

**Operational Guidelines
Downtown Sylvester Farmers' Market
Sylvester, Georgia
2012 Market Season**



The Downtown Sylvester Farmer's Market provides a direct market for farmers, growers, producers and artisans to come and sell their products to help sustain the regional agriculture economy. The Downtown Sylvester Farmers' Market also promotes education of the community emphasizing the correlation between food choices and the impact they have on the general health and the environment.

1. Introduction

The Downtown Sylvester Farmers' Market provides a direct market for farmers, growers, producers and artisans to come and sell their products to help sustain the regional agriculture economy. The Downtown Sylvester Farmers' Market also promotes education of the community emphasizing the correlation between food choices and the impact they have on general health and the environment. The purpose of the Market is to promote and stimulate economic development and create traffic in the Downtown area, to provide a community social gathering place, to provide opportunity for consumers to purchase farm grown goods and to create a sales venue for our local area farmers.

2. Time and Place

The Downtown Sylvester Farmers' Market times and location will be announced each year. The Downtown Sylvester Farmers' Market will begin the 2012 season on May 5, 2012 and run through November 24, 2012. The location will be the Depot and the grassy area surrounding the building. The market hours are every Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Market Saturday's will be added after the market season to promote harvest market days for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Years.

3. Definition of Local

As defined by the Downtown Farmers' Market, local is any produce, craft or other item grown or made in Worth County or any of it contiguous counties in the surrounding areas.(Crisp, Mitchell, Tift, Lee, Dougherty ,Colquitt and Turner Counties). Permitted products: At least 50% of total produce sold must be homegrown, and the vendor must have participated in the production of the items for sale. Processed items and crafts should all be handcrafted by the vendor from all-natural products.

4. Vendors

All vendors must submit an application to the Downtown Enhancement Director (Market Manager) in accordance with section 7 below. Only vendors registered and approved in accordance with these rules may sell at the market. Applications are available by contacting the Sylvester Downtown Enhancement Office or the Farmers' Market President and must be submitted 1 week in advance of the first market the Vendor wishes to attend. Applications shall be sent to the attention of the Downtown Enhancement Director. Applications will be required every year. Any dispute of a determination made by the President of the Farmers' Market may

be appealed to the Downtown Enhancement Director (Market Manager) and the Sylvester Farmers' Market Committee.

- A) **Farm Vendors:** the Downtown Sylvester Farmers' Market strives to be a local producers-only market. By selling at the Downtown Sylvester Farmers' Market the vendor assures that she/he is the primary grower of the produce being sold or that the produce being sold is grown in an area defined by the Downtown Sylvester Farmers' Market as "local" (see section 3) Vendors wishing to offer samples must adhere to all appropriate state regulations. No wholesale brokers are allowed. Farm vendors must agree to allow a farm inspection by the Downtown Sylvester Farmers' Market personnel if requested.
- B) **Artisan/Craft Vendors:** the Downtown Sylvester Farmers' Market strives to provide a venue for locally made crafts that are well conceived, expertly executed, and hand made by the artist. Craft vendors must submit an application to the Downtown Sylvester Farmers' Market Manager in accordance with section 4 (B) and section 7 below. The craft vendor applicant must be local (see section 3) and the applicant must make her/his own craft items. The first priority will be given to crafts which feature materials which are found naturally in our region. Craft vendors must agree to allow the personnel of the Downtown Sylvester Farmers' Market Officials to inspect their facilities if requested.
- C) **Food Vendors:** The Downtown Sylvester Farmers' Market strives to showcase food made from local ingredients and made by local vendors. Food vendors must submit a food vendor application to the Downtown Sylvester Farmers' Market in accordance with section 4 (c) and section 7, below. The food vendor applicant must be local (see section 3) and the applicant must make her/his own food items. **All food vendors must maintain appropriate Health Department certification and adhere to all local, state, and federal laws regarding food safety and have permits available. All prepared food processor facilities must comply with Worth County Health Department regulations. (this process is lengthy and requires a minimum of 30 days to be approved)**

5. **What can be sold**

A majority of products offered for sale at the market must be grown or produced by the vendor selling them. Vendors may sell:

- A) **Produce:** the strong preference of the Downtown Sylvester Farmers' Market is that local produce be seasonal food grown within Worth County or any of the contiguous counties areas (see section 3) However, if a farmer outside the area defined in section 3 deems it economically feasible to travel some greater distance with her/his own produce, that produce may be considered eligible for sale. As with all vendors to the Downtown Sylvester Farmers' Market an application (see section 7) must be submitted and reviewed by the Downtown Sylvester Farmers' Market personnel.
The sale of meats, eggs, dairy, organic items from growers without organic certification and low acid/acidified foods such as canned vegetables, salsas, pickles, etc. are subject to specific federal and state regulations. **Vendors are responsible for ensuring their products meet all federal, state, and local regulations. Fresh Produce: Must be either homegrown or grown in the Deep South. You cannot label it as "organic" unless you have USDA certification or show that you qualify under USDA exemptions, however you can use other**

words/phrases to describe your product. Produce vendors must complete and display a standard price sheet indicating price and origin of each item. Price sheets and display frames are provided at market. The committee reserves the right to request removal of low-quality produce from a vendor's table. The committee may request a farm visit to verify farm practices.

