

Union County Farmers Market

Market Policies and Operating Rules

MISSION: To promote and encourage the development of local small-scale agriculture, to provide and administer a seasonal marketplace for local producers of agricultural products and handmade arts and crafts and to provide an example of the heritage of the mountain community.

TIME AND PLACE: The Union County Farmers Market operates every Saturday and Tuesday from June through October. Specific dates and times will be announced each year AS DETERMINED BY the Union County Farmers Market Committee. The Union County Farmers Market is located at 148 Old Smokey Road, Blairsville, Georgia.

VENDORS: Shall be local farmers or gardeners, processors of agricultural commodities, artists, or handcrafters who have produced the items for sale. All vendors must reside and produce items they sell in a county contiguous with Union County (Union County, Fannin County, Lumpkin County, Towns County, White County in Georgia and Clay County, Cherokee County in North Carolina). Those selling must be the original producers, family members of producers, or employees of producers of all items being sold. Food Processors are responsible for meeting any and all county, state and federal requirements. For more information please call the Georgia Department of Agriculture at 1-800-282-5852 and the Union County Health Department at (706)781-3824. Recognized civic groups/non-profits are welcome to participate and may resell non-agricultural items for fund raising purposes but MUST contact the Union County Farmers Market in advance to schedule date(s).

WHAT CAN BE SOLD AT THE MARKET?

A. **Raw Agricultural Products:** Includes fruits, vegetables, grains, herbs, flowers, bedding plants and potted plants. Nurseries must grow plants from seed, plugs, cuttings, bulbs, and bare-root. Woody plants and bedding plants may be re-potted and sold as long as they have been owned for forty-five (45) days. No resale of pre-finished plants is allowed. Plants must be in the possession of the vendor a minimum of forty-five (45) days. All vendors selling plants must obtain a live plant license from the Georgia Department of Agriculture.

B. **Value-added Agricultural Products:** This category includes products made of raw agricultural commodities that have been processed. Examples are jams, jellies, sauces, oils, vinegars, baked goods, molasses, cider and picked out nuts. Sellers must abide by all applicable federal, state, and local health regulations. In addition vendors must adhere to federal guidelines on all labels.

C. **Arts and Crafts and Non-agricultural Products:** Includes approved arts and crafts, handmade soap, handcrafted furniture, pottery, quilted products, and jewelry. Members selling these items must have created them. These items must be handcrafted, original, and exhibit a high level of quality and design. Products not allowed include those made from a kit assembly and direct resale of commercially available products.

D. **Meat and Other Animal Products:** Includes meats, trout, catfish, poultry, milk, cheese, eggs, honey, wool, leather and other products derived from animals. Vendors must abide by all applicable federal, state and local regulations and inspection regimes. In addition, they must adhere to federal or state guidelines on all labels. For example, those persons selling eggs must obtain an egg candling license and be certified by the Georgia Department of Agriculture.

The following products can only be sold at the market if all applicable laws are met:

Meat Products (including trout and catfish), Dairy Products and Organic Products (Farms must be certified through the United States Department of Agriculture to be labeled as an organic product).

National, State and Local Laws and regulations may over-ride any policies that are currently in place at the Union County Farmers Market. To find out more information please visit the Georgia Department of Agriculture website at www.agr.georgia.gov.

All produce must be of the highest quality which is subject to the judgment of the Market Manager. Only USDA certified organic growers may display signs using the word “organic”.

No buying and reselling of produce or other products are allowed with the exception of trout, catfish, peaches, apples, peanuts, pecans, muscadines, pumpkins, sweet potatoes, cantaloupes and watermelons. These products may only be sold by RSVP Vendors. Melons can be sold until they are available locally. The Market Manager makes the decision on melons (usually late August). Strawberries may be resold ONLY during special events but NOT during the regular Market Season (June-Oct). Any violation of this policy will result in the immediate dismissal from the Union County Farmers Market.

Commercial produce stand vendors will not be allowed to sell any item which can be locally produced. Produce stand vendors can sell the items listed above under those circumstances only.

Nursery plants sold at the Union County Farmers Market must be in possession of and cared for by the vendor for forty-five (45) days prior to being sold at the Farmers Market. Anyone selling live plants must have a live plant license available at www.agr.georgia.gov.

