Whitney Farmer’s Market
Vendor Guidelines

**The Farmers Market Vendor Experience**

Selling your produce or goods at a farmer’s market is different than selling in other locations or online. Your potential customers have very specific expectations and ideals. Capitalize on those unique characteristics and spend a little bit of extra time to create an image for you and your business, and you’ll stand out.

By selling your goods at a farmers market, you’re participating in a greater story about community - one that automatically makes your product appealing. For the most part, the people who shop at a farmer’s market have certain ideas about what they’ll find there.

* They expect produce or artisan products that are grown or produced locally.
* They expect to see the owner or a knowledgeable worker at the booth.
* They expect products to be packaged by the owner, in an environmentally friendly way.

Farmer’s market shoppers are there for several reasons:

* They want to support local farmers and artisans.
* They feel that eating fresh, healthy food is important
* They want to reduce the carbon footprint of their consumerism by buying items
* They enjoy the community atmosphere of the market.

**Roles & Responsibilities**

The Whitney Farmers Market

1. *Establish Markets:* We continue to expand our footprint throughout Texas by working with municipalities, property owners, and private enterprises. We work with our Vendors to find the right Markets for them based on demographics, geography, and other factors.

2. *Promote the Markets:* We use print media, including postcards, flyers, and billboards to promote the Market. On-premise signage is added leading up to and on Market day. We also have a strong social media presence on Facebook, Instagram, and NextDoor.

3. *Create Market layouts and coordinate Vendors:* Our Team designs a layout to provide the best patron experience. We do the best we can to accommodate for patron flow, the elements (sun), competing products, etc.

4. *Accountability:* We work to ensure the overall experience by Vendors, patrons, and nearby tenants is positive and safe.

Vendors

1. *Create great product:* Attract and keep customers (and get those customers to refer others) by offering only top-quality products at your booth. Identify a niche and focus on that niche. Use quality ingredients and sources, while taking great care in producing a consistent product each week. Find characteristics about your product that is superior and package it in a way that tells a story.

2. *Promote your product prior to the Market:*  Talk to people about the Market. Link to us and post on social media. Interact with market goers on CONNECT. Post a special offer. If each Vendor attracts 10 people to the Market, that’s over 250 shoppers!

3. *Present your product beautifully*: Take some time to create a booth that is visually pleasing and well-organized. Cleanliness, colorful tablecloths and clear signage go a long way in showcasing your product and increasing sales.

4. *Engage with patrons pleasantly*: Smile and stand to encourage patrons to interact with you. It’s important that everyone selling at the market put their best cheery face forward, as this helps the market develop a reputation as a friendly, fun place to shop.

5. *Build relationships and cultivate repeat customers*: Many of your customers at the farmer’s market want to feel a connection to you and your business. Share information about your craft with your customers and connect with them. When customers feel as if they’ve made a personal connection with you, they’ll be much more likely to return again and again.

6. *Be prepared and organized:* Reserve your booth in a timely manner (product categories are limited) and develop a system for organizing, transporting and setting up your product at the Market. Get a good night’s sleep and arrive on time.

**Vendor Regulations**

Vendor, and Vendor's permitted use of the licensed premises, will comply at all times with the regulations of Whitney Farmer’s Market (WFM) and Vendor shall cause all of its employees, agents, contractors, and invitees to comply at all times with regulations. Violation of any provision of the Vendor Regulations shall be a material breach and default by the Vendor. The Vendor may be asked to vacate the premises immediately. Failure to vacate may subject the Vendor to civil and/or criminal remedies.

WFM or its designee shall reserve the right to cancel any Vendor’s participation at any time if and when the seller shall be found to be in violation of any market regulation or eligibility requirement. WFM reserves the right to revise the Vendor Regulations at any time.

1. All Vendors must abide by the health code and restrictions of the City of Whitney where the Market is held.

2. All Vendors who produce food and/or agricultural products or manufacture non-agricultural goods and have obtained the necessary permits and licenses are eligible to sell at the Market.

3. Non-potentially hazardous, pre-packaged or whole produce or products are permitted for sale.

4. All items intended for human consumption must be kept off the ground above six (6) inches at all times and be in safe and sound condition. The seller is solely responsible for damages resulting from the sale of unsafe, unapproved or unsound goods.

5. Vendors sell only items that WFM has approved for sale. WFM has the discretion to add or delete items from the list and has the duty to provide notice to Vendors.

6. Vendors must arrive no later than 30 min - 1 hour prior to the Market start time to set up and be ready to greet their customers at the opening of the Market.
7. WFM reserves the sole right to cancel or delay the start time of the Market. In the event of cancellation, Vendors shall be subject to a booth fee credit for a future Market.

