

Vendor FAQ's

Hants County Ex Farmers' Market is primarily a Farmers' Market, and we always strive to maintain our ration of primary to secondary producers at 60% primary, 40% secondary.

Location: 221 Wentworth Road, Windsor, N.S. The market will be held outside in our courtyard. Please bring your own table/booth and tent if you have one. Each vendor will have a 10x10 allotted space.

When: Thursdays, 4 p.m. – 7 p.m. Opening on June 2, 2022 and closing September 29, 2022.

Cost: The fee is \$10 per week if you attend all 18 consecutive weeks (full season)

The fee is 12\$ per week for 8-17 consecutive weeks (part season) and \$15 per week on a week to week basis.

Contact information: hantscountyex@eastlink.ca Outside the part-time market manager, please understand that this is a 100% volunteer committee market. Volunteers are generously giving their time to organize this for the community; positive and constructive feedback are welcome.

We are not bound by any particular set of criteria and reserve the right to accept or refuse anyone as a vendor. Our basic criteria are as follows:

- The vendor must be a primary or secondary producer.
- A minimum of 85% of the product sold by food producers must be of the vendors own production. Up to 15% may be someone else's production on market days. This must be approved by the Vendor Committee and meet our product guidelines set out in vendor handbook.
- 100% of all products sold by non-food vendors (artisans, crafters, etc.) must be of their own production
- There must be an available space in the appropriate product category.
- Direct reselling of products is not permitted.
- Styrofoam containers for dispensing food product are not permitted.
- Plastic use should be minimized as much as possible

Vendor Resources: Accepted Vendors are expected to familiarize themselves with each document: (all are available on the website)

- A copy of this application
- Hants County Ex Farmers' Market Vendor Handbook

Roles & Responsibilities

Market Manager

The Market Manager is responsible for: managing the property on Market days; recruiting and scheduling vendors; fostering vendor relationships; coordinating public relations; assisting with financial and budget matters; monitoring the quality and appropriateness of products sold; administering and advising on rules and policies; serving as the Market's public and corporate representative, and liaising with the Hants County Ex Farmer' Market Board on a regular basis.

Vendors

Vendors are at the heart of the Hants County Ex Farmers' Market and come from throughout Hants and Kings Counties with a few from the Halifax Regional Municipality as well. At many markets vendors organize themselves, set policies, hire staff, undertake marketing and promotions, and jointly rent a large space. At the Hants County Ex Farmers' Market, vendors rent individual spaces, and are free to focus on their own products, sales and personal marketing and displays, while the volunteer board members of the HCEX Farmers Market and the Market Manager take care of the detailed aspects of Market operation.

Seasonal Vendors are expected to commit to all Thursday markets during the regular market season. In exchange for this commitment, seasonal vendors:

- are guaranteed a weekly space
- are given special consideration when assigning spaces
- are given the first option to apply to attend the Christmas Markets
- are able participant in the Vendor Advisory Committee

Occasional Vendors participate in the Market on a week-to-week basis. The Market Manager maintains a list of interested Occasional Vendors and may contact vendors as space permits.

Hants County Ex Farmers' Market
Food Vending Checklist 2022

All Food Vendors are required to submit a copy of their Food Handling Course Certificate and Market Permit (if applicable)

Before selling any food products at the Hants County Ex Farmers Market, a food vendor must complete the following requirements and sign the checklist once complete.

I have read the NS Environmental Health and Food Safety Division Food Safety Guidelines for Public Markets.

Having read the Guidelines for Public Markets, I understand which of my products are Schedule A products and Schedule B products and that I cannot sell products under Schedule C at the Hants County Ex Farmers' Market.

If selling any Schedule A Products:

I have spoken with the Food Safety Specialist (FSS) to determine what practices I must adhere to in order to satisfy Food Safety Regulations.

I am adhering to these practices

I have applied for and received my annual Schedule A Public Market Permit.

I have asked the FSS if I should take the Food Handling Course and followed her/his recommendation.

If selling and Schedule B Products:

I have spoken to the Food Safety Specialist (FSS) to determine if there are any specific practices I must adhere to

I have asked the FSS if I should take the Food Handling Course and followed her/his recommendation

I have applied for and obtained my Schedule B Public Market Permit

Name (Please Print): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX D

Vendor Concern Form

Vendors who have concerns about marketing operations, vendor policies, or other vendors' compliance with market rules, should submit this Concern Form. The Hants County Ex Farmers' Market will not reveal the inquiring vendor's name to anyone. Please submit this form directly to market management on the market day or within a week of the market during which the alleged violation occurred.

