

Omaha Farmers Market

SATURDAY MARKET in THE OLD MARKET

2014 Rules & Regulations

Dates & Location

- 🍏 Saturdays 8:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., May 3rd – October 18th
 - Absolutely no public sales before 8:00 a.m. or after 12:30 p.m. There will be a bell signaling the opening of the Market and a closing bell signaling its end.
- 🍏 The Market takes place in the Old Market Parking Lot between 10th & 11th Streets, on Jackson Street and on 11th Street and surrounding areas.

Vendor Types

- 🍏 **Season Vendors** are vendors that pay a stall fee for the full season. They are assigned a particular stall that they are permitted to set-up in each Saturday of the Market. Season vendors are generally granted “first right of refusal” to reserve their stall from season to season. New season spaces are available on a limited basis each season. Please read the available FAQs (available at omahafarmersmarket.com) and then contact Wendy at wbredensteiner@vgroup.com if you have additional questions.
- 🍏 **Weekly Vendors** are scheduled for stall spaces depending on space availability, product mix and market management discretion. Weekly vendors should expect to be in a different stall each week they are scheduled. Requesting a date on the vendor application form does NOT guarantee a stall space for that day. You will receive an email the week of the market IF there is a space available for you. Your schedule flexibility is appreciated as we continue to fill last minute cancellations up until Friday evenings.

Space / Stall Details

- 🍏 Vendor spaces vary, some are sized to accommodate a vehicle, some are strictly 10 x 10 spaces and others are odd shapes and sizes. Please work with the office to determine which type of space will work for you. Market Management will let you know IF a vehicle is permitted when contacting weekly vendors. If you are told it is a no vehicle spot don't try to squeeze one in.
- 🍏 Please be courteous to your neighbors and remember when you encroach on aisles you are taking space from your customers!
- 🍏 Subletting or sharing spaces is not allowed. If a season vendor is absent from the Market, OFM management has the right to fill the space with another vendor. **PLEASE** let us know if you are going to be absent -- this policy allows us to keep our vendor fees low and it helps us to keep the Market full and energized.
- 🍏 Vendors are provided an empty stall space. You are responsible for bringing your own items for set-up including, but not limited to: tables, chairs, tents and necessary weights, signage, cash boxes. The Market does NOT have storage available.
- 🍏 Trash, including produce debris and food items **must** be swept up and disposed of after each market. Vendors are responsible for cleaning their own area before leaving. Brooms are available through the information booth. If you have a large amount of trash, the onsite managers will help you haul it to the dumpster. Please do **not** fill the Market trash cans with produce or boxes.
- 🍏 **Vendors are required to have a sign with their name and location (city or town); growers must also list prices. Signs must be prominently displayed each week.**

Payments, Billing and Fees

- 🍏 Please see the Vendor Application for a complete breakdown of stall, health department and electrical fees.
- 🍏 Season vendors are billed in a three-payment installment plan. Installments are generally due in February, April and June. Season vendors are required to pay the *entire* season fee and associated health department and electrical fees, no exceptions and no discounts if you are absent.
- 🍏 Returned checks: First occurrence the vendor will be charged an additional \$15 fee and must pay the entire amount in cash at the VGA office. Second occurrence, the fee will increase to \$25 and the vendor must pay in cash for the rest of the season.

General Policies

- 🍏 **It is the vendors' responsibility to be familiar with the local, state and federal regulations and permits that govern the products which they sell. The notes and guidelines included in this document are included as a courtesy, but do not take precedence over governmental policy.**
- 🍏 Vendors must apply in one of three categories. More information on these categories is provided in the attached “Category Descriptions & Permitted Product Information” sheet. Only one category of product is allowed per stall space. Categories are:
 - Farm & Nursery Products and Processed Farm Products
 - Value Added Food
 - Craft Items
- 🍏 The Omaha Farmers Market is a “green market” and priority will be given to the Farm & Nursery Products and Processed Farm Products and Value Added Food categories. Product mix is also a deciding factor for space assignment.

