



Criteria for Pikesville Farmers Market Vendor Selection

Pikesville Farmers Market (PFM) is committed to creating a diverse marketplace with the highest quality, locally produced products available. PFM will not be bound to apply a particular set of selection criteria in every instance and reserves unconditional discretion to accept or refuse anyone as a PFM vendor; we will consider many factors when evaluating vendor applications. We do not duplicate vendors (i.e., one honey vendor, one jewelry vendor, etc). Admission is subject to space availability, vendor acceptance of our terms and safety guidelines, and approval from the Pikesville Farmers Market.

General Guidelines for All Prospective New Vendors Priority will be given to vendors who demonstrate:

- High product quality with attractive labeling/packaging that adheres to applicable regulations
- Past successful history with the PFM or another market
- Record of strong attendance in past seasons (if returning)
- The number of years selling at the Market
- History of compliance of Market rules and regulations
- Conduct, compliance and strong customer service skills
- History of positive interactions with Market staff, customers, fellow vendors, and volunteers
- Billing and payment history
- Attractive displays
- Neat personal appearance of vendor
- Consistent high quality product
- Consumer demand
- Products that fill a niche or service not currently represented at the Market
- A willingness to commit to regular participation in the Market on a weekly or bi-weekly schedule for the full term of our season (May-October)
- Food safety compliance; adhering to the highest standards in safe food production and handling including all federal, state and local regulations. Vendors must clearly display required licenses and certifications to customers
- Products that are unusual, unique or not adequately represented at the Market.
- Market commodity mix

Agriculture

- Priority is given to regional farmers and producers who bring product to market that is 100% grown and harvested on farmland they own and/or operate.
- Farmers who use environmentally responsible growing, breeding, raising and harvesting methods will also have priority. To qualify as a seafood “farmer” vendor must own, lease or operate the fishing vessel or parcel of land where the seafood is caught or harvested and must be a resident of Maryland State.
- Processors are persons offering food products (such as meats, seafood, ciders, wines, baked goods, jams, nuts, etc.) that have added value to their product through some sort of “hands-on” processing (e.g., hand-filleted fish, smoked or butchered meats, handmade candies/nuts, etc.), but have not raised the ingredients themselves. Resellers are persons who buy products such as produce, shellfish, honey etc from other producers in Maryland, transport it to a FMA Member Market, and resell it to the consumer.
- Must have proof of appropriate permits and licenses issued by Federal, State and/or local agencies and Health Department certification.

Prepared Food Vendors

- Must show proof of appropriate Health Dept. licenses and permits.
- Priority will be given to vendors who demonstrate a use of locally grown ingredients.
- Priority will be given to vendors who offer foods made from fresh healthful ingredients.
- Must have proof of appropriate permits and licenses issued by Federal, State and/or local agencies and Health Department certification.
- Must have proof of required insurance, as required by Federal, State and/or local agencies and Health Department certification.

Artisans/Crafters

- Should use materials produced or grown in Maryland State as much as possible.
- Product should have a high level of quality and workmanship.
- Priority will be given to vendors who create high quality, unique or unusual items not already well represented at the Market.

Community Booths

- Building local relationships is a key factor to our success moving forward. The PFM may consider community table participation to community members, local artisans, or a local business on a first-come, first-served basis, and as space is available on market day. Participation, products, and sponsorship of this area is at the discretion of the PFM Board of Directors.

Hawking of Wares Not Permitted

- The success of our market depends upon many factors, including our customers’ comfort level with walking past our stalls. Hawking, or calling out your wares, is not acceptable at the PFM. You may interact with customers, but high-pressure sales through calling out is not acceptable.

Market Day

Location

The location of the Pikesville Farmers Market will be determined by the POM Chamber of Commerce. Currently, we are located in Pomona Square on Reisterstown Road.

Time and Dates

The Market will operate Tuesdays from May 1 through October 31st from 2pm until 6pm. Vendors who repeatedly arrive late or leave early may be asked to leave the market without a refund.

Management

The day-to-day management of the PFM rests with the Market Manager. Each Vendor shall respect the authority and responsibility of the manager to make management and operational decisions. The Market Manager has the responsibility to act in the best interest of the market as a whole and not those of an individual vendor.

Weather

We are a Rain or Shine Market. That means that the market will run, rain or shine. It is strongly suggested that a canopy is used each week to aid in presentation, comfort and weather contingency (see canopy rules). The market will only close due to weather when dangerous public conditions occur (i.e., severe thunderstorm/lightning). *In the last nine years of the market, this has only happened once.* The Market Manager will make this determination. Vendors will be contacted via e-mail or cell phone/phone number provided by vendor to Market Manager at 6:00 am on a market day if threatening weather is imminent.

