

**ASHE COUNTY FARMERS MARKET POLICIES & PROCEDURES**  
(APRIL 7, 2009)

1. MEMBER QUALIFICATIONS

The Ashe County Farmers' Market, Inc. membership is made up of three categories: Grower/Producer Vendors, Food Vendors, and Handmade Arts & Crafts Vendors. All members must reside in Ashe County. Membership is available to all adults who meet vendor product qualifications. There is no limit on the number of members.

Misleading or dishonest practices are not permitted. Complaints to the Market Manager or President submitted in writing will be investigated and appropriate action taken. Membership can be terminated by majority vote of the corporation's members for good cause and after giving the affected member an opportunity to be heard.

2. VENDOR AND PRODUCT REGISTRATION

No products can be sold at an Ashe County Farmers' Market event except by a member whose vendor registration application lists those products, and the application has been accepted by the Market Manager or ACFM President. Application for registration includes completing a Producer Certification Form, and must be accompanied by payment of annual dues and applicable space reservation fees. Producer Certification Forms are available at [www.ashefarmersmarket.com](http://www.ashefarmersmarket.com) and at market events.

3. DUES AND FEES

Dues are set for each calendar year by the ACFM board of directors. (For 2009 the amount is \$25.00.) Membership dues must be paid in advance of any market sales, and are not prorated.

The fee per calendar year for each ten foot wide assigned space, including adjacent parking for one vehicle, is \$175.00 for an Enclosed or Sheltered space and \$100.00 for an Open space, which entitles the member to its use at all Saturday and Special market events. A fee of \$5.00 will be charged to every vendor who participates in a Wednesday market event.

A member who has no assigned space, for a \$5.00 fee may purchase one day's use of a space from the Market Manager when a member who has that space does not claim it by the time deadline for that day's event. (The Market Manager has the discretion to allow a member to extend arrival time for good cause.)

Sharing the cost and use of a single space is limited to two members. Uniform signs for vendors are encouraged but not required. The cost of signage will be no more than the actual unit cost to ACFM. No other charges or assessments will be made to ACFM members.

#### 4. CRAFT VENDORS

Handmade arts and crafts will be admitted as market products only after a registration process that includes review and approval by a jury of all product types to be sold at a market event. Jury members are designated by the ACFM board of directors from outside the membership. Each item must be handmade by the member in Ashe County. Items are judged on the basis of craftsmanship, artistic merit, aesthetic value and market appeal. Commercial kit assemblies are not acceptable, and manufactured component parts are allowed only to the extent necessary for structural integrity.

These rules apply to product types:

Flower Arrangements must use only fresh or dried flowers. Silk or plastic flowers are not acceptable.

Clothing, hats, footwear and their accessories must be made by the member. Artistic decoration of an otherwise disqualified article will not qualify it for the market.

Belts must be handmade, except for their attached buckles. Machine embossing is not acceptable.

Jewelry must utilize handcrafted components as primary features. Unaltered commercially available stones, beads and clasps may be used if not viewed as primary features.

Clocks must use cases handmade by the member. Commercially produced components are acceptable if not viewed as primary features.

Artwork must be originally produced by the member. Copies of this art may be sold, including reproductions on paper and cloth items. Commercially produced frames are acceptable if not viewed as primary features.

Pottery must be produced by the member, and must be identified as to safety for food storage or preparation.

Musical recordings must be from performances by the member or a group that includes the member.

Written works by the member are acceptable if illustrations or other features are not viewed as primary features.

Soaps and lotions must be formulated by the member, and labeled with major ingredients. Commercially produced containers must not be viewed as the primary feature.

A jury will be at the Spring Expo for the purpose of reviewing products. Other jury dates may be set by the Board of Directors, with scheduled dates available from the market manager.

Approval of a product is limited to that market season and the following market season, and will then be submitted to the jury process for a decision as to its continuation. Photographs will be taken of products approved by the jury, and will be retained with the applicant's registration form.

The board of directors may place restrictions on some arts and crafts categories to avoid duplication that would in the opinion of a majority of board members adversely affect the image of the Farmers' Market.

#### 5. VENDOR SPACES

Vendor locations are available in three classifications: Enclosed, Sheltered, and Open. Each classification has assigned space areas for product display and for parking, which are designated for vendors by the Market Manager. Reservations are made at the beginning of each calendar year, with preference given to those who wish to retain spaces paid for during the past market season. Other spaces will be assigned to applicants by majority vote of the board of directors. Fees for assigned spaces must be paid no later than the end of the Market Expo. A member cannot sublet or assign rights to use a space without permission of the board of directors. Each space must be kept clean, and cleared at the end of each market day.

#### 6. PARKING & SET-UP

Hours for regular season events (Saturdays and Wednesdays) are from 8 a.m. until 1 p.m.

Vendors with assigned spaces are to arrive between 6:30 and 7:30. A member with an assigned parking space who does not arrive by 7:30 and who has not received approval from the market manager for late arrival will forfeit use of that parking space for that day. The market manager will assign vacant spaces, beginning at 7:30 a.m., on a first come-first served basis to other members.

Setting up for sales is to be completed by 8 a.m. when the market opens to the public. To prevent the disruptions caused by people coming into the market area while members are setting up, the rule that no sales can be made by vendors until 8 a.m. is strictly enforced.

## 7. SAMPLES

Offering samples to the public of farm produce is encouraged. It is permitted if the vendor complies with these rules:

(1) Samples must be prepared using sanitary methods, including washing of whole produce before cutting into samples while using clean cutting utensils and cutting surfaces and wearing clean plastic gloves when cutting.

(2) Convenience items such as toothpicks and napkins must be supplied as needed.

(3) Samples must be kept in clean and covered containers.

(4) Appropriate waste disposal containers must be provided.

(5) Samples must be free, and not associated with any appeal for contributions or donations.

(6) Meat samples must have been prepared in an inspected kitchen. Cheese samples must be from a USDA certified cheese producer.

## 8. EVENT RULES

Public support is essential to the success of the Farmers' Market, and each vendor represents the group. Respect for others includes appropriate dress and avoiding controversial messages, such as political statements on merchandise, displays or T-shirts.

Complaints from vendors or the public are to be presented immediately to the Market Manager, who will handle them in accord with policies set by the ACFM board of directors.

Accidental injuries are to be reported immediately to the Market Manager, or in the absence of the Market Manager to the ACFM President, or in the absence of both to any elected officer. Written reports are required, as some must be reported to the ACFM insurance carrier.

Only "service animals" (usually dogs) used by persons with handicaps have the right to be on the market grounds. A person claiming to have a service animal qualifies for these rights upon the showing of a tag, issued by the Department of Health and Human Services stamped "NORTH CAROLINA SERVICE ANIMAL PERMANENT REGISTRATION" with a registration number - or upon a showing that the animal is being trained or has been trained as a service animal. An animal in training to become a service animal may be taken into a public place for the purpose of training when the animal is accompanied by a person who is training the service animal and the animal wears a collar and leash, harness, or cape that identifies the animal as a service animal in training.

Consumption of alcoholic beverages at market events is strictly prohibited.

There will be no communications or agreements among members to raise, lower or fix prices for items sold at the market.

9. LIABILITY

The Ashe County Farmers' Market is a nonprofit corporation, with limited financial resources. It has purchased a comprehensive general liability policy to protect everyone who participates in market events against accidental injuries. The policy does not cover product liability, and each food vendor is advised to purchase insurance to cover that risk.