Current Date:_____ Your Vendor Business Name:_____

Your Contact Information (name, phone number, email or mailing address):

Your Concern. (If applicable, please use your Vendor Handbook to reference the rule or policy with which you have a concern. If this is a complaint regarding a Vendor, specify Vendor's Name)

Market Date and approximate time at which the violation occurred (if any):

Signed

Dated

For Market Use Only:

Notes

Date Rec'd _____

By _____

Fee Rec'd _____

APPENDIX E

Product Challenge Form

Vendors can submit this challenge form when they believe another Vendor is misrepresenting their product. There is a fee of \$20 filing fee (which can be shared by a group of Vendors). This fee is returned to the challenger(s) if the claim is verified. Please submit this form directly to market management on the market day or within a week of the market during which the alleged violation occurred. The Hants County Ex Farmers' Market will not reveal challenge(s) identities to anyone.

Name of the vendor about whose product you are challenging:

Specific product(s) that you are challenging:

Market date and approximate time at which the product is being sold:

Please state the specifics of the violation. Provide any evidence that supports your challenge:

Your name, business name, addresses and phone number:

Signed

Dated

For Market Use Only:

Notes:

Date Rec'd _____

By _____

Fee Rec'd _____

Vendor Advisory Committee (VAC)

The Vendor Advisory Committee provides vendor perspective on issues and opportunities relating to vendor activities and Market operations. It assists the Market Manager in reviewing new vendor applications. It assists the Market Manager and Board Members of HCEX in reviewing Market rules and policies and procedures, vendor complaints and conduct issues.

At the beginning of each Market season, the Market Manager will invite expressions of interest from Seasonal Vendors for volunteer membership on the VAC. From all interested vendors, a member will be drawn in each of the five major product categories – field produce, meat & fish, plants & flowers, prepared foods & beverages and arts & crafts. It is our goal to have new members on the VAC each season.

Vendor Advisory Committee members will be expected to attend meetings as needed outside of regular market days and respond to all communications promptly. VAC members are also welcome to request meeting themselves if issues arise. Meetings of the VAC will be chaired by the Market Manager. VAC members are expected to contribute their views in an honest, balanced and productive manner.

Dates and Times Location

The Hants County Ex Farmers' Market operates at Exhibition Park, 221 Wentworth Road, Windsor, N.S.

The park is covered under the Windsor Mesh network; this is an unsecured network. It is not recommended that the network be used when processing payments.

Thursday Markets

The Thursday Market operates from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. The Market opens on June 2nd and ends on September 29th, 2022. Dates are determined each year.

3. Vendor Application

All vendors (seasonal and occasional) applying for a Market space must:

1. Submit a completed application form annually.
2. Agree to pay fees as outlined in this handbook
3. Meet all the criteria for vendors, and accept the policies outlined in this handbook and on the application form.
4. Acknowledge that vendor acceptance is non-transferable. Any change in ownership of a business will result in termination of the vendor acceptance and necessitate the filing of a new application.

Note: Food vendors must read and sign the Food Vending Checklist to indicate their agreement to adhere to all requirements, terms and conditions contained therein.

Criteria for Vendor Selection

The Hants County Ex Farmers' Market is committed to creating a diverse and vibrant marketplace with the highest quality, locally produced products available. HCEX Market is not bound to apply a particular set of selection criteria in every instance, and reserves discretion to accept or refuse any application and vendor at any time. All vendors, current and interested, are required to apply annually.

The Market Manager and the Vendor Advisory Committee are responsible for the review of new and current vendor applications. All vendors are presented to the Board for final approval.

Many factors are considered when evaluating vendor applications, beginning with the Basic Vendor Criteria as set out by the Farmers' Market.

Basic Vendor Criteria

1. Each vendor at the HCEX Farmers' Market must be a primary or secondary producer.
2. 100% of all products sold by non-food vendors (artisans, crafters, etc.) must be of their own production
3. A minimum of eighty five percent (85%) of product sold by food producers at the Market on market days must be of the Vendor's own production and the remaining fifteen percent (15%) must also abide by our product guidelines per market during the market season. (Noncompliance will be addressed by the Manager)
4. There must be an available spot in the appropriate producer category

The determining factor in placing a vendor in a primary or secondary category is the source of the vendor's raw materials.

