

Alberta Approved Farmers' Market Rules

It is important that the market operates under a set of rules that guide the operation of the market and the behavior of vendors and staff. Clear rules that are applied consistently will help to avoid conflict.

Individual market rules may not contradict the Guidelines for Alberta Approved Farmers' Markets (copy available on the www.sunnygirl.ca website, or by contacting Alberta Agriculture and Forestry, Farmers' Market Specialist at 780-853-8223).

Market managers, sponsors and vendors should all be involved in the development and ongoing review of the market rules.

Market managers must be given support to enforce the rules. When making rules for the operation of your market you will want to address the following items as well as any others that are unique to the operation of your market.

Logistics:

- Location
- Day of the week
- Hours of operation
- Season start and finish
- Rain or shine market if outdoors

Set up time:

- When will the doors be open for vendors to start arriving
- When do vendors have to be set up by
- How long do vendors have to tear down

Vendor parking:

- Loading and unloading
- Parking during market hours

Christmas markets or other special markets if any:

- Who gets priority (ie members first)
- Different stall fee for special markets?
- Hours and day of the week, etc.
- Special markets could have their own set of rules that incorporates the normal rules plus any additional rules specific to the special markets.

Stall rental fees:

- Weekly, monthly, seasonal
- Paid when?
- NSF cheques

Stall:

- Table supplied or bring own
- Table covering needed – supplied or bring own
- Stall size
- Height of displays
- Additional free-standing displays
- Tent if outdoor market – supplied or bring own, use of sidewalls, requirement to weigh down tent

Vendor behavior policies:

- Vendors selling before the market officially starts (customers and/or other vendors)
- Leaving before the market is over
- Conflict with other vendors
- Customer complaints
- Consequences: 3 strikes rule vs immediate dismissal –
 - Types of behavior that warrant warnings and types of behavior resulting in immediate dismissal
 - Whose decision – manager; manager and board member; vendor committee, etc?
 - Appeal process
- Vendors' children in the market
- “Vendors should be neat and clean in appearance, and must conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times. Any **complaints** received concerning unprofessional conduct, including the use of profane language, smoking, cleanliness of the vendor or vendors' product, etc., may be considered grounds for dismissal from the market. Insubordination, the consumption of alcohol or drugs, and fighting during the market will be cause for immediate dismissal. No warnings are required nor are refunds given.”
Sample policy re-printed with permission from Salisbury Farmers' Market policies
- Vendors responsibilities:
 - Cleanliness of space during the market
 - Cleaning their space after market end
 - Providing garbage cans if handing out samples
 - Providing product for draws, if any

Vendor & Product signage:

- Required or not
- Supplied or not

Market membership:

- Yes or no
- Cost, if any
- Immediately or after specified number of markets
- Membership per vendor/business or individual

Vendor meetings:

- Number and frequency
- Voting rights

Vendor and Product mix:

- *It is the responsibility of the market to decide who and what products are available.*
- Application process
 - manager decides; manager + committee, etc?
 - sign-off agreeing to the rules but don't have them sign at the bottom of the rules themselves because you want them to keep a copy of the rules
- Exclusivity policy
- State policy – following 80/20; all make it bake it grow it EXCEPT...; specific percentages per category of food, agriculture, craft and other, etc.
- Introduction of new products during the year – allowed or by permission only. Repercussions if breach the policy
- Vendor visits – reserve the right to verify vendor production by visiting their operations

Policy for allocation of stall space:

- Whose decision – manager, committee, etc.
- Maximum number of tables/spaces allowed
- Who decides how many spaces and where placed

Vendor insurance:

- Required at your market?
- *Talk to insurance carrier because some market policies require vendor insurance*
- Waiver in lieu of insurance? See Salisbury Farmers' Market, City Market on 104, Beverly Farmers' Market, etc. for examples of vendor waivers.
- *Talk to lawyer about designing a waiver*

Compliance with legislation

- Compliance is mandatory; it is not an option to be non-compliant but could include information on specific regulations you want the vendors to follow
- Sampling rules – pre-cut, pre-cooked and warmed, toothpicks or single use; use of gloves; toothpicks; time/temperature, etc
- Hand washing stations – who needs, how big, etc
- Labelling – food and textile
- Eggs
- Meat
- Products containing dairy
- Food coverings
- Frozen products
- Products requiring coolers