



Forsyth Farmers' Market Statement on Vendor Selection

Forsyth Farmers' Market, Inc., a Georgia not-for-profit corporation, operates the Forsyth Farmers' Market as a means to further its mission of increasing understanding and participation in a local food system that supports sustainable production and increases access to local products. Applicants to Forsyth Farmers' Market will be reviewed by a committee to decide if they are a good fit based on the criteria discussed below. FFM has limited resources and will not be able to accommodate every vendor who applies.

****Applicants will receive a response not less than 2 weeks after their application is received, which may be a request for more information.*

1. Does the product help us accomplish our mission?

There are two basic parts to what FFM is trying to accomplish – to foster a deep and more thoughtful engagement with food and to develop a food system we believe will be healthier for everyone in the long run.

- a. We believe vendors should be familiar with the source of their product and the effort it takes to get it to market so that they can have a more honest and authentic interaction with customers. For this reason we do not permit vendors who are strictly re-selling someone else's product.
- b. There are many issues to be considered regarding the type of food system that we want to encourage.
 - One is the idea of local – both to foster more intimate relationships with the farmer and also to cut down on the carbon footprint of consumption. To this end **FFM has recently decided to institute a 200 mile radius of eligibility for our vendors.** We have also begun to make more frequent farm visits to verify the source of products. It is not feasible for us to travel great distances. In addition, we are happy to say that more and more food made in our area is becoming available which negates the need for so many miles of transport.
 - We may also take farming methods into account. If we have one spot available and/or two applicants with similar products, we will favor growers who do not use petro-chemicals, although natural growing methods are not currently required for all our vendors.
 - In terms of prepared foods, we consider whether or not the production of the goods in question helps to build our local food economy. While we acknowledge that many ingredients needed for commercially prepared food may not be available in our region, our goal is to try to remedy this. We want to see possible vendors try to obtain and use local or regional ingredients.

2. Will the product and/or vendor fit with current market logistics?

The market cannot be successful unless the farmers and producers are making a profit. While we try to constantly increase the number of shoppers, we are not interested in unlimited duplicates of a particular product and may reject a vendor because we do not see the need for more of what they are selling. We also try to gauge what we think consumer demand is for the product in question.

Because setting up and breaking down is arduous and time consuming, we may not be able to accommodate large vendors that will need lots of help.

3. Does the product and/or vendor fit within our rules?

All products and vendors must abide by both the relevant local and state regulations and conform to the rules of the FFM. A full copy of our rules is available on our website.

4. How healthy is the product?

While health education is not a primary part of our mission, we recognize that our food system is closely connected to the health of our communities. Our focus is on increasing access to whole and wholesome foods. Prepared foods that are high in sugar, refined ingredients, or added fats are not likely to be accepted.