Baked goods must be fresh (made within 24 hours of market day). Baked goods must be prepared from scratch (exceptions-nonprofit organizations) meaning there shall be nothing sold using commercially prepared mixes, crusts/shells or fillings. Baked goods must be individually wrapped or, if warm, must be covered and protected from the environment at all times. All baked goods must comply with Georgia Department of Agriculture regulations.

Vendors may only sell food items if they are a non-profit/civic group or if they meet all federal, state and local health department requirements.

No selling of coffee or any other drinks except by the operator of the Food Trailer.

CRAFTS: All crafts are reviewed on a case by case basis. All crafts must be a product of a home or cottage type industry and must be made by the vendor or a member of the vendor’s family. All crafts must be of excellent workmanship in quality and design. All crafts must be “handmade” or “hand crafted”. All applications must include a photograph of the craft. All crafts sold must be listed on the application completed by the vendor.

FARM INSPECTION: No reselling of any products is allowed other than the items previously mentioned. The sale of any product not grown or produced by vendor will result in the expulsion of said vendor from the Union County Farmers Market. Union County Farmers Market management reserves the right to inspect any member’s farm or business to determine whether the member is producing all the said vendor is selling at the market. The Market Manager will be visiting produce farms in May and June for inspections.

PRICING: The pricing of goods is at the discretion of the individual vendor. Vegetables and other products will be sold by the piece or by volume, not by the pound. The use of scales is prohibited at the Union County Farmers Market. Prices should be fair market value.

MARKET DAY RULES: Vendors must be in place 30 minutes prior to the opening of the market or their space may be reassigned. Please call or text the Market Manager at 706-781-8802 before 6:30 AM on market day if you will be late. The Market Manager is responsible for all space assignments.

Each agricultural vendor is allowed one or more spaces. Crafters are limited to one space. Spaces may be reserved for the entire season; otherwise they can be obtained on a first come first served basis. Vendor Fees are \$15 per Saturday and \$10 per Tuesday. During the registration process applications are accepted at the discretion of

market management. If spaces are needed for special reasons, the Market Manager has the power to reserve a specific area. If space becomes a factor, agricultural producers are given top priority.

1. All vendors are expected to conduct themselves in a courteous and respectful manner in dealing with customers and other vendors.
2. No “hawking” of products, distraction of customers from another vendor’s booth, or disparaging remarks about another vendor’s goods will be tolerated.
3. Vendors shall not participate in arguments or make threatening remarks toward other vendors or customers.
4. Vendors shall not interfere with communication between other vendors and their customers; ie-singing or loud music.
5. Vendors will not be allowed to solicit for political or religious purposes.
6. Each vendor is responsible for cleaning up the area around his or her space.
7. No signs, shelving, tables, or furniture of any kind may be left at the market during the week.
8. Nails or screws shall not be mounted to any structure in the market.
9. Anything left at the market will be removed by the Market Manager. Any unauthorized vehicles left at the market in a vendor’s space will be towed.
10. No smoking under or within 10 feet the buildings is tolerated.
11. No pets (customer or vendor) are allowed at the Union County Farmers Market. Service Dogs are permitted.

Electrical power demands are limited to 20 watts on any circuit (comprised of 2-4 outlets). If a particular machine is using more energy than the demand the Market Manager will remove that machine from the circuit.

Safety of customers and vendors at the Union County Farmers Market is a priority. Vendors arriving and departing the market must drive slowly and carefully especially during hours of operation at the market.

MARKET MANAGER: The Market Manager is empowered to answer questions, solve problems and amend market policies. The Market Manager will inform the Union County Farmers Market committee of issues demanding the committee’s attention. The Union County Farmers Market Committee is comprised of vendors, the Market Manager, and personnel from the Union County Commissioner’s Office. The committee’s purpose is to advise the Market Manager about changes in policy at the Union County Farmers Market.

ENFORCEMENT OF MARKET POLICY: Vendor failure to adhere to any Union County Farmers Market Policy set forth herein results:

First Offense-Verbal warning issued.

Second Offense- Will result in expulsion from the Union County Farmers Market.

The Union County Farmers Market Committee reserves the right to amend these policies as is necessary.

TAXES: Individual vendors are responsible for paying their sales taxes. The Union County Farmers Market is not responsible for collection of sales taxes.

NON-DISCRIMINATION CLAUSE: The Union County Farmers Market will not discriminate against anyone because of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, age disability or sexual orientation.

Updated 2/21/19