8. Designation and allocation of Vendor spaces are the responsibility and at the discretion of the WFM Market Manager. WFM does not guarantee certain spaces to Vendors.

9. Once the market has begun, no moving vehicles are allowed within the Market area as a safety precaution.

10. Perimeter parking spaces will be reserved for vendors to load and unload. WFM will coordinate specific load-in and load-out windows with vendors to make vendor setup and breakdown as convenient and efficient as possible.

11. A standard vendor space is 10 feet x 10 feet.

12. Vendors supply all materials and containers for the customer sales.

13. Market staff and volunteers may be available to assist Vendors throughout the market; however, Vendors must be prepared to set-up and break down their space and supplies and be able to move their own trash and manage supplies and products without assistance of the Market staff.

14. Vendors determine the pricing and should display their products in a manner that presents well and draws patron interest.

15. If Vendor is using a tent, it must clean and securely anchored with a minimum of 20 lb. weight to prevent it from becoming loose due to wind and/or inclement weather. A Vendor whose tent is found to be non-compliant will be asked to remove the tent.

16. Vendors must be courteous and polite to the public and conduct themselves respectfully and professionally. Vendors will not use offensive language or gestures and should be dressed in appropriate clothing.

17. Vendors must clean up their areas at the end of each market day. Trash cans on-site are for patrons only. Vendors must remove all trash and recycling from their booth and are responsible for taking their own trash and recycling with them from the Market.

18. Vendors will not play music without obtaining written permission from WFM.

19. No Firearms or drugs will be allowed at the Market

20. Smoking is not allowed inside or near the Market area.

21. No parking on grass, to be enforces by all vendors and WFM volunteers.

22. Vendor Categories:

A) ***Agricultural producer vendors*** grow or raise the following:

* Produce that has been grown on the producer’s land (including leased land) located within 150 miles of the market attended.
* Meat (excepting fish, fowl and feral animals), that is from animals born and bred on the producers’ land (including leased land) and processed at a USDA-inspected facility as well as processed meat products such as bacon, jerky and sausage, or products such as eggs, cheese, yogurt, honey, soap or yarn from these animals.
* Foraged and wild-crafted items where the producer responsibly wild harvests a raw agricultural product from their own land, leased-land or public land (where foraging is allowed) and packages the item(s) with minimal additional ingredients. Example products include yaupon tea, chile pequin, henbit or ramps.
* All agricultural producers must maintain least 50% of products/items sold at market booth comprising their own agricultural products to maintain this vendor category.

- Examples: Farmers, Ranchers, Beekeepers, Foragers

B) ***Value-added food vendors*** create culinary products from any operation that has changed the form, flavor, blend and/or the substance of raw products using as many market products as available, preference given to those vendors who use local products. Organic ingredients must be incorporated when available. Commercial kitchen must be within 100 miles of the market attended.

Value-added food vendors operate under a Texas Dept of Health Food Manufacturer permit or as [Cottage food producers](http://www.dshs.texas.gov/foodestablishments/cottagefood/default.aspx), or in some cases do not need a COA health permit (e.g. dog food).

*-Examples: Salsa, Hummus, Wine/Cider, Dog Food or Treats, Baked Goods, Herbal products*

* Food to be sold must be presented for sampling and inspection of labeling before acceptance into market/s. The executive director will request these samples from you, please do not drop off before invited to do so.

**LABELING REQUIREMENTS:**

All food items must be clearly labeled according to Texas law and include:

1. Contact information: address, phone number and/or email address
2. Common usual name of product that consumers will recognize
3. List of ingredients according to weight
4. The eight major food allergens
5. Please [read Texas labeling laws here](https://www.dshs.texas.gov/foods/labeling.aspx) for details.

**COTTAGE LAW VENDORS:** must indicate on product labels this statement: This product is not inspected by any state of Texas or local health department. Please do not apply if your product is not specifically listed under [Texas Cottage Food Law](http://www.dshs.texas.gov/foodestablishments/cottagefood/faq.aspx?terms=cottage%20food%20law).

***C) Artisan Vendors*** utilize materials from outside the area of the farmers’ market when integrated with other local products or sell products created by a local artisan located within 100 miles of the market attended.

*-Examples: Beauty and skincare products, jewelry, art, ceramics, woodworking, textiles*

* Current photos of your products should be sent to the Market Manager after filling out this application and before paying your fee. If your products are considered “crafts”, please do not apply.
* State of Texas Sales Tax is required on sales of your product. WFM is not responsible for paying any vendor taxes or fines.

23. Examples of items allowed:

Produce

Jams & Jellies

Soaps

Honey

Lotions

Meats

Candles

Eggs

Bath items

Baked Goods

Cheese

Wine

24. Items not allowed: Distributors, wholesalers, liquidators