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- 🍏 Vendors must complete the application process through the office before being allowed at the Market.
- 🍏 Weekly vendors are not allowed to show up on “stand-by”, hoping for a spot. Doing so will result in a violation.
- 🍏 The Market is held rain or shine and refunds are not given unless the Market is cancelled prior to opening and at the determination of OFM management. In this case, refunds will only be considered for Weekly Vendors.
- 🍏 The OFM Onsite Manager arrives at 6:00 a.m. each Saturday. Vendors are allowed to drive onsite between 6:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m. Vendors arriving after 7:00 a.m. will have to handcart items. **All vendors MUST be onsite by 7:30 a.m., this includes vendors with direct street access.** Vendors that are not onsite by 7:30 a.m. may have their space reallocated to another vendor. No vehicles are allowed to enter or exit the site between 7:00 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. If there is an emergency please work with the Onsite Manager. Not following the listed arrival times may result in disciplinary action (see rule violation section).
- 🍏 Vendors are not allowed to leave before 12:30 p.m. even if they sell out of product. Leaving early may result in disciplinary action (see rule violation section).
- 🍏 No items offered for sale may be commercially made. All products must be the original work or produce of the vendor.
- 🍏 Definition of “Vendor” – Vendor shall be defined as the producer of goods sold and shall include spouse, siblings, children, parents and employees of the applicant who assist in the cultivation of the same property or assist in the production of items available for sale.
- 🍏 OFM Management reserves the right to conduct on-site inspections of farms, kitchens or other workshops or spaces.
- 🍏 Electricity is available on a limited basis in a small section of the Market and must be arranged in advance by contacting the office. If vendors are approved to use electricity it is their responsibility to provide a 100-foot heavy-duty extension cord and heavy-duty mats to cover the cord.
- 🍏 No smoking in vendor stalls.
- 🍏 Non-produce vendors are responsible for collecting, reporting and paying sales tax. Omaha’s current tax rate is 7%.
- 🍏 Vendors selling woody plant material or perennials must be licensed with the Nebraska Department of Agriculture, Plant Industry.

Parking Lot Rules

- 🍏 Use of the parking lot is donated through an arrangement with Mercer Management and Central Parking Systems. It is exceptionally important that we follow these rules and be courteous “tenants” each Saturday.
 - If you are allocated a vehicle spot, you may park in your stall space, but vendors are asked NOT to park in any other area of the parking lot or in the alleyway. If you choose to ignore this request, you are responsible for paying for the parking space (even during Market hours) and for any subsequent tickets issued by Central Parking Systems (including the row of parking along the alley and spaces at the East end of the lot). They WILL ticket you.
 - Trash, including produce debris and food items **must** be swept up and disposed of **in the dumpster** (not the market trash cans) after each market. Vendors are responsible for cleaning their own area before leaving. Brooms are available through the information booth. Only NON-FOOD cardboard may be recycled and please break down any boxes. We want to be good neighbors to the downtown businesses.
 - Vendors must vacate the parking lot no later than 1:30 p.m.

Food Displays and Packaging

- 🍏 All food items must be free from harmful pesticide residues and free from insects and spoilage. All produce must be washed.
- 🍏 All food items, including produce, must be stored and displayed at least 6 inches above the ground.
- 🍏 Pre-packaged produce must be in NEW food-grade plastic bags or plastic food wrap. Produce sold by piece or per quantity may be sold in NEW paper or plastic bags.
- 🍏 Only legal scales with state permit stickers will be allowed at the Market. Vendors without legal scales must sell by the piece or per quantity. If you wish to sell produce by weight, but do not have a legal scale, consider weighing and packaging items at home, but sell 'by the bag' or 'by the package'.

Douglas County Health Department

- 🍏 Only products in compliance with the regulations of the Douglas County Health Department may be sold at the Market. *Vendors are responsible for securing all necessary permits and approvals. The Health Department will notify the Market when they approve you to sell at the Market.*
- 🍏 **Season** vendors pay fees directly to the Health Department. **Weekly** vendors requiring a Health Department permit will continue to pay prorated weekly fees through the Market.

