

# **UNION COUNTY FARMERS MARKET**

## **2021 Market Policies and Operating Rules**

### **Mission**

1. To promote and encourage the development of local, small-scale agriculture.
2. To provide and administer a seasonal marketplace for local producers of agricultural products as well as hand-made arts and crafts.
3. To enhance knowledge about the economic importance of supporting local farmers and the nutritional benefits of eating fresh foods.
4. To promote the local heritage of rural living and the social interaction at Farmers Market.

### **Time and Place**

The Union County Farmers Market operates each Saturday and Tuesday from June through October. Specific times will be announced each year as determined by the Union County Farmers Market Management and the Farmers Market Committee. The Market is located at 290 Farmers Market Way, Blairsville, Georgia.

### **Vendors**

Shall be those local farmers, gardeners, processors, crafters, or artists who actually produce the items for sale at the Market. All vendors must produce their product and reside in Union County or a county contiguous with Union County (Georgia-Union, Fannin, Towns, Lumpkin, White; North Carolina-Clay, Cherokee). These vendors must be the original producers, family members of producers, or employees of producers of all the items being sold at the Market.

Those vendors selling processed foods must meet all county, state and federal requirements. For more information regarding these requirements please call the Georgia Department of Agriculture at 1-800-282-5852 and the Union County Health Department at 706-781-3824. All vendors must abide by all applicable federal, state and local regulations and inspection regimes. In addition, vendors must adhere to federal and state guidelines on all required labels.

Recognized Civic groups/non-profits organizations 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 dates for participation.

### **What can be sold at the Market?**

A. Raw Agricultural Products: includes fruits, vegetables, grains, herbs, flowers, mushrooms, honey, bedding plants, potted plants, as well as meat and other animal products including beef, pork, poultry, lamb, milk and eggs. 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 in the seller's possession for 45 days. No re-sale of pre-finished plants is allowed. Fresh cut flowers are also allowed to be sold as long as those are grown by the vendor. Mushrooms sold must have been grown by the vendor on his property.

All vendors must meet and abide by license requirements from the Georgia Department of Agriculture, the Union County Health Department as well as those required by USDA. These include: the use of the word "organic", a Live Plant License, an Egg Candling License, a forager's license for mushrooms, USDA certification for selling meat, a license for selling milk and the proper label on jars of honey.

B. Value Added Products are those grown by a person and processed by the same person. These include products made of raw agricultural products. Examples are cheese, cider, pickled out nuts, dog treats, wool, sorghum syrup, leather, and soaps made with herbs, honey and goat milk produced on their farm. These vendors must adhere to federal, state and local licenses and guidelines on their labels.

C. Prepared Foods as defined includes any act used in the preparation process other than washing. These are pre-packaged and ready to eat and include breads, rolls, biscuits, cakes, pastries, cookies, candies, fruit pies, jams, jellies, preserves, dried herb seasonings, cereals, trail mixes, granola, coated nuts, popcorn and flavored vinegar. Vendors selling these must obtain a Cottage Food License from the Georgia Department of Agriculture. All vendors selling any food item must meet federal, state and local regulations.

D. Arts and Crafts include approved arts and crafts, handmade soap (not produced by a farmer), handcrafted furniture, pottery, quilted products, jewelry, cutlery, candles etc. Members selling these items must have created them. The items must be handcrafted, original, and exhibit a high level of quality and design. Products from a kit assembly are not allowed to be sold. Direct resale of any item is not allowed. T-Shirts may be sold if those T-shirts are being made by farmers and are a promotional item of that farm.

### **Important Notes**

1. National, State and Local laws may over-ride any Union County Farmers Market Policies. For more information, please visit the Georgia Department of Agriculture website at [www.agr.georgia.gov](http://www.agr.georgia.gov).

2. 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".

