

Statesboro Farmers Markets Guidelines
Rules and Regulations for Vendors
January, 2021

1. Defining the markets: Statesboro MainStreet Farmers Market & Statesboro Market2Go

Mission Statement: The common mission of the Statesboro MainStreet Farmers Market and the Statesboro Market2Go (collectively, the Statesboro Farmers Markets) is

- to provide access to locally grown and locally made produce, prepared food and artisanal products;
- to provide local farmers and producers a place to sell directly to local customers in a family-friendly community atmosphere;
- to provide educational opportunities in nutrition and healthful living;
- and to promote a vibrant local food economy.

The **Statesboro MainStreet Farmers Market** is normally open every Saturday from the first week in April through Thanksgiving. Closed in 2020 due to pandemic restrictions, the MainStreet Market is expected to reopen in late spring, 2021, at a date to be determined.

The **Statesboro Market2Go** operates year round with a weekly online order cycle from Friday night through Tuesday night and order pickup at designated locations on Thursday afternoon. Details can be found at StatesboroMarket2Go@locallygrown.net.

Shopping by Lantern Light is an annual holiday event sponsored by the MainStreet Market on Tuesday evening before Thanksgiving. Other market events during the year may include Christmas in July (at the MainStreet market), the Market2Go Christmas Shoppe (online) and Pop Up Markets with selected vendors at the Market2Go drive through.

As a community of local farmers, food producers and artisans, our vendors are expected to maintain a spirit of cooperation and mutual respect for each other and their customers, even within an atmosphere of friendly competition.

2. Vendor eligibility: who can participate?

The market welcomes vendors with authentically local products -- grown or made locally, using as much local ingredients or material as possible -- and especially products that add diversity to our market offering.

There are three types of market vendors:

- (a) **Farmers**, consisting of whole food vendors (vegetables, fruit, dairy, honey, meat, etc) and horticulture vendors (plants and cut flowers). The market tries to maintain a balance of more than 50% of the vendors in this category. The whole food or horticulture vendor must be producing the products they sell or (by permission for Saturday market) representing another approved farmer-producer. Preference is given to producers using sustainable practices.

(b) **Prepared food vendors** (jams & jellies, bakery goods, coffee/tea, ice cream, fruit pops, candy, condiments and any cooked food). All food purveyors are required to have a certified kitchen OR a Georgia cottage industry permit. Food vendors are encouraged to use local ingredients in their products to the greatest extent possible, In particular, we encourage cooperative arrangements with Whole Food market vendors.

(c) **Artisans** (woodwork, soaps, candles, jewelry, painting, decorative items, or other artisanal products/services) Market artisans must make their products locally, as part of a local business, incorporating local materials and themes. Products must be made individually, not mass produced. T-shirt production or the simple application of designs to purchased products does not meet the requirement for artisan vendors.

3. What can be sold?

As part of the market application, each vendor must submit for approval a complete list of items they are intending to sell, including current prices. Products may be added during the season with approval by market management. Product approvals are based on the following criteria.

LOCAL. All products sold at the Statesboro MainStreet Market or the Statesboro Market2Go must be grown or made by local farmers, food producers or artisans. For the purpose of these markets, "local" refers to counties in south Georgia and the low country, at a distance that makes it economically feasible for a vendor to travel with his/her own products to the market. Preference is given to products from Bulloch County and surrounding counties.

WHOLE FOODS AND HORTICULTURE PRODUCTS. Products allowed for sale in this category include seasonal produce, eggs, dairy, honey, meat and seafood plus cut flowers and live plants. All agricultural products sold at the MainStreet Market or the Market2Go must comply with regulations from the US Department of Agriculture and/or the Georgia Department of Agriculture as well as the local health department. Specific rules apply to the sale of meats, eggs, and dairy; cut leafy greens and organic produce, and live plants. It is the responsibility of the vendor to ensure that their products meet all federal, state and local regulations.

PREPARED FOOD. The Mainstreet Farmers Market and Market2Go encourage local food vendors to sell wholesome, healthy foods using fresh ingredients, while minimizing disposable containers and wrappers. Foods sold at market should highlight regional produce/products and seasonal ingredients. All food products must be produced in a certified Commercial Kitchen or under a Cottage Food license and must have appropriate labeling, including allergen statement. Foods produced under a Cottage Food license must be shelf stable and not require refrigeration. It is the responsibility of the vendor to ensure that their products meet all federal, state and local regulations.