Primary Producer: a producer that grows or harvests raw materials for direct sale or manufacture into secondary products.

Secondary Producer: a producer that purchases raw materials for local manufacture into secondary products.

As a Farmers' Market, the HCEX Farmers' Market strives to have 60% of our vendor-ship comprised of primary producers.

General Considerations

In addition to the basic criteria, approval/refusal of a vendor application may also be determined in accordance with the following general consideration.

Product Quality and Presentation

- Consistently high product quality: fresh, flavourful and ripe
- Clean and attractive displays
- Courteous, strong customer service and knowledgeable staff
- Foster a connection between the producer and the consumer

Conduct and Compliance

- Compliance with all market rules, policies and procedures
- Compliance with all federal, provincial and local laws and regulations pertaining in any manner whatsoever to the vendor's business.
- Positive vendor conduct toward customers, fellow vendors, Market staff, and volunteers.
- Billing and payment history
- Attendance record

Product Balancing

- Products that are unique or unusual
- Products not already represented in the Market
- Product not readily available through national distribution channels

Food Safety and Production

- Adherence to the highest standards of animal husbandry, safe food production and handling
- As a minimum, complies with the requirements set forth in the NS Environmental Health and Food Safety Division Food Safety Guidelines for Public Markets
- Promptly takes required corrective actions in the event that a Government Inspector notifies the vendor, his employees or representatives that such corrective action is required regarding the production, labeling, handling, storage, distribution or sale of their product.
- Adherence to all applicable laws and regulations pertaining in any manner to the production, labeling, handling, storage, distribution and sale of the vendor's products (e.g. The Animal Protection Act of Nova Scotia for those vendors producing and selling products such as eggs, cheese, beef, pork, lamb, etc.)

Space Availability

- Admission to Hants County Ex Farmers' Market is subject to space availability

Agriculture

- Priority is given to those regional farmers and producers who bring product to market that is 100% grown and harvested on farmland that they own and/or operate
- Preference will be given to the most local producers when a space becomes available at the market, without compromising quality or diversity.
- Farmers have priority over processed and on premise prepared foods.
- Farmers producing and selling meat, dairy, poultry, etc. products must practice responsible animal husbandry
- Farmers that use environmentally responsible growing, breeding, raising and harvesting methods will also have priority.

Prepared Foods

- Products available locally should be sourced locally and directly from their producers where possible
- Priority will be given to products processed by the vendor over products by a second party or co-packer.

Product Guidelines

The Hants County Ex Farmers' Market focuses on locally produced agriculture and crafts. Other products or services that may fit in the Market environment are assessed on an individual basis. Goods purchased for resale that are not made by hand locally, prepared locally or grown locally may not be sold.

*Each vendor is responsible for obtaining all necessary permits and licenses for their products and for ensuring that these permits and licenses remain current at all times. If at any time a vendor's license and/or permit is revoked for any reason whatsoever, they are required to immediately notify the Market Manager. If at any time, a vendor, their employee or representative is notified by a Government Inspector that they must take corrective action to address any deficiencies regarding production, labeling, handling, storage, distribution and sale of the vendor's products, the vendor must notify the Market Manager and provide the Market Manager with a copy of the Inspector's report, if one has been issued. The vendor must take prompt corrective action to address the deficiency identified by the Inspector.

Produce

The HCEX Farmers' Market supports farm fresh, locally grown products and is not an outlet for wholesale produce. Produce should be insect free, fresh and have no residue that cannot be removed by normal washing. Only the highest quality produce will be allowed for sale at the Market. The Market Manager has the

right to request any vendor to remove any merchandise deemed, in the sole discretion of the Market Manager, to be unacceptable to the Market.

Meat – Claim of Ownership

Beef - minimum of 12 months on the individual's farm. Preferably the animal should be born on the individual's farm. This ensures that the vendor knows what the animal's health history is and is imperative for selling the products as from the vendor's farm.

Grass-fed Beef – the animal needs to be born on the individual's farm and reside there until butchering

Lamb – minimum three months on the individual's farm, preferably the animal should be born on the individual's farm. This is imperative if the lamb is to be sold as from the vendor's farm.