Booth Assignments

The market, jointly with the Market Manager, assigns spaces to Vendors. Booth assignments will be sent to vendors one week prior to the first market day. Booths are seasonally assigned at the discretion of the Market Manager, based on the following considerations:

- The good of the Market
- Vendor stall preference
- Years as a vendor with the Market
- Current stall assignment
- Attendance commitment (preference given for full season commitment)
- Compatibility of products
- Category differences

Booth Fees

All vendors must have an account in good standing with the Farmers Market. Unpaid fees will result in cancellation and will impact the opportunity to vend with PFM in the future.

Market Times to be Respected

Please do not begin selling before 2PM; also, do not pack up prior to 6PM. The Market is in a highly visible area and packing up early may give the wrong impression to customers and passersby. As a close-knit community of vendors, we all agree to begin and end at the same time. Consistency is key to market success. Failure to comply may result in being asked to leave the market.

Vendor Vehicles

Vendors may drive into the market area to unload goods two hours **prior** to 2 PM (farmers may need even more time) and load **after** 6:00 PM. Vehicles will follow normal traffic patterns. Vendors may park

near their booth, and with few exceptions must be parked horizontally to the booth. Please see loading/unloading for parking specifics.

Set-Up

Set-up can begin at 10:00 am. Set-up must be complete and vehicles must be out of the market 15 minutes before the market opens. Vendors should off-load their products and supplies in their space, park their vehicles in the parking lot, and then return to unpack their product and set up the booth space. Vendors are expected to be punctual and ready for the market opening at 2:00 PM. A Vendor who arrives late will not be allowed to sell on that market day with no refund. Vendors may leave early **only** under extenuating circumstances (i.e. illness) and with permission of the Market Manager. All produce displayed for sale must be at least 12 inches off the ground with the exception of large or heavy items such as pumpkins

Off-Loading and Loading

This will be a carefully coordinated process in order to minimize our impact on Pomona Square businesses and visitors. To alleviate traffic hazards, vendors should unload their vehicles before unpacking boxes or beginning to arrange displays. Your vehicle is permitted to be parked vertically to your booth area for easy unloading prior to the start of the market. When you are finished unloading, please park your car in a designated parking spot horizontal to the farmers market (usually near your booth).

Clean Up

Your booth area must be cleaned by you, the vendor, at the end of each market. Please take your trash and recycling with you! This is essential to our relationship with Pomona Square. Pomona Square does offer two trash cans for customer use during the farmers market. ***It is not the Market Manager's job to clean up your space.***

Crisis/Emergencies/Theft

A crisis situation is any situation that has reached a critical phase or an emotionally significant phase that severely disrupts the routine daily operations of the Market. We have communicated with local law enforcement regarding the safety of our market. That said, if you see something, say something. Do not hesitate to call 911 in any escalating situation. Vendors should then report to the Market Manager.

Theft can happen. If you suspect a customer of stealing, report to the Market Manager, and try to have a description of the suspect. Without making customers feel like they are being distrusted, keep a close eye on your products.

Public Restrooms for Vendors

Pomona Square offers vendors access to their restrooms. You can get the key from the Market Manager, who is in the PFM HQ tent. These restrooms are for vendors only (***not customers***).

Market Supplies

You will have to provide your own transportable tents, tables, and chairs. Make sure that you'll be comfortable for the entirety of the market and that it's manageable for the number of people working the market to move and set up.

Prices and Labels

Bring cards to label each item on the table with product names and with prices.

If possible, laminate the cards to withstand moist produce and the rain.

Also consider labeling foods in Spanish, Russian, or another language if it's commonly spoken in the area of the market. It will help you communicate with customers.

Cash

Bring a cashbox, calculator and laminated price sheet for your reference. Don't forget cash – go overboard with singles and quarters – for making change.

Customers are more likely to spend smaller bills and so by circulating singles with customers around the market, you're helping to boost everyone's sales.

Tips for Selling More

What does your booth look like?

1. Use a white tent: Bright light makes the product look best
2. Show your farm's name (out in front and inside - BIG LETTERS are key!)
3. Use an attractive layout
4. Hide those boxes! Make it look clean and neat!
5. Hang signs at eye level, not at waist level

How do you place your product?

6. Stagger the height, Utilize corners
7. Use hanging baskets
8. Let people smell and see up close - they are going to be eating this food/wearing your product
9. Make things easy to reach – use leveling for accessibility and interest
10. Use tablecloths and coverings to create ambiance
11. Don't forget color and branding! Make the customers want to shop with you and remember your booth
12. Offer samples, especially of unusual veggies, jams or new products

Be inviting to passersby—get them interested

13. Excellent customer service sets the PFM and you apart from competition.
14. If the price seems high, offer a sample
15. Try not to sit or wear sunglasses - be attentive and available
16. When you talk to your customer, make it about them. What does your product do to benefit them? Make the product personal. What are you selling?
17. Don't miss an opportunity to brand your goods. Name your pickles after your husband or your salad mix after your daughter - people love it! Is your booth distinctive?
18. Make your booth warm and welcoming, with a display that stands out and tells the story of your business.
19. Use photos! People want to know about your life and your story. Make your space personal!