CRAFTS. Local crafts are works that are well conceived, expertly executed, and made by hand by the artisan. Categories of crafts include but are not limited to basketry, pottery, painting, fiber arts, jewelry, leather, metal, mixed media, wood, candles, soap, dried flowers, and other artisanal products and services. All products in this category must be made locally by the artisan, with preference for those incorporating local materials and themes. Products must be made individually, not mass produced. T-shirts and gift items with printed design or logo are expressly excluded except as promotional items for farm or food vendors.

4. Application Process

The Statesboro MainStreet Market and the Statesboro Market2Go are members-only markets and require a joint membership application to be submitted annually, along with copies of any relevant licenses or registrations. An annual membership fee will be assessed at the time of acceptance and prior to the vendor's participation in either market. The annual membership fee for the 2021 market season is \$75, which entitles the vendor to participate in the MainStreet Market and the Market2Go, with additional fees specific to those markets.

Applications can be obtained at the Statesboro Convention and Visitors Bureau, 222 South Main Street, or by emailing StatesboroFarmersMarketManager@gmail.com. Completed applications with relevant attachments should be mailed to

Statesboro Farmers Markets, PO Box 1135, Statesboro, GA 30459.

New member applications are accepted February 1 through November 1, and applications are reviewed monthly. Acceptance of new vendors will be based on the criteria described in these guidelines. Arts & crafts vendors are asked to submit a sample or photograph of their work for the review process.

Existing members in good standing will automatically be accepted for the following season when their annual application, licenses and membership fee have been submitted.

Special events during the market season, including but not limited to Shopping by Lantern Light, Christmas in July, the Market2Go Christmas Shoppe, and scheduled Pop Up Markets, may require separate applications and fees.

5. Federal, State, and Local Law Compliance

It is the responsibility of the vendors to know and follow all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations, including laws regarding food/horticultural sales and food safety. The market does not collect or pay tax on vendor sales; each vendor is responsible for their own tax reporting and payments.

6. Enforcement of Guidelines.

Statesboro MainStreet Farmers Market and Statesboro Market2Go vendors are expected to abide by all regulations established for the markets, including general guidelines and those specific to either of the markets. As part of the application process, vendors will acknowledge receipt of these guidelines and their intent to comply. Vendors found to be out of compliance will receive a warning and clarification of the guidelines as pertains to their non-compliance and a request that the vendor bring their products or behavior into compliance. The market will work with vendors to help them achieve compliance. Unwillingness to cooperate and/or continued noncompliance may result in suspension or revocation of a vendor's market membership, suspension or expulsion from the premises of the MainStreet market, and/or suspension of privileges to sell online through the Market2Go. Market managers have the authority to enforce these guidelines. A vendor who wishes to dispute the decision of managers may submit a written request to have their case brought to the Market Board of Directors.

7. Hold Harmless Clause and Insurance

All authorized vendors participating in the Statesboro MainStreet Market or Statesboro Market2Go are independent operators and not partners or joint ventures, and shall be individually and severally liable for any loss, personal injury, deaths, and/or damages that may occur as a result of the vendor's negligence or that of its employees, agents and associates.

Statesboro Mainstreet Farmers Market and Market2Go vendors agree to take part in the markets, including any special events, at their own risk and will not hold the Market, its directors, officers, agents, employees, sponsors or site owners responsible for any legal or financial liability resulting in the participation thereof. Because no insurance is provided by the markets concerning vendors, each vendor must carry their own personal and product liability insurance.

8. Notice of Change to these Guidelines.

These guidelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Statesboro Farmers Market board, after notification at least one week prior to the implementation of any new rules. Guidelines will be reviewed and updated annually in January and the revised guidelines included with market applications for the upcoming season.

Guidelines for Market2Go Vendors

The Statesboro Market2Go uses the LocallyGrown.net platform to allow vendors to sell directly to customers. All transactions are between vendors and customers. The Market2Go provides order processing, sales reporting and bookkeeping to facilitate product sales, and venues for aggregating and distributing orders. The Market2Go does not buy any products or hold products in its inventory.