Grass-fed Lamb – the animal needs to be born on the individual's farm and reside there until butchering

Pork – minimum four months on the individual's farm, preferably the animal should be born on the individual's farm. This is imperative if the pork is to be sold as from the vendor's farm.

Other Production:

Up to 15% of a food producer's products may be of someone else's production on market days, under these conditions:

- It must be an agricultural or food product grown or produced in Nova Scotia
- It must be specifically approved by the Market Manager to ensure that the product fills a gap in the offerings being made at the market
- Vendors will be required to display signage each market day indicating the source/origin of each product not of their own production.

Product Labeling

All labeling must comply with the standards set out in the NS Environmental Health & Food Safety Division's Food Safety Guidelines for Public Markets as well as any other labeling requirements necessary for the vendor's product.

Organic Labeling

For a product to be labeled or represented as organic it must be certified organic per the Organic Grade Regulations in the Agriculture and Marketing Act.

Landscape Plants & Live Flowers

Plants must be propagated in soil by the vendor from seed, cuttings, bulbs, or plant divisions. The vendor must have grown all products for sale.

Food Items and Prepared Foods

Prepared items must be produced by the vendor from basic ingredients. The Market may, at its discretion, limit the number and product mix of food vendors. Ingredients should be sourced locally and from the market wherever possible.

Arts and Crafts

The Market welcomes a limited number of local artisans whose products reflect unique methods, and/or local heritage.

Onsite Inspection

The HCEX Farmers' Market reserves the right to do farm or site inspections of any product and/or process for the purposes of verification and to ensure that products sold at the market comply with market policies and requirements. Onsite inspections will be performed by the Market Manager and vendor will receive 48 hours notice.

Space Assignment

Spaces are assigned with consideration to the length of time at the Market, continuity, product presentations, and the best interest of the entire Market. Seasonal Vendors are given primary consideration in assigning spaces. Vendors may request assignment to a particular space at the time of application. A space is identified Single space as an approximately 10x10 feet with one selling side.

Transfers of Space Assignments

- Vendors may not sublet space to others without prior approval of the Market Manager
- Reservation of spaces establishes neither right to nor guarantee of space rental in subsequent years.
- If a vendor sells his or her business, he or she may not transfer his or her Market space to the new owner. The new owner must submit an application for approval – acceptance is not guaranteed.
- Change in space assignment for vendors may occur at the Market Manager's discretion. Notice will be given

Spaces for Seasonal Vendors are typically kept in the same location all year; however, changes may be required in mid-season to balance product distribution, improve traffic flow, or to meet individual vendor needs. The Market Manager maintains the discretion to change spaces as required.

Fees

All fees are subject to change at the discretion of the Board of the HCEX Farmers' Market. General changes to fees will be discussed in advance with the Vendor Advisory Committee. All efforts will be made not to change fees during the Market season, except as a result of changes in government taxes, fees, dues, etc.

Vendor fees vary for Seasonal Vendors and Occasional Vendors. Fees for the 2022 season have been set as follows:

Hand-wash Stations

Food vendors are required to ensure they meet all food permit requirements including hand wash stations. There is washroom availability.

Payment Methods – All Vendors

All vendors (Seasonal and Occasional) must pay for their booth on the market day they attend. Failure to do so will affect future attendance at Market with possible termination of the vendors' participation at market; this

will be assessed by the Market Manager, the Vendor Committee and the Board of ACFM. Payment can be by cash or cheque, given to the Market Manager. All cheques should be made out to the "HCEX Farmers' Market".

Cancellations & NSF

Vendors with space reservations are responsible for occupying that space for the duration of the term they reserved. Vendors not able to attend a reserved Market date are required to call or email the Market Manager with at least 48 hours notice.

A \$25 fee will be charged for any cheques returned due to non-sufficient funds. If one (1) cheque is returned due to non-sufficient funds, the vendor may be asked to pay their vendor fees in cash for the remainder of the season.

4. Vendor Guidelines and Regulations

The following regulations and guidelines are established to create clear expectations, address potential issues or concerns, protect the best interests and reputation of the Market and to make the Market a safe and enjoyable place for vendors, staff, volunteers, and patrons.

The Market Manager, consulting with the Vendor Committee and approval of the Board, may make modifications and additions as required. The Market Manager shall deal with any items not specifically covered by these rules on market days, at his/her discretion.

