

METHOW VALLEY FARMERS MARKET HANDBOOK AND GUIDELINES

1.0 MISSION

The purpose of the Methow Valley Farmer's Market is to promote and encourage the development of local, sustainable agriculture, food processing, and artisan crafts grown and produced in Okanogan County, by providing and administering a seasonal marketplace for the products of these activities.

2.0 APPLICATIONS

Every prospective vendor must fill out a vendor application and pay their yearly application processing fee IN ADVANCE of selling at the Market. If a vendor arrives without having submitted an application and/or have not paid their application processing fee, they will NOT be able to set up a booth until these requirements are met. Vendors will be given an application to fill out, but will not be allowed to enter the Market Area and set up until the application has been completed and approved. Approval received at the Market is probationary, good only for that week; the vendor may NOT participate in any following Market unless and until they have been advised of Board approval.

The following criteria are used to determine whether or not a vendor application will be considered:

- 1. Applicant must reside in Okanogan County for a period of 6 months per year minimum.**
- 2. Applicant has no outstanding/delinquent fees from the previous season.**
- 3. Applicant's products must meet the hand grown/handmade/handcrafted criteria per applicable vendor type description.**
- 4. Products must be locally grown, handmade, or handcrafted. Produce and Food Products must be grown and processed in Okanogan County.**

Membership is limited to individuals or households. Applicants in partnerships, associations, and businesses with established storefronts, etc., must apply to and receive specific approval from the Market Board.

It is recognized that there may be legitimate exceptions to acceptance criteria as stated, and the Market desires to be inclusive rather than exclusive in approach. Potential exceptions will be considered by the Market's Board of Directors on a case-by-case basis. Any exceptions granted will be good for the current Market season only.

Long-standing Vendors (qualifying market attendance for 3+ years) who also operate a storefront within Okanogan County may apply for an exception to the annual market season rule stated above. If granted the exception, the Board reserves the right to remove or revoke the exception if said Vendor does not make qualifying market attendance numbers or other unforeseen circumstances that are deemed inequitable to other market vendors.

2.1 VENDOR TYPES

All vendors are expected to behave in a professional manner that fosters a sense of Market community and camaraderie and a spirit of cooperative involvement that promotes the Market as a whole to the community it serves. Our farmer's market is a long-standing community institution that encourages and promotes a diverse, safe, respectful, and family friendly environment. Please be kind and courteous to other vendors and market attendees.

2.1.1 Farmers

Farmer members are persons who raise produce (vegetables, fruits, herbs, flowers, or nursery crops) from seed or plants, and care for, cultivate, and harvest the crops offered for sale at MVFM in Okanogan County. Also in this category are beekeepers, egg farmers, livestock and poultry farmers, and farmers who process their own raw materials into “value-added” items.

Farmer Members are not to sell anything produced by another farmer, individual, or household without Board approval. Nursery plants sold must have been in the care and possession of the vendor for at least 60 days prior to selling. **Produce being sold as organic is expected to meet the USDA definition of organic.** Farmer vendors must make at least 80% of their annual gross Farmers’ Market revenue from the products they raise, (as opposed to crafts they may make), to qualify for the Farmer category of membership. Farmers with seasonal products, who are also crafters, will be assigned to the farmer category only when their product is in season and it is their primary item at the Market. All craft items must fully meet the criteria for crafted items.

2.1.2 Crafters

Crafters are persons who craft with their own hands the products they offer for sale at the Farmers’ Market. To qualify as a crafter, a majority of the tools and equipment used must require skills and personal handling by the crafter. Work should be handmade with appropriate tools, showing imagination, skill, and the mark of the craftsman’s individuality. Any items made from kits, commercially available plans or transfers, and items that are or appear to be mechanically mass-produced are not allowed. The Market Master and Board of Directors reserve the right to disqualify craft items from being offered for sale at the MV Farmers’ Market based on these standards.

2.1.3 Food Processors

Food Processors are persons offering food products that they have processed themselves into the product being offered for sale at the Market, including animal products (e.g., meats). These products may be “ready-to-eat”, pre-packaged, or a combination of both. A Food Processor is required to meet all Local, County, State, and Federal regulations before selling their products at Market. It is the vendor’s responsibility to be familiar with Local, County, State, and Federal health regulations regarding their products, to be in compliance with those regulations. Food

Processors must have licensing and permits available to show the Health Department upon inspection. The Okanogan County Health Inspector makes routine visits to the MVFM.

2.1.4 Service Providers

Service Providers offer special services to customers (e.g., knife sharpening, lock-smithing, face painting.). Personal hands-on services (e.g., haircutting, massage, tattooing) will be considered on a case by case basis and must have Board approval before attending a market session. Service providers may only sell items if they comply with the criteria for crafters, farmers or food providers. Service Providers seeking exceptions must request approval through a written request made to the Board.

