



A Guide to Getting Ready to Apply & Getting Ready for Market

Are you thinking about becoming a vendor at the Alexandria Farmers Market? Are you considering applying to the Community Produce Table as a consignment vendor? Here are some things to think about and have on hand *before* you fill out the online application, and if you are accepted into the market, some things to have ready before you start.

For Regular Market Vendors:

- The Alexandria Farmers Market requires that all vendors have a minimum \$1 Million product liability policy. You need to submit proof of liability insurance prior to coming to market if you are approved, you are not required to have the insurance just to apply.
- The Alexandria Farmers Market requires all vendors and their staff/volunteers/help to have vehicle liability insurance for all vehicles that are at market each week. You need to submit proof of vehicle liability insurance prior to coming to market if you are approved, you are not required to have the insurance just to apply.
- If we are considering your application, we will perform a site visit to view your production practices before your start date is confirmed.
- We prioritize year-round vendors that will be at the market every week. We average 50 markets a year. Are you prepared to be at the market **every** Tuesday rain AND shine?
- Our shoppers enjoy talking to our vendors about their products, they like to ask about how fruits and vegetables are grown and/or products are made; be prepared to discuss your production methods in detail with full transparency. If you have any relevant certificates we suggest you display them (e.g. ServSafe, FSMA Growers Training, GAP, Certified Organic, Certified Naturally Grown, etc.).
- We expect the person staffing the vendor's booth to be part of the production of the products being sold. No exceptions. Farmers Market shoppers especially want to shop with the farmer who grew the produce!
- Every year we share which types of products are our priority for new market vendors; check out this year's priorities [HERE](#). When a vacancy at our market opens up in any product category we always refer to previous applications first (as a sort of waiting list).
- If you have questions please reach out to set up an appointment with our market staff, we are here to help.

For Consignment Vendors at The Community Produce Table:

- We only sell produce (fresh fruits and vegetables) at The Community Produce Table.
- There is a different application for Vendors and Consignment Vendors, make sure you are submitting the correct one.
- Consignment produce needs to be delivered by 1 pm on market days and picked up by 6:30 pm on market days. Unclaimed produce will be donated. Produce delivered late will not be accepted. Make sure your schedule will support these requirements. If you have a different idea to propose we would be glad to hear it, our goal is to make this work, but we have limited staff time.
- Produce must be clean, packaged for retail, and must match the invoice (quantity, weight, prices).

- Produce must be grown in accordance with industry best practices, be safe for consumption, free from harmful contaminants, clean, fresh, and packaged for retail sale.
- Produce that does not meet standards will not be accepted.
- The consignment application requires you to submit a photo and a brief bio about you and your farm/garden. The photo should be the highest quality you can manage (a cell phone picture is usually good, try to have good lighting, pose at your garden/farm, and have someone take the picture for you).
- A site visit will be scheduled to review your production practices prior to scheduling your first market.
- If you have questions, please reach out to set up an appointment with our market staff, we are here to help.

Getting Ready for the Market: Regular Market Vendors

If you are approved as a vendor you need to have all of these things ready BEFORE your first market:

- You must submit the signed W-9 and the ACH authorization form so that we can process weekly reimbursements and pay you.
- 10x10 commercial grade canopy. Required. Oversized tents, or multiple tents will be charged for multiple vendor spaces.
- 4x 20# weights (heavier is encouraged but do what you can) - with an attachment system to secure canopy (we suggest the weights rest on the tent feet but have secure lines/straps to the top corners of each tent leg). Required.
- 1x folding chair (bar height preferred)
- Table(s) adequate to display all of your products.
- Washable table covers (please wash them every week).
- Banner or suitable sign with farm name and location (professional logo strongly encouraged), with an attachment system to keep all four corners secured to your canopy, or the sign in place in case of wind. Required.
- Booth display and decor- the nicer you make your booth the more shoppers will stop to look. Put some effort into it! Think multiple layers, angles, textures, and shopability! ***People shop with their eyes***, so make it visually appealing. Required.
- Booth signage: all products must have information and prices clearly marked. Label your products- do NOT assume everyone knows what kale is! Required.
- Signage on payment types you accept (credit, digital, cash, checks, etc.). Most shoppers assume farmers markets are cash only and won't ask you about other payment types. ***Your sales will improve if you clearly communicate what forms of payment you take.*** Strongly encouraged.
- Labels for value-added products must be in compliance with FDA/USDA/[Cottage Food Law](#) requirements.
- Scale - must be certified (information [HERE](#)). Products traditionally sold by weight MUST be sold by weight. Required if selling anything by weight.
- Packaging - must be new (not reused), includes shopping bags, baggie ties, bunch ties, rubber bands, paper bags, mason jar lids, egg cartons, baskets, and anything product is given to the customer in. Required.
- Payment management system for credit/debit, digital (Apple Pay, CashApp, Venmo, etc.), tokens, and cash. Required.
- Hand washing station - must meet food safety guidelines! All waste water must be contained. Suggested.
- Trash can. Suggested.
- Business cards or other giveaways with social media and contact info. Suggested.

Get Ready for Being at The Market: Consignment Table Vendors

If you are approved as a vendor you need to have all of these things ready BEFORE your first market:

- You must submit the signed W-9 and the ACH authorization form so that we can process weekly reimbursements and pay you.
- Be sure you have a way to transport produce to the market that maintains appropriate cleanliness and temperature.

- Totes/ice chests are to be left at the market with adequate temperature control for the duration of the market.
- You can pick these up between 6-6:30 pm on the evening of the market, or make arrangements (well in advance) for when you will be picking these up.
- It may be reasonable to have two sets and you swap them out every week.
- These containers MUST be washed, rinsed, and sanitized prior to being used to transport and hold produce.
- Market staff is not responsible for cleaning totes/bins/chests.
- Produce not delivered by 1 pm on the day of market may not be accepted (at market staff determination).
- Produce not picked up by 6:30 pm will be donated.
- All produce must be dropped off with an accurate invoice that includes: your intention to either pick up leftovers or donate them, cell phone number where market staff can text you about leftovers that evening, business name & address, date, specific products list with a line item for each product that includes:
 - Product Name
 - Quantity/Weight
 - Retail Price
- Produce may only be delivered to the designated consignment table staff.
- produce must meet receiving criteria and be verified to the invoice before consignee departs.
- Consignment table produce will be arranged and displayed by market staff, if you are bringing an item that is going to present challenges to display please communicate with the staff in advance and consider bringing display materials that will show the product off to shoppers.
- This process will require a lot of communication as we figure out the systems that work and don't work. We appreciate your patience as we learn alongside you!