Vendor Requirements

- Vendors must bring an adequate supply of their primary product(s) to every market
- Vendors must adhere to the highest ethical and legal standards of quality, service and business practices.
- Subletting of space(s) is not permitted.
- Vendors must honour all HCEX Farmers' Market promotions including Market Money
- Vendors must not practice distress pricing
- Smoking is not permitted in the market area – please review the Smoking Bylaw in the Regional Municipality of Windsor/West Hants for full details.
- All food vendors must comply with the requirements set by Canadian Food Inspection Agency, the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture and the Nova Scotia Environment's Environmental Health and Food Safety Division.
- All food vendors producing and selling products such as eggs, cheese, beef, pork, lamb, etc.
- Must adhere to all applicable laws and regulations pertaining in any manner to the production, labeling, handling, storage, distribution and sale of the vendor's products (e.g. The Animal Protection Act of Nova Scotia)
- If at any time, a vendor is notified by a Government Inspector that they must take corrective action to address any deficiencies regarding production, labeling, handling, storage, distribution and sale of the vendor's product, the vendor must notify the Market Manager and provide the Market Manager with a copy of the Inspector's report, if one has been issued. The vendor must take prompt corrective action to address the deficiency identified by the Inspector.
- Vendors must obtain all necessary licenses, permits, inspections and certificates for the sale of their product(s). If, at any time, any of the vendor's licenses, permits, inspections and certificates fail to remain current, lapse or are revoked the vendor must immediately notify the Market Manager. This includes any vendor selling and/or providing samples of alcohol.
- Compliance with both Provincial and Federal Sales Tax Regulations is responsible of the individual vendor.
- No pets will be allowed in the vendors selling area. The only exceptions will be seeing-eye dogs, dogs for the hearing impaired or other disability/service guide dogs.
- Vendors must monitor and supervise their children at all times during the Market day. Young children should not be allowed to wander the grounds and adjacent properties without a parent or guardian with them. The Market can take no responsibility for their safety or whereabouts, or for any damages they may incur.

- All vendors, and their staff, are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful, safe, courteous, co-operative and harmonious manner with customers, Market staff, other vendors and government inspectors.
- All vendor concerns should be brought to the attention of the Market Manager. Any complaints should follow the complaint procedure outlined in this handbook.
- Vendors are required to immediately notify the Market Manager if they, their business or any of their employees or representatives are subject to any federal, provincial, and/or municipal statutory or regulatory investigations, actions, and/or charges that are connected in any way with their business and/or product for sale. Failure to do so may result in termination of the vendor's participation at market.

Attendance Regulations

1. Late Arrival

a. All vendors are required to be on site by 3:30 p.m. to ensure set up is complete by 4:00 p.m. for when the market opens. Any vendor not able to arrive by 3:30 p.m. on a given market day must phone the Market Manager and indicate what time they will be arriving and the reason. This will allow the Market Manager to place a sign at the vendor's space indicating the expected time of arrival and answer any questions our customers may have.

b. Failure to communicate with the Market Manager and continued lateness may result in vendor's participation at market being terminated.

2. No shows

a. To ensure the integrity and professionalism of our market, not showing for an expected market day without any notice to the Market Manager by a vendor will not be tolerated. Extraordinary circumstances may be considered.

Display Regulations

1. Each vendor should display their name or the name of their farm or business. Vendors are encouraged to personalize their spaces with stories and pictures, and to share their farming/artisan background with customers.
2. Vendors are required to display prices for their products by way of a general price list or individually priced items.
3. Vendors are required to display signage each market day indicating the source/origin of each product not of their own production of which they are allowed up to 15%
4. Product labeling must comply with the standards set out in the NS Environmental Health and Food Safety Division's Food Safety Guidelines for Public Markets.
5. Organic labeling must be certified organic product only and follow the Organic Grade Regulations in the Agriculture and Marketing Act. The certification sign from the applicable agency must be prominently displayed.
6. For uncertified claims, written and verbal declarations regarding pesticide or chemical use which cannot be certified such as unsprayed, no spray, and pesticide-free will need a written statement, submitted with the vendor application, attesting how these procedure are followed.
Vendors are required to produce the written statement about production methods for any consumer who requests it and should have copies of the statement available in his/her space.
7. Vendors must not misrepresent their products or product processes (where and how they were grown, harvested, prepared or created).
8. At this time, vendors are responsible for bringing their own tables, booths, tents, umbrellas. Please understand that this is a volunteer driven market and resources are limited at this time.

