at the market, the market may allow consignment arrangements or other sales by persons other than those who grow, raise, produce or gather the product.

On a limited basis, the market may allow some booths that offer services for cooks and gardeners.

All products shall be of good quality as determined by market management.

All products must be approved by market management for sale at the market.

CFM reserves the right to make product/booth inspections at the market at any time to ensure compliance with market rules.

Vendors wishing to add products to their application mid-season should submit a written request for approval at least one week prior to when they wish to sell it.

Specific Product Rules

Fruit and vegetable farmers must submit a list of the varieties of the produce they wish to sell at the market. You may use the form included in the application or attach a copy of seed orders or other similar records.

Livestock or dairy products containing growth hormones, such as rBGH, may not be sold at the market.

All meat and dairy products must be labeled in accordance with ODA guidelines and from an appropriately licensed processing facility.

Eggs must be labeled in accordance with ODA regulations and vendors are required to have a Mobile Retail Food Establishment License or a Temporary Retail Food Establishment License.

Vendors of Processed Farm Products, Value-Added Products, and On-Premise Prepared Food Products must:

- List all products to be sold at the market on their application
- List all sources of ingredients in the products to be sold at the market. It is expected that the vendor will use raw ingredients that are grown locally, as appropriate for the market.
- Detail any part of the processing not done by the vendor and provide appropriate documentation of any second party processor or co-packer.
- Packaged processed foods must follow all labeling requirements as set forth by the ODA.
- Priority will be given to vendors who use products from participating farms, process the product themselves, and who highlight regional produce and seasonal ingredients.
- If a vendor would like to introduce a new product into their mix, the new product must be juried a minimum of one week before selling it at the market.

Vendors of Processed Non-Food Agricultural Products must:

- Vendor must list all Processed Non-Food Agricultural Products on their application and these products must be approved in advance by market management.
- Vendor is required to specify the sources of the components of the products.
- Products must be handcrafted or processed by the vendor.
- Wool/yarn must be spun by the vendor, preferably from the vendors own animals.
- Pelts must be from the vendors own animals.

Product Additions Vendors wishing to add products to their application mid season should submit a written request for approval at least one week prior to when they wish to sell it.

General Vendor Guidelines

Farmers and producers are encouraged to use environmentally responsible methods of production.

Customer queries regarding farming practices should be answered factually and knowledgeably.

Vendors are discouraged from giving produce or other items away for free or at below-cost pricing, thus undercutting potential sales of other vendors. This does not include sampling.

Vendors are expected to behave courteously to customers, other vendors, market staff and volunteers, and to conduct themselves professionally at all times. Vendors are not to publicly disparage other vendors, products or markets.

Vendors are responsible for keeping their space clean and attractive during market hours and must clean up their space after the market closes, including picking up any trash in the area and disposing of it in the market trash cans.

In order to measure the market's growth and better represent CFM to outside entities, we request your help in compiling sales figures. Vendors should submit gross sales forms along with market fees each week prior to leaving the market site.

Vendors may not sell products before the opening bell.

Specific Vendor Rules

Compliance with Health, Safety and Related Laws It is expected that all vendors and their employees at the market will inform themselves about and comply with federal, state and local health regulations and licensing requirements governing the production, display, distribution, sampling and sale of their products.

Permits and Licenses Vendors shall provide CFM with copies of any permits and licenses applicable to the sale of their products. Some examples are nursery licenses for bedding plants, organic certification, mobile retail food establishment licenses, and home bakery licenses.

Organic Certification Vendors wishing to use the term organic must submit a copy of their certification with their application, and post the certification on market days. Vendors without certification may not make such claims. Vendors of organic produce claiming exemption based on sales of under \$5000 will need to sign an affidavit showing eligibility for the exemption and exclusions from certification.

Uncertified Claims Written and verbal declarations regarding pesticide or chemical use which cannot be certified such as unsprayed, no spray, and pesticide free will need a written statement, submitted with the vendor application, attesting how these procedures are followed. Vendors are encouraged but not required to produce the written statement about production methods for any consumer who requests it and have copies of the statement available in his/her stall.

Offensive Marketing Techniques Vendors are not permitted to use the following techniques while at the market: hawking, calling attention to products in a loud repetitive public manner, and selling products in an aggressive way.

