



WIREGRASS FARMERS MARKET VENDOR GUIDELINES - FALL 2023

Please read regulations before completing your application to sell – submission of application is your acknowledgment that you are willing to abide by all Market Guidelines below.

- The Wiregrass Farmers Market is an open-air, community-based market, open to vendors growing or making all or most of their own products. **The market will open *October 7-November 18, 2023* for a Fall Market.**
- **Market Location:** Georgia Museum of Agriculture and Historic Village, 1392 Whiddon Mill Rd., Tifton, Georgia, 31793. Market is held under the pole barn adjacent to the Country Store. **Please Note: the Country Store and Georgia Museum of Agriculture are completely separate from the Farmers Market. **DO NOT MAIL APPLICATIONS TO THE GMA.****
- **Booth Fees:** All booth fees are non-refundable and non-transferable. **Please make check payable to ABAC Foundation.**
 - ❖ **Farm/Food Vendors:** \$40 per month, for all markets in that month or an seasonal fee of \$100 secures your spot for all regular markets during the spring market season- but attendance must be communicated with market manager in order to be included in table assignments for the week. Seasonal fee vendors will be limited to two (2) paid tables. Payment is due by May 6thst in order to take advantage of the annual fee option and based on a first come, first serve basis according to the permanent tables available.
 - ❖ **Non-Food Vendors** (craft, plants, soil amendments): \$20 per market.
 - ❖ **Charitable/non-profit groups:** \$0/market. Non-profit groups (recognized as such by the IRS) may sell approved items to raise funds for a local cause. A letter of verification from the organization's leader must be submitted with the application and clear signage of non-profit status must be displayed on the table at market. Only one non-profit vendor will be accepted per market.
- **The Market Management Committee (the "Committee") will contact you within a timely manner of receipt of your application to let you know whether you are approved for the month's markets. If you are not approved, your application and check will be returned to you.** For Farm/food vendors: you must pay the full \$40 fee regardless of when in the month you apply and regardless of how many markets you plan to attend that month.
- **All products must be approved by the Committee.** Space is limited and all participants are carefully selected. **Vendors consistently not complying with the guidelines will be given a written warning from the Market Management Committee or its designee, and upon the 3rd warning that vendor will receive a letter telling him/her not to return to the market for the rest of the season.**
- Cooperatives of vendors consisting of multiple local growers/producers selling similar goods or produce made or grown by the members of the cooperative are permitted to sell at a single table, provided that guidelines above for permitted products are followed by the cooperative as if the cooperative were considered a single vendor.
- **Permitted products:** At least 75% of total *produce* sold must be homegrown, and the vendor or members of his/her family who are selling the produce must have participated in the production of the items for sale

and must be able to answer questions about production and content. Processed items and crafts should all be handcrafted by the vendor from all-natural products. Resale (up to 25%) is permitted for produce only. Bulk grains, beans, or herbs may not be re-packaged and sold. **Permitted products are as follows:**

- ❖ **Fresh produce:** Must be either homegrown or grown in the South. All produce sellers must be willing to submit to a farm inspection at the request of the Market Management Committee. If you are growing on lands of others, all parties to the lease must be willing to submit to a monthly farm inspection so the market can verify that you are actually producing the crop where you say you are. If you cannot show the Market Management Committee (or its designee) that you are growing the crops you sold on the Saturday previous to your farm inspection and/or according to the copy of any leases you furnished, then you will receive a letter notifying you that you may not sell at WFM for the rest of the season. This is a serious issue and three strikes are not necessary for this rule to be in effect. **To repeat, if you bring produce to the market stating it is grown by you and that fact can't be substantiated by a farm inspection and/or copies of leases you provided, then you will receive a letter notifying you that you will not be allowed to sell at WFM for the remainder of the season. Please note that you are agreeing to this when you sign and submit your application.**