9. Vendors must take up only the 10x10 space allocated to them, and not allow displays to block paths, aisles or doorways. Tents and canopies must be secured – please ensure that ties are weighted down sufficiently.
10. Cooperation between vendors is encouraged.
11. All spaces must be neat, tidy and safe for customers. Vendors agree to be clean, tidy and properly attired.
12. Vendors selling meat, fish or dairy products that are, per applicable Food Safety Guidelines, required to be kept cool or frozen must provide adequate means of refrigeration/cooling for their products. (e.g. ice, cooler, etc.)
13. Hygiene and safety in the preparation of foods, together with any required business registrations, food permits and product liability insurance are the responsibility of the vendor.
14. All food vendors will comply with the NS Environmental Health and Food Safety Division's Food Safety Guidelines for Public Markets.
15. Tables shall not be dismantled before 7 p.m., the end time of the market.
16. Vendors are responsible for clearing their space at the end of the Market day and taking any substantial volume of garbage home. General garbage containers are intended for the use of customers.
17. Electrical Equipment: there are limited outlets. If you require electricity this needs to be communicated with the Market Manager before market day. No vendor's electrical equipment is to be plugged in without communication with the Market Manager.
18. No Styrofoam containers are permitted for food/product dispensing. The Market encourages vendors to minimize use of plastic and use recyclable and/or bio-degradable packaging.

Vendor Property

Each Vendor is responsible for moving his or her property for market setup. Vendors are encouraged to help each other and watch belongings if the vendor needs to seep away or park their car.

Set-up & Take-down

Vendors are expected to be on site no later than 3:30 p.m., and ready to sell by 4:00 p.m. You may arrive earlier to set up. If you have not arrived by 3:30 p.m., you are required to call the Market Manager.

When unloading, please ensure you do not impede other vendors from accessing the property; after unloading, please move vehicles to the designated vendor parking spaces (see Parking below). As a request from the Regional Municipality of Windsor/West Hants, there shall be no vendor vehicles on the grass.

Vehicles should not be left idling adjacent to the park.

Vendors are not permitted to bring their vehicles back on the property prior to the market closing at 7 p.m.

All vendors must vacate the site by 8 p.m.

Vendors are required to remove all their signage, equipment, waste, etc. unless prior arrangement has been made with the Market Manager.

Weather: the market will always be held outside. If the forecast is calling for extraordinary weather conditions, the Market Manager will notify vendors of cancellation via email. This decision would be made by the Board.

Vendors Courtesy/Conduct

The Market is a community event where many diverse people are gathering to shop and sell. Vendors and their representatives are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful, safe, courteous and harmonious manner with customers, Market volunteers and with each other.

Zero-Tolerance Policy

Any language or behaviour by a vendor or any of their employees or representatives that, in the opinion of the Market Manager, jeopardizes the normal operations of the Market or adversely affects the Market's reputation are grounds for termination of the vendors' participation in the Market. Accordingly, vendors or any of their employees or representatives must not threaten or use abusive or disrespectful language with customers, staff, government inspectors, community representatives or each other.

Vendors must consider the comfort of other vendors and the public, and appropriately limit aggressive selling techniques such as hawking, or calling attention to products in a loud, repetitive public manner. What aisles are particularly crowded, standing in the aisles while providing samples to customers should be avoided.

Vendors must not publicly disparage other vendors, products, or markets. All vendors must respect each other's space and products during Market hours.

Complaints received by the Market Manager will be shared with the Board of Directors, the Vendor Committee and forwarded to the vendor concerned.

Vendor Concern Procedures

Grievance Procedures

1. Complaints or problems should be directed to the Market Manager in a timely manner that is not disruptive to the Market.
2. Vendors who have concerns regarding other vendor compliance, Market staff, safety, or policies are encouraged to complete a concern form (see Appendix D). Forms are available in the Appendix.
3. The Market Manager reviews each concern form with the Board President or Vice-President. The concerned vendor will receive a specific written response within two weeks. The Vendor Committee will also be consulted, if appropriate – all efforts will be taken to ensure vendor confidentiality.
4. A vendor may appeal any decision of the Market Manager concerning violation of these rules or a concern form brought forth by a fellow vendor within 30 days. An appeal must be presented in writing to the HCEX Farmers' Market Board President. A decision by the Board President, after informing the HCEX Farmers' Market Board, shall be issued within 30 days of receipt and constitute a final and binding decision of any appeal.