Becoming a Market2Go vendor. Farmers, food vendors and artisans approved through the market application process and in good standing may sell products on Market2Go. Market members must create an account and a “grower page” on the Market2Go website before listing products for sale.

Product listings. Approved items from your market application may be listed online by category, following Market2Go protocol and website instructions. Vendors describe their products, and establish the sales unit, price, and quantity available. Artisans and vendors with prepackaged food items should limit their online listings to a carefully curated selection, avoiding a multiplicity of items that vary by a single attribute. Seasonal descriptions should be current and relevant. Product listings should be monitored and updated frequently so that available quantities and pricing are current.

Pricing and fees. There is no direct fee for listing products on Market2Go, but 10% of the selling price of each item is deducted to cover market maintenance and franchise payment. Thus the vendor receives 90% of the listed price of each item. Most vendors adjust pricing to compensate, so that they receive the amount they want. For example, if a vendor wants to receive \$4.00 for a bunch of carrots, the list price should be \$4.45. Market2Go does not deduct or collect sales tax on product sales; it is the responsibility of the vendor to report sales to tax authorities.

Order fulfillment, packing, labeling and delivery.

All food items should be handled carefully with attention to food safety requirements, including harvesting, cleaning, sorting, bunching, chopping, cooking, packing and storing. Prepared foods must be packaged and labeled in accordance with all governmental regulations, including allergen statement. Market2Go orders should be carefully packaged and labeled in accordance with Market2Go protocol to facilitate distribution to customers by market staff and volunteers, with appropriate protection for more delicate products. It is recommended that vendors use item labels printed from the Market2Go website. Orders should be delivered in a timely manner according to instructions on the weekly Sales Notification email.

Vendors should notify managers as soon as possible in the order cycle about cancelled orders, product shortages, special/atypical requirements for refrigerator or freezer storage, or other information pertinent to proper storage of your orders.

Pop Up Markets.

Market2Go vendors in good standing may apply to set up a tent at the weekly Statesboro drive-through pickup for a “Pop Up Market”. Vendors may sell “specials” through the online market, for pickup at the vendor tent or sell directly to walk-up customers. Market managers will maintain a schedule with up to three vendors per week, selected with attention to an appropriate level of competitiveness or redundancy. The market welcomes approved vendors with Food Trucks to participate in pop up markets, assuming compliance with local Food Truck ordinances.

Market2Go Item Listing Protocol

The first word in an item listing should always indicate the general category or Key Word: Beef, Okra, Cupcake, Plant, Meal. The first word should never be an adjective like Fresh, Big, or Young. Those attributes can be listed later in the item name, but are often best reserved for the product description. Vendor names should not be used as first word, although they may be included as appropriate in later descriptors; e.g., Kim's Cheese Straws or Relinda's Sweet Onions. Numerals are never allowed as the first character in a product listing.

For example, in the Vegetable, Fruits and Herbs categories, the first word should be the name of the vegetable, fruit, or herb: Eggplant, Peas, Blueberries, Oregano. For meats, the first word should be Beef, Pork, Chicken, etc. For Bakery Goods, key words are Bread, Cake, Pie, Cookies, Cupcakes etc. All eggs should begin with the word Eggs, whatever their other attributes. In the case of prepared foods, other than bottled sauces and dressings, the vendor should choose as the Key Word one of the following: Meal, Side, Spread, or Dessert.

A dash follows the key word, then further descriptors, starting with the most significant word. For example, the first descriptor after the key word might be a variety of vegetable (Peas – Pinkeye); a cut or style of meat (Beef – Roast, or Pork – Sausage); and for baked goods, the first listed attribute would likely be the main ingredient or style (Pie – Peach Cobbler; Cookies – Chocolate Chip; Cake – Pound Cake; or Bread – French Rolls)

Finally, you may choose additional language to distinguish your product, including a product style (sliced, round, link, gluten-free, vegan, three-layer); a production technique (organic, hydroponic, grass fed); or relative unit size (large bulb, quart, family size, 1/3 lb patties). Herbs or mushrooms should be distinguished as fresh or dried. Some product descriptions contain a unique product name like Hot Georgia Night sausage or WAGZ dog biscuits.