- B) **Crafts:** Local crafts are works that are well conceived, expertly executed, and made by hand by the artist from within Worth County or any of the surrounding areas (see section 3). However, if an artisan outside the area defined in section 3 deems it economically feasible to travel some greater distance with her/his own craft items, those items may be considered eligible for sale. As with all vendors to Downtown Sylvester Farmers' Market, an application (see section 7) must be submitted and reviewed by the Downtown Sylvester Farmers' Market Personnel. A sample of the craft or high-quality photograph of the craft the vendor plans to sell must accompany the application. No applications will be considered without a sample and /or photograph. Categories of crafts include but are not limited to basketry, leather, wood, candles, soap, and dried flowers.
- C) **Food:** The Downtown Sylvester Farmers' Market encourages local food vendors to sell wholesome, healthy foods using fresh ingredients while minimizing disposable containers and wrappers. Foods sold should highlight regional produce/products and seasonal ingredients. Local vendor is defined as within Worth County or any of its surrounding areas (see section 3 above). However, if a food vendor outside the area defined in section 3 deems it economically feasible to travel some greater distance with her/his own food items it may be considered eligible for sale. As with all vendors at the Downtown Sylvester Farmers' Market, an application (see section 7) must be submitted and reviewed by the Downtown Sylvester Farmers' Market Personnel. A limited amount of prepared foods may be approved for sale and should feature current, seasonal ingredients which are sold at the market. Food vendors must comply with all federal, state, and local regulations and must submit proof of certifications upon request.
- a. Homemade from-scratch baked goods. No mixes. All packaged food products must be labeled to indicate all ingredients, as well as the name, address, and phone of provider. Local products should be used and featured whenever possible.
 - b. Home-canned jellies and jams (all packaged food products must be labeled to indicate all ingredients, as well as the name, address, and phone of producer)
 - c. Locally- produced honey and syrup (labeled as above, see section 3)
 - d. Locally/regionally roasted coffee (labeled as above, see section 3)
 - e. Locally - grown nuts. Boiled peanuts or roasted pecans may be sold in bags but must be from the vendor's farm and processed on farm. (labeled as above, see section 3)
- D) **What Products Cannot Be Sold Without Proper Certification:**
- a. **Meat Products** – Governed by Georgia Meat Compliance Laws
 - b. **Eggs** – Governed by the Georgia Egg Law
 - c. **Dairy Products** – Governed by the Georgia Dairy Law
 - d. **Organic Products** –From Growers or Processors without an Organic Certification

- e. **Low Acid/Acidified Foods (Canned Vegetables, Pickles, Salsa, etc)** – Unless the Processor is licensed (met all the requirements) and has completed Better Process Control School.

6. General Market Operation

- A) **Space Allocation:** Vendors will be pre-assigned a vendor table stalls at the time their application is approved. Vendors stationed along the side of the Depot are limited to a table size of 6x3. If additional space is needed please indicate on the application. Vendors who pay on a weekly basis will not be guaranteed vendor tables stall under the depot if vacancy is unavailable.
- B) **Set-up and check-in:** All vendors must be set up at 8:30 a.m. and must check-in with the Market Manager before selling. (No exceptions) Participants must supply their own change and bags.
- C) **Take-down:** Vendors will stay for the full duration of the market. If a vendor sells out, they should display a sign indicating “sold out”.
- D) **Clean-up:** Vendors are required to keep their areas clean during the Market and to clean up their areas when the Market is over. This will be enforced by the Farmers’ Market personnel.
- E) **Parking:** Vendors are responsible for removing their vehicle (out of the direct market area) after unloading their supply. No selling from vehicles.
- F) **Signage and displays:** Vendors should plan an attractive and inviting display of their products. Vendors are required to provide their own table if one is not provided. If necessary, tents may be used in grassy area if vendors are not setup under the depot shed. Signs may be used for vendor display, and is strongly encouraged. No products may be displayed on the ground unless in an appropriate container. Signs should be displayed to identify products, price, identification of the farm/farmer, and origin of products. Certified organic products may be labeled as such with appropriate documentation available.
- G) **Tobacco Free:** The Downtown Sylvester Farmers’ Market is a Tobacco free environment.
- H) **Alcohol:** Alcoholic beverage consumption is not permitted on the premises.