Product Challenge

1. Product challenges may be made for misrepresentation of product by a vendor. Vendors can submit a written product challenge form when they believe another vendor is misrepresenting his/her product (see product challenge form in Appendix E)
2. A product challenge must be signed by the person bringing the challenge and preferably by supported by physical and verbal evidence of the offence. The product challenge must be made on the day of, or within the week, the violation is observed. Challenges alleging wrongdoings on past occasions will not be accepted.

3. There is a \$20 filing fee, which can be shared by a group of vendors. This fee is returned to the challenger if the claim is verified.
4. The vendor receiving the product challenge must respond to the challenge in writing. Failure to admit or deny a challenge may result in a determination that the challenge is valid.
5. The Market Manager will conduct a site visit in a timely manner to make a determination on the product challenge. If the Market Manager deems it necessary, a third-party inspector will be employed to assist with a site visit.
6. Product challenge forms are available in the appendix. Because of their sensitive nature, they must be returned directly to the Market Manager.
7. If the vendor is found in violation, the vendor may be suspended, or removed from the Market at the discretion of the Board in consultation with the Market Manager and the Vendor Committee.

Vendor Compliance

The Market Manager or his or her designee has ultimate on-site responsibility and authority to ensure compliance with all Market rules, guidelines, policies, regulations, etc. Any vendor complaints or problems or concerns should be directed to the Market Manager in a timely manner.

The Market Manager will attempt to resolve any vendor complaints, concerns or problems brought to her/his attention. At the Market Manager's discretion, a member or members of the Board of Directors of the HCEX Farmers' Market and a member of the Vendor Committee will meet with the vendor or vendors involved and try to resolve the issue. If the issue is not resolved, then all parties involved in the issue will present their case to the Board and the Board shall render a final and binding decision for resolution.

If a vendor is found in violation of or continually disregards any of the requirements and policies and procedures set out in this handbook they will be immediately suspended from market by the Market Manager. Their continued participation in the HCEX Farmers' Market will be reviewed by the Market Manager, the Board of the HCEX Farmers' Market and the Vendor Committee and could result in full termination. Suspension will continue until the review process is complete.

All necessary permits and licenses must be obtained before the start of the season and shared with the Market Manager. Failure to do so, or if the necessary permits and licenses are revoked by the licensing department, will result in the vendor being suspended from the HCEX Farmers' Market until all necessary permits and licenses are granted or full termination if the Market Manager is informed by the licensing department that the necessary permits and licenses will not be granted.

Any vendor, upon being investigated or charged due to their business dealings where it is connected to the products they sell at the HCEX Farmers' Market must report it forthwith and their contract to continue to sell at the HCEX Farmers' Market will be immediately suspended and will only be reinstated if /when it is determined that the issue has been rectified through the court or they have complied with any terms and conditions imposed through the courts or any other governing body to the satisfaction of the HCEX Farmers' Market Board of Directors.

To summarize, to help ensure public safety, protect the best interests and reputation of the Market and to promote positive Market environment, if a vendor or their employees or representatives do not abide by the rules, regulations, guidelines, requirements, etc. of the HCEX Farmers' Market, and/or fails to comply with applicable federal, provincial or municipal statutory and/or regulatory requirements applicable to their business and/or Market participation, the Market Manager or designee may take any action deemed appropriate, including suspending the vendor from selling at the Market for that day and any future Market days. Full

termination of the vendor's participation in market will be reviewed and determined by the Board of the HCEX Farmers' Market in consultation with the Market Manager and the Vendor Committee.

Equipment and Supplies

Hand-wash Stations

A single, simple hand-wash pump will be made available to all vendors if needed. Food vendors are required to ensure they meet all food permit requirements including hand wash stations. There is washrooms availability on site.

It is the responsibility of the user of the hand-wash station to ensure that it is cleaned after each usage.

Tables

Tables can be provided. Chairs are discouraged, unless special circumstances apply, to encourage engagement between the vendor and patrons. Stools are permitted and may be placed at the side/in front of a table but not behind.

Electricity

All electrical equipment (except solar/battery powered lights) must be pre-approved by the Market Manager to ensure that adequate electrical outlets are available. The HCEX Farmers' Market cannot guarantee electricity to its vendors.