Here are some examples that illustrate helpful item listings.

Beef – ground, 80/20, Family Size (2 lb)

Beef -- ground, bacon-seasoned patties

Beef – Ribeye steaks, boneless, two-pack with seasoning

Blueberries – frozen, quart

Bread – Banana Nut, loaf

Bread – Baguette, with seeds

Cake -- Key Lime, three layer

Cheese -- Mozzarella, goat milk

Cupcake -- chocolate, gluten free

Flowers -- sunflower bouquet, small

Garlic -- Thai Purple, small bulb

Meal -- Chicken Pot Pie, small (serves 1 -2)

Milk -- Half and Half, pint

Mint -- Peppermint, fresh sprigs

Peas – Pinkeye, shelled, ½ bushel

Pork – Chops, center-cut, thin sliced, 4 pack

Pork – Sausage, Sweet Italian, links

Spread -- Pimiento Cheese, cheddar

Tomatoes – Beefsteak, hydroponic, large

Guidelines for MainStreet Farmers Market Vendors

The Statesboro MainStreet Farmers Market, normally open every Saturday from the first week in April through Thanksgiving, was closed for the 2020 season due to pandemic restrictions. Expectations are that the MainStreet Market will reopen in late spring, 2021 at a new venue being developed behind the Statesboro Conference and Visitors Center. Specifics will be communicated when available to all approved market vendors.

Becoming a MainStreet Market vendor.

Farmers, food vendors and artisans approved through the market application process and in good standing may participate in the weekly Saturday morning market. Prior to participation, vendors are required to submit a schedule of planned market participation and pay booth fees prorated to booth size and number of planned market days. Specific information about the market schedule, space allocation and booth fees will be communicated when available to all approved market vendors.

Vendor booths, tables, product displays and signage.

All booths at the MainStreet Farmers Market must have table(s), either inside the building or, if permitted, on the grass outside the building. Outdoor booths, if assigned, will require vendors to provide tents, weighted for safety. All booths are required to have appropriate table covering and attractive, coherent displays of products. Booths must have clear signage to indicate the farm or vendor name, farm location, product identification and product pricing.

Upon specific approval of the Farmer Committee, a farmer-vendor may be allowed to sell products from a cooperating farm within the region, who has been separately approved. In the case of shared booths, products must be clearly differentiated by grower.

Product sales.

All authorized vendors at the Statesboro MainStreet Farmers Market operate as independent sellers; transactions are strictly between vendors and customers. The MainStreet Market provides the sales venue, market promotion, educational opportunities, and organizational support.

Vendors may accept in exchange for their products: cash, credit/debit cards with vendor's own processing (such as Square), market tokens (cash equivalent, reimbursed in full by the market), regular EBT tokens (for all EBT-approved items), and Georgia Fresh for Less tokens (for fruits and vegetables only).

In order to evaluate the overall success of the market, vendors will be asked on a weekly or occasional basis to report estimated sales at the market. (Sales estimates will be recorded in an anonymous manner and no individual vendor information will be collected or reported.)

Product sampling.

All sampling must comply with current food safety recommendations. Although we have strongly encouraged food sampling in the past, we ask food vendors to refrain from sampling until management provides new guidance based on public health conditions.

Booth setup and tear-down.

Vendors must be in place and ready to sell by the start of market. No tear-down is allowed prior to the official end of market; if a vendor is sold out, they may leave the booth and return after closing for tear-down. All trash and personal items must be removed at the end of the market, leaving the space clean and free of debris.

Other specific requirements for booth setup and take-down may be communicated when venue details are finalized.

Educational exhibits, food demonstrations and entertainment

There is planned space within the new venue for food demonstrations and entertainment. Booths will be allocated for educational and public-service booths as available, upon completion by the organization of an Education Vendor application.

General Code of Conduct

Vendors are expected to behave in a courteous and respectful manner toward customers, other vendors, market staff and volunteers. Any disputes between vendors or between a vendor and a customer, not quickly resolved by civil discussion, should be referred immediately to an on-site market manager.

Changes and updates

The Guidelines for MainStreet Market Vendors will be updated when decisions about the venue and schedule are finalized.