2.1.5 Importers/Resellers

Only importer/reseller vendors who have been grandfathered into the Market will be considered in this category. NO ADDITIONAL importer/reseller vendors will be allowed. Their continued participation in the Market as resellers is based upon their compliance with the following guidelines.

1. Importers/Resellers must at each Market VISIBLY display a sign at least 8x10 in size that identifies: (a) where products were obtained (e.g., country of origin), and (b) how and by whom the products were made.
2. Pricing must be consistent with comparable locally made products.

Failure to comply with these requirements may result in permanent expulsion from the Market.

2.1.6 Entertainers

Entertainers must coordinate with the Market Master for scheduling times and performance locations within the Market. Pre-scheduling is required. Vendors will not play music at their booth.

2.1.7 Guest Vendors

The Board of Directors will consider out-of-area vendor applications on an exception basis, with a goal of letting otherwise unavailable or unique products be offered for purchase. All out of area vendor applications must receive Board review and approval and have the associated application processing fee paid prior to a guest vendor arriving at the Market. Approved guest vendors may sell fruits, vegetables, processed food, and artisan crafts that are not available locally. Board approval will include specific itemization of the products that may be sold. Guest vendors are prohibited from augmenting their sales with products that are available from other vendors who meet the Market's residency requirements. Failure to follow this policy will result in permanent expulsion from the Market. The Board has the authority to limit the number of guest vendors for any given Market; all guest vendors must receive approval for specific, scheduled Market days. Any given guest vendor will be limited to four Markets in any given year.

2.1.8 Art, Non-Profit, and Civic Groups

“Community Groups” are allowed stall space as a courtesy to the community and at the sole discretion of the Market’s Board of Directors. A special application must be submitted which explains the purpose of the organization and describes the activities planned for the Market booth. In order to be accepted, the application must show that one or more of the following is true:

1. The purpose of the Community Group is consistent with the Market’s mission as stated in this handbook.
2. The requested stall will serve the community.
3. The requested stall will enhance the MVFM in some way.

Any activity that might compete or interfere with vendors will not be allowed. Community groups may not sell any items, may not give away any items other than literature, and must confine their activities to their assigned booth space. Political advocacy, proselytizing, and promotion of an ideology are not considered compatible with the purpose of the Market. Vendors have priority over Community Groups for stall space. Due to space limitations, all community group participation must be pre-scheduled through the Market Aide; pre-scheduling will be limited to four community groups per Market session. Also, Community Groups will be limited to 4 weekend dates during the market season. It is therefore recommended that applications be submitted early in the season. There is no application processing fee for Community Groups but the appropriate weekly stall fee applies. Approved Community Groups are non-voting Market guests. The Board of Directors may revoke an approved Community Group application at any time at its sole discretion.

2.2 AGENTS

An agent may sell a vendor member’s product or produce provided that the vendor member himself/herself sells at Market a minimum three out of four weeks in each month of attendance. One vendor may not sell for another vendor member except in the case of an emergency or short breaks during the day.

3.0 STALLS AND STALL ASSIGNMENT

Market stalls are located in the Methow Valley Community Center/Senior Citizens Center parking lot off of Highway 20 in Twisp. To avoid traffic jams, vendors are asked to pull in unload and remove their vehicle before setting up their booth. At closing vehicles will not be allowed into the market until 12:15pm and vendors are asked to take down their booth and pack it up before bringing vehicles into the market. No vehicles are allowed along the strip between the parking lot and Highway 20. Vendors are not allowed to park in this space. Vendors are not allowed to stop, unload or park along Highway 20. Once the orange cones are in place, vehicles will not be allowed into the market and must offload outside the market.

Stall size is 10 feet of frontage. Each vendor is allowed one space only. The table and set out display must all be behind the marked Fire Lane. Those vendors who do not have vehicle parking are encouraged to park on Glover Street or further away to encourage customer use of prime parking spots. Vendors are expected to remove all produce scraps, garbage, cigarette butts, etc. at the end of each Market day, leaving the stall area and surrounding grounds clean.

3.1 STALL ASSIGNMENT

The Market Master will make stall assignments as follows:

1. All vendors requesting an assigned stall space must submit their completed application and annual application processing fee postmarked by April 1st of the current Market year.
2. The Market Master is responsible for laying out general market areas per vendor type based on history of use.
3. Vendors who wish to change stall assignments may indicate such on their annual application. When a space becomes available, the vendor next in line based on the seniority will have the "right of first refusal".
4. The Market Master will make initial stall assignments, on which all future stall assignments will be based, in accordance with seniority, history of use, and general area.
5. No first-year Market vendor will receive an assigned space. The Market Master will place them each week based on vendor type and space availability.
6. Non-farmer vendors with at least 19 market days the previous year are eligible for an assigned space.
7. Farmer vendors with at least 10 market days the previous year are eligible for an assigned space.
8. A seniority point will be awarded for each market attended; seniority is cumulative across all Market years attended.
9. If the Air Quality Index (AQI) is 150 or higher in Twisp at any point between 5-7am on the morning of Market, those vendors not wanting to expose themselves to the smoke are able to receive an Attendance Credit for that day.
10. Daily cut-off time for vendors with assigned stalls to arrive to secure their stalls will be 7:30 a.m.