7. Application process

All potential market vendors (produce, crafts, and food) must submit a complete application to the Sylvester Downtown Enhancement Office before the first market week in which the vendor intends to participate. The Downtown Sylvester Farmers’ Market personnel will review and approve or deny the application based on conformance to the rules outlined herein and will notify the vendor of the approval/non-approval of the application within one week of the submittal. There is no guarantee the application will be processed any sooner that one week. Vendors are encouraged to submit their application well in advance of the market they plan to attend to ensure their application will have sufficient time to be processed. If approved, the application will allow the vendor to participate in the Downtown Sylvester Farmers’ Market for the rest of the season without the necessity of re-submittal. If approved or denied, the vendor will be notified.

8. Fees

- A) Annual fee for all Farm/Food vendors is \$100, guarantees a secured spot and table for all market days in the season. Due by April 4, 2012.
- B) Monthly fee for all Farm/Food vendors is \$20 per month for all market days in that month.
- C) Craft Vendors will pay \$7.00 per market.

9. Enforcement Process

Downtown Sylvester Farmers' Market vendors are expected to abide by regulations established for the Market. The Downtown Sylvester Farmers' Market personnel, Market Manager, or her/his designee, individually or collectively, may enforce said regulations. Vendors agree that violation of any regulation which is called to a vendor's attention will be rectified in a manner prescribed by the Market Manager or designee.

Violation(s) of any Market rule(s) should be reported to the Market Manager or designee, and vendors or members of the public are discouraged from addressing violations directly with the offending vendor. The Market Manager or designee will address the violation verbally with the offending vendor as soon as reasonably possible, and will offer the opportunity to remediate the stated violation. Failure to remediate the violation within an appropriate period of time, which is determined by the Market Manager or designee, may result in the loss of the right to participate in the Market. Should loss of privileges occur, the offending vendor may be asked to vacate the Market premises immediately, or as soon as feasibly possible. The Market Manager or designee should at all times attempt to have another Market Board member present when confronting an offending vendor, to witness the exchange. Penalties will be assessed based upon the severity of the violation, including but not limited to non-refundable vendor fee. A minor violation may be addressed by offending product or behavior immediately corrected, without further penalty. More serious violations, or repeat violations, may result in removal from the Market at which the violation is occurring. Chronic or serious violation of regulations may result in the revocation of the right to attend multiple markets or in permanent removal of Market participation privileges as determined by the Downtown Sylvester Farmer's Market personnel. For any violation of Market rules, a written notice of the violation will be mailed or hand-delivered to the violator.

Vendors, members of the public, and/or customers attending the Market are expected to act as one would reasonably find acceptable in a public place. Those displaying offensive, abusive, illegal, or otherwise disruptive behavior may be asked to leave the Market premises by the Market Manager or designee. Disruptive behavior may include, but is not limited to, smoking, consumption of alcoholic beverages, public intoxication, display or possession of lewd or pornographic material, unruly and/or dangerous pets, loud or offensive noise, profanity, or any activity which violates federal, state, or local laws, or statutes. Local authorities may be called upon to help resolve any issues. Any notice of violation of the Downtown Sylvester Farmers' Market regulations may be appealed by formal letter to the Downtown Sylvester Farmers' Market personnel.

10. Federal, State and Local Compliance

It is the responsibility of the Downtown Sylvester Farmers' Market vendors and other market participants to know and follow all applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations.

11. Hold Harmless and Indemnification

Vendors and other participants in the activities of the Downtown Sylvester Farmers' Market shall undertake such participation in the Downtown Sylvester Farmers' Market or activity in the Market at their own risk. Such vendors and participants shall hold harmless and indemnify the City of Sylvester, Georgia, its officers, agents, and employees, as well as the Downtown Sylvester Farmers' Market, its committeemen, directors, officers, agents, employees, sponsors, and site owners, from all loss, harm, and damage, or liability incurred as a result of or arising from any participation in or activities undertaken by such vendors or participants with respect to the Downtown Sylvester Farmers' Market. All such vendors or participants shall execute and deliver to the City of Sylvester the Hold Harmless Clause and Participation Agreement form attached hereto before commencing any activity upon or in connection with the Downtown Sylvester Farmers' Market.

12. Notice of Change to these Rules and Procedures

These rules and operational procedures are subject to change at the discretion of the Downtown Sylvester Farmers Market personnel after notification at least one week prior to the implementation of any new rules.

The Downtown Sylvester Farmers' Market and the City of Sylvester require that the facilities be left in satisfactory condition. Any damage or excessive clean-up will result in a maintenance billing and the possible loss of your vendor privilege to use the facility in the future.

We will ask each vendor for estimate gross sales at the end of each market. The information will be kept confidential and listed according to category, not vendor. This will help the market make sound decisions for growth and assist in grant applications. We will provide paperwork at each market for you to keep track.

If you have any questions about the operational guidelines, please contact John L. Green at 229-272-4262 or Brittany Evans at 229-430-7735.