Canopies

Every Market day, no matter the weather, all canopies, umbrellas, or other booth covers are required to have ties, weights or pegs on all legs sufficient to keep the covering in place during windy conditions. Failure to have proper weights means that vendor's tents and umbrellas cannot be set up on Market days.

Washrooms

There are public washrooms on site.

Waste Management

Vendors are responsible for keeping their space clean during the Market and for complete clean up of their space at the close of the Market. This includes taking with you any trash or garbage that is generated in or around your space and sweeping up any product debris left on the ground. Vendors are not permitted to dispose of produce waste, overripe or leftover produce, or boxes in any on-site garbage cans or dumpsters.

Parking

Parking spaces provided on the property are for customers only. This will give customers the best parking space available. Once loaded, vendors are permitted to park where assigned. Vendors that require parking on the property due to health reasons need to have approval of the Market Manager.

The Market Manager will update vendors when there is any event in the area that may impact parking availability.

Vendors will provide their license plate numbers on their application form so that their vehicles can be identified by the Market Manager and staff. Repeated parking violation by vendors will be addressed by the Market Manager.

Health & Safety

Pets

In the interests of health and safety, a Farmers Market is not the best place to bring a pet. If customers do choose to bring a pet, we ask them to abide by these rules to make a pet's visit to the Market a good experience for everyone.

1. Pets are not permitted inside.
2. Pets must be kept on a short leash.
3. Pets must be under control and by the owner's side at all times.
4. Pets must be kept away from produce, plants, and other food products.
5. Pets must be friendly with other animals and children to earn the right to be at the Market.
6. Be considerate – not everyone loves pets and some customers are allergic to animals.
7. Don't forget to clean up after your pet!

Should a vendor see a violation of any of these rules, notify the Market Manager who will address the concerns with the pet owner.

Equipment Safety

Vendor vehicles, tables and overhead shades must be maintained and used in a safe manner. Table legs must be firmly locked into place. Tables must have smooth edges and remain stable when loaded with produce. Tent poles, canopy legs, boxes, umbrella stands must not obstruct foot traffic flow and care must be taken when setting up or taking down displays. All tents and umbrellas must be weighed and properly tied down.

Smoking

Regional Municipality of Windsor/West Hants currently has a no-smoking policy in public spaces, this includes the park and the sidewalks around it.

Please address any concerns to the Market Manager.

Disclaimer

Although the Market does carry liability insurance, the Market does not assume responsibility for loss or damage to the vendor area, product, vehicle and any other property of the Market vendor, their employees or representatives. The vendor accepts all reasonable risks associated with the use of the Market space and will exercise sound loss prevention measures at all times. The vendor shall not make claim or take any legal action against the HCEX Farmers' Market or its representatives for any loss, damage or injury caused to the vendor, agents and/or property, including vehicles.

Market Tips: Merchandising 101: Sell Smart and Increase Profits

1. Build customer loyalty. Create an identity for yourself. For example, make your farm name and location clear to customers. Provide a description of your farm including location, acres, history, crops, and growing methods. Try displaying this information on a poster and include pictures of your farm. Or have a flyer AND a business card to distribute to customers. Take advantage of the opportunity to educate shoppers about how things are grown.
2. Train employees! Make sure they are knowledgeable about your product and your farm. Continuity of salespeople builds relationships with repeat customers.
3. Provide samples. Let your customers taste the difference! Sampling can increase sales up to 30%. Ask customers: "Have you tried this variety?" Make sure you follow the minimum guidelines for food safety detailed in the packet. Keep a separate box with your sampling tools, e.g. toothpicks, serving platter, napkins.
4. Supply recipes and information. Find recipes that are simple and contain a few ingredients that can be found at your stand or other parts of the farmers' market.
5. Start an email list. Let your loyal customers sign up for a mailing list so you can inform them about special opportunities, your ripening schedule, other markets, and locations they can find you or your products.
6. Use your personality and expertise as a merchandising tool to build and strengthen your customer base.
7. Practice good "booth-manship". Smile and engage customers. Remember that customers are drawn to enthusiasm, but repelled by aggression.
8. Consider the Market as a venue to network, expose your product, and gain FUTURE sales.
9. If you have a website, be sure to include the address on all your promotional products, labels, etc.
10. Bring everything you need.