Space Assignment The market manager will make every effort to give vendors regular locations from week to week. Due to the flux of vendor attendance it is not always possible to do so. Understanding in this matter is appreciated.

Late Arrivals & No-Shows Vendors arriving after the market has opened may be denied a space at the market. Vendors who have reserved a space for the week but do not show up without calling, will be required to pay the \$15 minimum weekly fee, and may be denied a space at the market in the future. Vendors unable to make it to the market for whatever reason are required to notify market management no later than 24 hours in advance, except in cases of emergency. Please use the market cell phone to notify market staff and volunteers of late arrival or emergencies: 330.524.5615.

Operations Guidelines Vendors are responsible for informing themselves and their staff, and expected to comply with individual market guidelines listed in this document. **These guidelines are part of the market rules.**

Enforcement

1. All rules of the market are enforced by the market manager or his/her designee, who has ultimate on-site authority. Complaints or problems should be directed to the market manager in a timely manner.
2. CFM reserves the right to visit and inspect the farm or business of any vendor and to request any documents verifying business or employee status. Visits will be made with prior notification when possible, and inspections will only be conducted with vendor present.
3. Customer complaints will be forwarded to vendors and kept on file. Complaints may result in disciplinary action including removal from market.
4. The market management reserves the right to make exception to these rules and guidelines at its discretion.
5. Any instance of physical violence will result in immediate suspension from the market.

Grievance Procedures

1. Complaints or problems should be directed to the market management in a timely manner that is not disruptive to the market.
2. Vendors who have concerns regarding other vendor compliance, market staff, safety or policies should complete a concern form. Forms will be available at the CFM Information booth. Each form is reviewed by the market manager and/or the Countryside Conservancy's Executive Director or Board when appropriate. The concerned vendor will receive a response within two weeks.
3. A vendor may appeal any decision of the market manager concerning violation of these rules within 30 days. An appeal must be presented in writing to the Countryside Conservancy's Executive Director. A decision by the ED (after informing the Board if appropriate) shall be issued within 30 days of receipt and constitute a final and binding decision of any appeal.

Product Challenge

Insuring the integrity of the products at our markets is of the utmost importance to us. In order to assist us with addressing legitimate concerns regarding product representation by fellow vendors the following product challenge procedures have been established.

1. Product challenges may be made for misrepresentation of product by a vendor. Vendors may submit a written product challenge form when they believe another vendor is misrepresenting his/her product.
2. A product challenge must be signed by the person bringing the challenge and preferably be supported by physical and verbal evidence of the offense. The product challenge must be made on the day of, or within the week, the violation is observed; challenges alleging wrongdoings on past occasions will not be accepted.
3. There is a \$100 filing fee, which may be shared by a group of vendors. The fee will be returned to the challenger(s) if the claim is verified.
4. A vendor receiving a product challenge must respond to the challenge in writing. Failure to admit or deny a challenge may result in a determination that the challenge is valid.

5. The market manager and ED will conduct a farm site visit in a timely manner to make a determination of the product challenge. If market management deems it necessary, a third party farm inspector will be employed.
6. Product challenge forms are available at the CFM market information booth. Because of their sensitive nature they must be returned directly to the market manager.
7. If a vendor is found in violation of product rules, the vendor will be fined, suspended or removed from the market at the discretion of the market management.

Fee Structure

All membership fees will be used to support the development, operation and promotion of the Countryside Farmers' Markets.

Application Fees Due to increasing interest from prospective vendors and the subsequent increased level of attention required to process and verify information presented in vendor applications, a \$25 non-refundable application fee made payable to Countryside Conservancy must accompany all applications. Each member of a Shared Farm Booth is required to pay a separate \$25 application fee. Vendors applying to sell at multiple CFM markets need only pay one application fee. **The fee for applications submitted after April 4th is \$30.**

Annual Membership Dues Annual dues of \$35 for one market and \$50 for both markets will be due upon filing an application for membership and space reservation. A separate check payable to the Countryside Conservancy should be included with the application. It will be returned if you are not accepted into the market.

Weekly Vendor Space Fees In addition to the membership fee, CFM's weekly vendor space fee shall be 6% of daily sales, with a minimum fee due of \$15 per market **per space**. (Each space is 10x10; if you occupy 2 spaces, your weekly minimum will be \$30, etc.) Vendors' calculation and payment of their sales fee will be paid by check or cash at the close of each market day and shall be done on the honor system. Vendors are responsible for paying their weekly market fees to the market management before leaving the market area at the end of the market day. Until weekly fees are received by the market manager, vendors' reservations for the next week's market will not be kept.