Use Social Media to get the word out!

20. Have you like the **Pikesville Farmers Market Facebook page**? The more likes we have, the more people will follow us and remember to stop by our Tuesday market. Invite your friends to like our page, too! The Chamber will post reminders as well.
21. Post reminders on your own social media pages that you will be at the PFM on Tuesday.

Safety 101: Your Guide to Canopy Safety at Pikesville Farmers Market

Most accidents at farmers markets involve wind-blown tents, canopies and umbrellas. **We require all vendors to minimize the risk caused by canopies by following these rules for canopy safety.**

All vendors are required to have their canopies sufficiently and safely anchored to the ground from the time their canopy is put up to the time it is taken down. Any vendor who fails to properly anchor his or her canopy will not be allowed to sell at the Farmers Market on that market day, unless that vendor chooses to take down and stow their canopy and sell without it. **Each canopy leg must have no less than 24 lbs (pounds) anchoring each leg.**

In certain inclement weather conditions even properly secured canopies can be precarious. If canopies need to be taken down in the middle of market due to inclement weather, vendors should direct customers to move out of the way so they are not injured. Weights should be secured in a manner that does not create its own safety hazard.

- Weights should not cause a tripping hazard
- Weights should be tethered with lines that are clearly visible
- Weights should have soft edges to avoid causing cuts and scrapes
- Weights should be securely attached
- Weights should be on the ground (NOT above people's heads)

Canopies are used at markets to shield vendors and product from sun and rain, but unpredictable winds can come up at any moment creating a safety hazard if the canopy is not properly secured. Sufficiently weighted canopies will have at least 24 pounds per leg. **One canopy manufacturer recommends at least 40 pounds on each corner of a 10x10 tent.** Weights for signs will vary depending on the size of sign.

Always be prepared

You should always have your canopy secured to the ground. It is not enough to have the tools necessary to secure your canopy on hand if you do not employ them. Strong gusts can come up without warning anywhere, at any time. At Pomona Square, you must be aware that we are in a parking lot and off of a main thoroughfare, and no one wants a canopy to damage a car, cause injury or an accident.

Always secure canopies and stay alert

During setup and breakdown periods canopies are especially vulnerable to wind. Stay alert. During the peak business hours of markets, the mere presence of hundreds of shoppers, along with the tight configuration of all the vendors, creates a disruption in the flow of wind, reducing its force through the market. But at setup and breakdown times, the shoppers are gone, the solid block of vendors is disrupted, and you are at some point in the process of setting up or taking down your canopy. You must be sure to completely secure your canopy as soon as you set it up, and take down your canopy as soon as you remove its weights at the end of the day. Do NOT let yourself be interrupted by ANYTHING in the middle of this process, as a half-secured canopy is as dangerous, if not more dangerous, than an unsecured canopy.

Canopy Weights & Customer Safety

The safety of farmers market shoppers should be the goal of every market's staff and vendors. In general, farmers markets are statistically among the safest places in our country. Canopy weights should be located on the ground and not in the path of the customer, to avoid tripping or injury.

Examples of Good Canopy Weights

- *Our preference:* Sandbag weights that are specially made for securing canopies and weigh at least 24 pounds. These sandbag weights are strapped to the legs of the canopy.
- Filling an empty bucket (2.5 gallon works great) with cement and tying this to each corner of the tent with a rope or bungee. It is NOT sufficient to place the bucket on the feet of the canopy.
- Filling buckets/containers with sand/cement that can be anchored or secured with a rope or bungee; these include canvas bags or plastic buckets/containers that have a handle through which a rope or bungee can be secured.
- The best weights are strapped to the bottom of each leg, and then tethered via a bungee to the top corner of the canopy, thus lowering the center of gravity of the canopy. In a strong gust of wind, even canopies secured with enough weight, can be broken if the weights are not suspended from the top corners of the canopy.

Examples of Bad Canopy Weights

- Gallon water jugs are not heavy enough for large gusts of wind. One gallon of water weighs 8 pounds and therefore is not sufficient.
- Tying tents, canopies or umbrellas to tables, coolers or vehicles provides tripping hazards and frequently does not provide adequate weight. Vendor safety is just as important as customer safety.
- Sandbags that cannot be placed upright and securely tied to the tent or canopy should not be used. Cement blocks are not permitted as weights.

Contact Info

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SNAP at the market - EBT information www.snaptomarket.com

USDA Farmers Market Nutrition Programs <http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/fmnp/fmnpfaq.htm>

USDA Small Farm Resources <http://www.nifa.usda.gov/familysmallfarms.cfm>

For More Information on General Food Safety:

www.FoodSafety.gov

[www.fsis.USDA.gov/Factsheets/Basics for Handling Food Safely/index.asp](http://www.fsis.USDA.gov/Factsheets/Basics_for_Handling_Food_Safely/index.asp)