You cannot label produce as “organic” unless you have USDA certification or show that you qualify under USDA exemptions; however, you can use other words/phrases to describe your product. Produce vendors must complete and display a standard price sheet (provided at each market) indicating the price and origin of each item, which should be specific as to whose farm it was grown on or from whom it was purchased (maximum 25% of total goods), i.e., Cordele, Atlanta Farmers Market, etc. The committee reserves the right to request removal of low-quality produce from a vendor’s table. **Again, the committee may request a farm visit to verify farm practices and produce being sold by each vendor. Failure to submit to an inspection will result in your being removed from the market for the remainder of the season.**

- ❖ **Plants:** Ornamentals, vegetables, fruits, herbs, and trees. **75%** Must be cultivated by vendor; **25%** resale allowed.
- ❖ **Homemade from-scratch baked goods:** No mixes. All packaged food products must be INDIVIDUALLY labeled to indicate all ingredients, as well as the name, address, and phone number of provider. Local products should be used and featured whenever possible. **Generic labels for multiple items with varying ingredients are not acceptable.**
- ❖ **Home-canned jellies and jams:** these should be processed using the highest current safety standards, using a water bath or pressure canning process for the appropriate length of time, in properly sanitized and sealed jars. All canned products must be **INDIVIDUALLY** labeled to indicate ingredients, as well as the name, address, and phone of producer.
- ❖ **Locally-produced honey and syrup** (labeled as above).
- ❖ **Locally/regionally roasted coffee.**
- ❖ **Locally-grown nuts:** Boiled peanuts or roasted pecans may be sold in bags but must be locally grown and processed on vendor’s farm. **Nuts cannot be cooked on site.**
- ❖ **Herbal health remedies/teas/vinegars:** must be clearly labeled with all ingredients
- ❖ **Locally produced cookbooks supporting community groups.**
- ❖ **Traditional crafts produced by local artisans using natural/agricultural products** (example, pottery, soap, baskets, woodworking, knitting, quilting, and natural jewelry): **No crafts made from synthetics such as acrylic, synthetic fragrances, and plastics.**

- **The following items may not be sold unless vendor has the proper license from the State of Georgia and follows all state regulations for safe storage and labeling:** Eggs; meat; dairy products; low-acid/acidified

canned goods (i.e. pickles, salsa, vegetables); processed/prepared foods (except items in above permitted list); live animals.

- **All items must comply with the USDA Guidelines attached.**
- If selling a dairy product for “pet consumption,” do not distribute information promoting use of product for human consumption.
- **Vendors may NOT sell consumable products unless properly licensed. This includes beverages.**
- **Per USG policy, absolutely no smoking, tobacco products, open carry, or pets allowed on site.**
- Alcohol is prohibited except at approved functions.
- No soliciting for political or religious purposes.
- No loud music unless part of market performance.
- **(PENDING COVID RESTRICTIONS)** Samples may be offered (if not highly perishable) but must be kept covered at all times and vendor must control access to samples. Samples should be offered without touching food unless you are wearing clean, food quality gloves. Do not handle money with food gloves on or you defeat the purpose. Samples left on trays for customer to pick up must be individually presented (wrapped or in muffin cup). Vendor may also use tongs to present a sample to the customer. For items that require refrigeration (baked goods containing perishable products, like cream cheese, custards, etc), items should be maintained at 40 degrees F or lower until time of purchase.
- **ALL VENDORS: Please wash or sanitize hands frequently, especially after handling money, eating food, or using a phone!**
- **Booth set-up: Participants must have their space set up and ready for the public by 8:45. If you have not arrived by 9:00, you will forfeit your table for that market day and the Market Management Committee, or its designee, may at his/her discretion allow another vendor to use that table space. Vendors arriving after 8:45 must park in the approved area away from the market and carry their items to their table. No vehicles will be allowed by the pole barn after 8:45. For safety reasons and to provide a high-quality experience for our customers, no vehicles are allowed in the market area until the official close of the market at Noon.**
- Vendors must supply their own change and bags. Vendors will be assigned tables each week by the market manager, depending on the number of approved vendors, you may be asked to furnish your own table/tent/chairs. Selling from vehicles is not permitted (except for pre-approved refrigeration vehicles). Vehicles may be used to transport items to the table, but the vehicle must be moved to an approved area by 8:45am.
- Produce vendors receive priority for tables under the pole barn. **Baked goods and craft vendors may need to provide a pop-up tent, table, and chair.** If a seasonal vendor is absent for more than 5 consecutive markets, s/he forfeits the secured table under the barn for the remainder of the season. The vendor may return to sell but will be assigned whatever space is currently available.
- **All new product types brought to market by a vendor must be approved in advance by the Market Management Committee.**
- **All vendors are expected to set up on time and stay for the full duration of the market (until 12 noon) unless sold out of all products.**
- We will ask each vendor for estimated gross sales at the end of each market. The information will be kept confidential and listed according to category, not vendor. This will help the market make sound decisions for growth and assist in grant applications. We will ask you at each market for your estimated food and non-food sales. **The Market pays no sales tax on behalf of vendors and is not responsible for the payment of any federal or state sales tax that you may owe.**

