



What Should Aspiring Vendors Consider when Applying to the Farmers' Market?

1. Know the market, know what the mandate of the market is, our strengths and where you see yourself fitting in. Spend time reviewing the markets website. This may inform your email to the market.
2. Plan ahead. Many requests to participate come in during outdoor market season, but in most cases our markets vendor line-up is determined months before.
3. Do not send a vague first email. It's best to put all your cards on the table so you're not wasting anyone's time. First impressions count.
4. Our market has a particular focus (producer based), so be sure you fit the criteria and include information about these elements.
5. Visit the market and introduce yourself to the manager.
6. Think about what you do that is truly different from other vendors. Market organizers need to be concerned about current vendors making enough to support themselves; they don't want to take on too many of one kind of vendor (i.e. meat farmers) and watch them all go broke together. Can you explain how you will bring in new market-goers or fulfill an un-met demand?
7. In order to be considered a farmers' market by the Public Health authorities, a market must have a MINIMUM of 50% + 1 farmer vendors. Many prepared/specialty food vendor applicants are unaware of this farmer to non-farmer ratio and its impact on inspections. This requirement, as well as the high level of interest in launching food ventures at markets, means there is a lot of competition for non-farmer spaces.
8. No matter how wonderful you are, there may not be an immediate opening. Don't just disappear if you don't get into a market instantly; let the organizers know you're still interested, and keep in touch from time to time.