Shared Farm Booth Fees Each member of a shared farm booth is responsible for application fees as well as membership fees. Weekly fees will be in accordance with other booths, \$15 weekly minimum **per space**. We request individual sales information for tracking purposes only, but do not require each vendor to submit weekly fees individually.

Returned Check Policy Checks returned for non-sufficient funds (NSF) will be charged a \$25 fee. Vendor will not be permitted to attend the market until the matter is resolved.

Unpaid Fees Vendors with unpaid fees due at the end of the season will not be allowed to return the following year.

Community Booths Educational, community service, and non-profit organizations are eligible to participate in the market, subject to review and approval by market managers – provided space is available. Such organizations will be allowed participation up to once per month per market without incurring fees. Organizations will be required to pay CFM's annual membership fee if participating more than monthly during the season, and the weekly sales fee will be applied and charged if products are sold. Waiving of the fees may be made at the market manager's discretion, and may include instances where a service is being provided to market patrons.

Operations Guidelines

If members with space reservations cannot attend a market, they should notify market managers no later than 24 hours in advance, except in the case of emergencies. If no notice is given, the \$15 minimum weekly space fee must be paid before the vendor may resume market attendance. Please use the market cell phone to call and apprise us of any situation that would delay you or prevent your participation for the day. 330.524.5615

Space Allocation

- Each vendor space is 10'x10'.
- Season-long vendors will generally be allowed the same space from week to week, but may be asked to move to accommodate the needs of the market as a whole.
- Space assignments will be made at the discretion of the market manager in such manner as s/he believes will best serve the general needs of all vendors and customers.
- Allocation of spaces with adjoining parking will be made as fairly as possible.
- Guarantees of spaces with adjoining parking can not be made.

Tents & Equipment

- Vendors must provide and set-up their own 10'x10' tent to cover their display. "Pop-up" tents are preferred over umbrellas (they are simple, fast, and stable). We also recommend the color of the tent to be white since it will brighten your sales space.
- Vendors must provide their own tables and equipment necessary for displays.
- Vendors are responsible for the transportation and storage of their equipment.
- Vendors are responsible for providing weights for tents during windy or otherwise inclement weather. CFM markets are held rain or shine, and will only be cancelled if the weather poses a danger to vendors and/or customers.
- Vendors selling products by the pound must use a certified scale. Vendors are responsible for obtaining their own scale certification.

Arrival & Departure

- Vendors must arrive and set up no less than 30 minutes or more than 90 minutes prior to the opening of the market.
- Vendors should clean up and leave promptly after the end of the market.
- Vendors may not tear down tables and displays until the end of the market.
- Vendors may not move their vehicles in or out of the market area during the hours of operation.
- Once your vehicle is parked, the motor must be turned off during market operation.

Booth Set-Up & Display

- Each producer shall display a sign which states the producer's name and farm/business location.
- Vendors should have their prices displayed.
- Vendors may not spill into another space without the permission of the market manager and neighboring vendors.

- Vendors are responsible for maintaining the appearance and cleanliness of their own spaces, tables, and displays. They are also responsible for cleaning up their space before leaving.
- Vendors should dress and act in a professional manner at all times during the market.
- There will be NO smoking by vendors in any stall space.
- CFM reserves the right to require vendors to change their space or display to assure safety and compliance with market rules.

Application Deadlines & Inquiries

Applications to participate in the Countryside Farmers' Markets for the 2008 season should be submitted by **April 4th**, along with application fees and membership fees.

Application forms, relevant licenses, proof of insurance and product declarations should be completed and mailed to:

Countryside Farmers' Markets
2179 Everett Road
Peninsula, Ohio 44264

Vendors will not be considered for participation until all required information is submitted.

Market selections for new applicants will be made in a timely fashion.

Applications will continue to be accepted throughout the market season, and new vendors will be selected in accordance with the selection criteria and depending on the availability of space and/or demand for specific products. **The fee for applications submitted after April 4th is \$30.**

Inquiries regarding product needs and space availability at the markets should be directed to Beth Knorr, Market Manager. 330.657.2538 or farmersmarket@cvcountryside.org