Subject 40-7-19 COTTAGE FOOD REGULATIONS

Rule 40-7-19-.01 Purpose

The purpose of this Chapter is to allow individuals using home kitchens to prepare, manufacture, and sell non-potentially hazardous foods to the public.

Rule 40-7-19-.03 Registration

A cottage food operator must register with the Georgia Department of Agriculture's Food Safety Division before commencing operations.

Rule 40-7-19-.04 Licenses and Fees

- (1) A person must not operate as a cottage food operator without registering with and obtaining a license from the Department.
- (2) The annual fee for the Cottage Food License will be \$100.00. Registration must be completed annually for permitted cottage food operators, according to calendar year. For new applicants registering after June 30th, the fee for the License will be reduced by 50%.
- (3) Water analysis, for coliform bacteria and nitrates, will be required annually for cottage food operators with a private water supply; and a copy of the water analysis results must be attached to the registration form. The most recent copy of the annual water analysis results must be maintained by the cottage food operator and provided to the Department upon request. The cottage food operator must also adhere to the requirements found in the Department's *Non-Public Water Supply Testing Guidance* document.
- (4) Cottage Food Licenses are not required for individuals selling home produced non-potentially hazardous foods only at non-profit events as described in O.C.G.A. § [26-2-21\(a\)\(5\)\(C\)](#).

Rule 40-7-19-.05 Cottage Food Limitations

Cottage Food Operators:

- (1) May only produce non-potentially hazardous foods. Examples of these foods include:
 - (a) Loaf breads, rolls, and biscuits;
 - (b) Cakes (except those that require refrigeration due to cream cheese icing, fillings, or high moisture content such as tres leche);
 - (c) Pastries and cookies;
 - (d) Candies and confections;
 - (e) Fruit pies;

- (f) Jams, jellies, and preserves (Not to include Fruit Butters whose commercial sterility may be affected by reduced sugar/pectin levels);
 - (g) Dried fruits;
 - (h) Dry herbs, seasonings and mixtures;
 - (i) Cereals, trail mixes, and granola;
 - (j) Coated or uncoated nuts;
 - (k) Vinegar and flavored vinegars; and
 - (l) Popcorn, popcorn balls, and cotton candy.
- (2) Sale of cottage food products must be to the end consumer. No distribution or wholesale is allowed, including to hotels, restaurants, or institutions.
- (3) The cottage food operator may only produce the cottage food products listed on their registration form. To add additional products to the list, the cottage food operator must submit a new registration form, including an additional License fee for processing the registration form and re-inspection to ensure that their facilities and equipment are adequate for production of the new cottage food products.
- (4) Cottage food products must not be manufactured in conjunction with any domestic activities; including, but not limited to, family meal preparation, dishwashing, clothes washing or ironing, kitchen cleaning, or guest entertainment.
- (5) Home canned produce must not be used as an ingredient in cottage food products. Most home canned products are not approved for production under these Regulations, *with the exception of jams and jellies*.

**All rules and regulations under the Cottage Food License may be found at:
<https://rules.sos.ga.gov/GAC/40-7-19>**