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**Rules for your Farmers Market**

There are specific guidelines that should be within all market rules. They should be written to be very clear, concise and unambiguous. There should be no question on just what the rules require. In addition, there are specific subjects that should be in market rules to ensure they are complete and enforceable.

Use the guidelines and definitions in this document to help you create rules for the operation of your market. If you already have rules for your market, review them against this guide to be certain that all sections are covered.

Your assignment is to hand in the set of rules you have created or edited for your market. When they have been reviewed and approved you will have a document that can be included in your market’s operational handbook.

**Market Governance**

This section identifies the mission of the market and the role of the market manager. If you are operating under the sponsorship or umbrella of another organization, they would be identified in this section and the role they play in operating the market.

**General Operations**

This section will begin the actual rules of operation for your market, including

* Hours of the market, location and parking requirements for vendors
* Arrival time for set up and any restrictions or requirements for booth set up
* Late arrivals – how are they handled? Is there any guarantees of space, fines for being late
* Departure time and any restrictions or requirements for tear down
* Requirements of attendance and notification requirements for absences
* When can selling begin/end for the day

**Who may sell at the market:**

This section defines who may sell at the market, what may be sold and requirements and restrictions for selling each type of product. For example:

* Produce- grown by seller; is any reselling allowed and if so, under what restrictions/requirements
* Baked goods – any restrictions on products, licenses required
* Prepared food vendors - any restrictions on products, licenses required
* Plants require nursery license
* Alcohol – local grains? What licenses? Tastings?

This section also includes any food safety regulations that must be followed while at market, such as handwashing stations, protecting foods from contamination, etc.

If there are products that require management approval, identify them here.

Will there be any farm/business inspections to ensure compliance. Include details on inspections in this section.

Many products being sold will require licenses and/or permits. Will market require proof of licenses and will the market keep copies on file?

Do new vendors have a probation period?

**Guidelines for Selling**

This section outlines acceptable behaviors, processes for selling, requirements for participating in the market. Here are some issues to consider:

* Quality of products for sale
* Handling of garbage
* Signage requirements – price signage, identify seller
* Sampling instructions
* Display design; i.e. height, maintaining product off the ground, maintenance of materials, etc
* Restrictions on eating, drinking, smoking within the booth space
* Hawking and noise restrictions
* Insurance requirements
* Who is responsible for rules violations

**Stall fees and assignment**

Vendors want to know how stall assignments are made, will they get any guarantee of space assignments, who sets the annual fee and when and how will they be notified of changes? Also identify whether stalls are paid annually, weekly or other payment methods. Must a seller sign for the whole season and if they can come only when they have a product to sell. For example, maybe they only grow blueberries and are only with product for one month, can they come on a daily basis? If so, what are the requirements to be a daily vendor?

Another question that can come up, is about subletting of stall spaces. Is this allowed and under what conditions? Same with stall sharing.

If a vendor arrives late

**Compliance**

This is a critical part of the rules. This section will spell out consequences of not complying with the rules, but also provides an opportunity for vendors to be heard. It also spells out how complaints can be made and to whom depending on who the complaint is about – another vendor or the market’s manager and how the situation will be investigated and resolved.