3. There shall be no buying and reselling of produce or other products with the exception of trout, catfish, peaches, apples, peanuts, pecans, muscadines, pumpkins, sweet potatoes, cantaloupes and watermelons. Melons can be purchased and resold until local melons are available. These products may only be sold by RSVP Vendors. Strawberries may be resold only during special events, but, not during the regular Market season. Commercial produce stand vendors will not be allowed to sell any item which can be locally produced locally with the exception of items they grow and are verified by the Market Manager.

4. Nursery plants sold at the Farmers Market must be in the possession of and maintained by the vendor for 45 days prior to being sold at the Farmers Market. Any vendor selling live plants at the Farmers Market must meet Georgia Department of Agriculture regulations, ie- Live Plant License.

5. All baked goods require a cottage food license and must comply with Georgia Department of Agriculture regulations. These 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.

6. All crafts are reviewed on a case by case basis. They shall 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. They must be of excellent workmanship in quality and design and must be "hand-made" or "hand-crafted".

7. The Union County Farmers Market Management Team reserves the right to visit and inspect any vendor's farm or production site to verify that items being sold are being produced at the farm or production site. No re-selling of products is allowed at the Farmers Market other than the items previously mentioned. The sale of any product not grown or produced by the vendor could result in the expulsion of said vendor from the Union County Farmers Market.

8. 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.

9. If a vendor cannot be present on a Saturday Market Day, the vendor must either call or email the Market Manager before 12:00 noon on Friday.

10. Vendors must be in place 30 minutes prior to the opening of the Farmers Market Opening at 7 a.m. or their space will be reassigned. If a vendor cannot avoid being late or has an unexpected emergency, vendor must **call or text** the Market Manager at **706-781-8802** prior to 6:30 on Market Day.

11. Seasonal booth reservations are available to vendors willing to commit to attending a majority of all Market Days unless extenuating circumstance dictate otherwise, such as illness. These seasonal reservations are made by the Market Manager and Staff and are based upon seniority, consistent attendance and market needs. Vendors may not sublet stall space or share it with another vendor without prior approval from the Market Manager.

Craft vendors are limited to 1 space. Agricultural Vendors may be allowed 1 or more spaces. Additional spaces will be granted by the Market Manager to qualified farmers.

Walk-up vendors can obtain a space on a first-come, first-serve basis. However, agricultural vendors have the priority. All 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.

### **Market Day Rules**

1. All vendors are expected to conduct themselves in a courteous and respectful manner when dealing with customers, other vendors and market staff.
2. No “hawking” of products, distracting of customers from another vendor’s space, 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, customers and market staff.
4. Vendors or non-profits shall not interfere with the communication between other vendors and their customers.
5. There shall not be any solicitation for political or religious reasons.
6. Each vendor is responsible for sweeping their space of any debris after the Market Day.
7. No signs, shelving, tables, or furniture shall be left at the Market during the week.
8. Nails and screws shall not be mounted in any structure or post at the Farmers Market.
9. Anything including unauthorized vehicles left in a vendor’s space after the Market Day will be removed.
10. No smoking within 25 feet of the building.
11. No pets are allowed on the north side (market side) of Butternut Creek except for trained service dogs and those dogs at the pup tent.
12. The electrical power demands are limited to 20 watts of energy on any circuit. If a particular machine is using more energy than the demand the Market Manager reserves the right to remove that machine from the circuit.
13. Safety of customers and vendors is a priority at the Farmers Market. Therefore, both vendors and customers departing and arriving at the Market must drive slowly and carefully especially during hours of operation and set-up.
14. The Market Manager is empowered to answer questions, solve problems, and amend Market policies. The Market Manager will inform the Union County Farmers Market Advisory Committee of issues demanding their attention. This committee is comprised of vendors, and the Market Management team. The committee’s purpose is to advise the Market Manager in matters of policy.
15. Vendor failure of adherence to these policies set forth herein results: a first offense brings verbal warning and the second offense brings expulsion from the Market.
16. The Union County Farmers Market is not responsible for collecting sales tax. Vendors are responsible for collecting and paying their own sales tax.

The Union County Farmers Market does not discriminate against anyone because of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, age, disability or sexual orientation.