NOTE: Front gate access off Highway 20 will be allowed only until 7:30 a.m. Moving or driving through cones/barricade is strictly prohibited and may result in loss of assigned space.

11. Vendors without assigned stalls must get a weekly assignment, given on a first-come, first-served basis, by the Market Master. Vendors should arrive by 7 o'clock and park in the alley across from the Commons to wait for their stall assignment.
12. All vendors with assigned stalls are asked to notify Market Master Willie Getz, 996-2747, no later than 5:00 p.m. Friday if they will not be at that week's market, so the space can be re-assigned.
13. Vendors may take a one-season sabbatical without losing seniority points. They will not gain seniority points for that year. Upon returning, they will be allowed to resume use of their assigned space.
14. The Board reserves the right to consider unique situations and requirements regarding stall assignments on a case-by-case basis.
15. Canopies must be secured with weights (weighing at least 25# per leg) tied to the 4 legs of the canopy. Vendors who don't have weights will be required to vend without their canopies.

3.2 STALL FEES

Stall fees are established by the Market's Board of Directors prior to the beginning of each Market season. The stall fee for each Market is \$17.00 per space. The Market Master will collect fees at each Market. Upon payment, the vendor will PRINT the Market roll sheet with the Vendor Name on their Market Vendor Application (not their business name). The stall fee for one-time vendors is the same as for regular members. There is a NSF fee of \$40 for all returned check.

GENERAL MARKET GUIDELINES

4.0 PRICING

Pricing of goods at the Market is the responsibility of the individual vendor. “Dumping” is strongly discouraged. “Dumping” is the act of lowering prices to the point that no one else can sell similar goods competitively. There will be no space made available to those who wish to give away produce or other food at the Market. If a (potential) vendor has goods to give away, the Market Master or any Board Member can recommend places in the community that accept donations.

4.1 LIVESTOCK

The sale or giveaway of livestock or pets will be allowed only in contained areas designated by the Master. Animals must be confined. Any waste produced must be removed from the Market grounds at the responsibility of the owner. The area must be left fully clean.

4.2 ALCOHOL, DRUGS, AND FIREARMS

No alcohol, drugs or firearms are permitted with the exception of firearms carried by law enforcement officers. Illegal activities are prohibited and will be reported to the proper authorities.

5.0 COMPLAINT HANDLING and GRIEVANCE REPORTING

Should a vendor, Market staff person, or a Market Board member feel their rights have been violated, or feel that another vendor, Market staff person, or Board member has acted outside the authority of their position, or in any way which has harmed the Farmers’ Market as a whole, the appeal or complaint must be made in writing, utilizing a grievance form available from the Market Master or Aide.

This form requires that its submitter:

1. Provide a clear and specific description of the problem.
2. Provide the name(s) of the person(s) involved, and the name of the person bringing the appeal or complaint.
3. State the incident date(s).
4. Identify witness (es), and provide written witness statements, if possible.
5. Provide a description of the ways in which the aggrieved person has attempted to resolve the problem (if applicable).
6. Describe the action the aggrieved person would like to see taken (if applicable).
7. Provide copies of the written appeal/complaint to the Board of Directors and to all persons involved in the matter.
8. Mail a copy of the completed form to MVFM PO Box 1085 Twisp, WA 98856

5.1 SUSPENSION OR TERMINATION

The Market Master and/or Board of Directors are empowered to expel members who do not abide by the rules of the Market as defined in this Policy Handbook. The decision to expel a member may be reversed by a majority vote at any Board meeting. Failure to pay annual processing fee will result in termination of membership for that year.

5.2 MARKET ENFORCEMENT

At the Market site, the Market Master, or any Board member may determine if a vendor is failing to adhere to the Market policies set forth in this handbook:

- First offense – Verbal warning
- Second offense – Written warning. May include expulsion from Market.
- Third Offense – Expulsion.

Appeals may be handled as directed under “Grievance Procedures” section. The Market management reserves the right to visit any vendor, farmer or crafter, on the vendor’s production site for inspection to ensure that the vendor is adhering to Market policies, including demonstration of production methods by the vendor, if deemed appropriate.

6. The MVFM Board of Directors

The Board of Directors of the Methow Valley Farmers Market are nominated and voted on by the total number of vendors of the Market every year. To run for the Board, a vendor must have completed one season of vending at MVFM. Board positions will be for a 3-year term. The Board of Directors shall have a Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary nominated by and voted on other Board members at the annual Board meeting.