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- SEASON Vendors - The fees that you pay directly through the Douglas County Health Department *may* cover you for other Douglas County Farmers Markets held during different hours or on different days but the fees **do NOT cover you for other markets that take place on overlapping days and times** nor do they cover you for other Douglas County public events. Please contact the Health Department for additional policy information and to secure your necessary permits.
- WEEKLY Vendors – The prorated fees that you pay through the Market Management only cover you for a single session of the Omaha Farmers Market. They do not cover you for any other events or markets.

🍏 Vendors selling meat products must display proof of USDA inspection and a current manufacturer's license/permit on-site during the market each week.

🍏 Perishable produce and other food items must be maintained at appropriate temperatures with heating and cooling devices. Eggs must be kept in a cooler at 45 degrees.

🍏 Vendors selling approved products prepared in a non-regulated, non-inspected kitchen must clearly display a sign at their stand indicating such. The sign must be clearly visible and clearly worded. A sample of acceptable wording is: "Food items were prepared in a kitchen that is not subject to regulation or inspection by the Foods Division of the Nebraska Department of Agriculture". ***Only certain items (mainly baked goods) are eligible for this option, please contact the Health Department for details - do not assume that your product is covered by this exemption just because you bake it. Cheesecakes, for example, are not eligible for this exception.***

🍏 Vendors selling items produced in a regulated kitchen must display their license at the Market. **All** food items (except produce and eligible baked goods) must be prepared in a licensed kitchen. This includes, but is not limited to: salsa, jellies, sandwiches, enchiladas, etc.

🍏 Sampling must meet Douglas County Health Department code. Please contact the Health Department for details.

SNAP & Credit Token Programs

🍏 Both Season and Weekly vendors are **REQUIRED** to accept SNAP and Credit tokens from customers, even if you have your own credit card machine. Vendors are reimbursed FULL face value of tokens; there are no fees for vendors to participate. There is a separate packet about SNAP and Credit tokens available for printing and review at www.omahafarmersmarket.com.

🍏 SNAP Tokens are GREEN and come in \$1 increments. They may only be redeemed for eligible FOOD items. Do NOT give customers change on SNAP purchases and DO NOT use them in trade with other vendors.

🍏 CREDIT Tokens are BLUE and come in \$5 increments. They are basically "Farmers Market Gift Cards" and you give change as though the customer paid in cash. They are redeemable on any item at the Market including both food items and craft items.

🍏 Season Vendors Token Reimbursement – Season Vendors will turn in their tokens every three weeks and will be notified via email when there will be a "token turn in weekend." Season vendors should turn in their tokens in their labeled and re-usable zipper pouches. Reimbursement checks will be returned in the pouches as soon as possible.

🍏 Weekly Vendor Token Reimbursement – Weekly Vendors may turn in tokens at the end of each Market. Onsite managers have Ziploc baggies, counting slips and markers available at the Info Booth. Please make sure you label the outside of the bag with a permanent marker AND include a counting slip in your bag. Bags will be held in the office and reimbursed at the same time as the Season Vendors. Reimbursement checks will be sent in the mail or delivered on-site if you are there the following weekend.

Information Booth & Other Amenities

🍏 The information booth is located on the west edge of the parking lot. The on-site manager and assistant manager are available to help vendors and customers with things including lost and found, vendor locations, token sales, souvenir sales and other Market related questions.

🍏 Market vendors have an opportunity to donate produce and baked goods to Omaha's less fortunate through the donation cart located near the information booth. Market management arranges with the Open Door Mission and the Siena Francis House to pick up the donations on a rotating basis.

🍏 Public restrooms are available at Upstream Restaurant, in the Passageway Building (North side of Howard) and in the City Park 4 parking garage just South of Jackson Street. Many other shops and restaurants have restrooms available on a limited basis for their own customers.

🍏 OFM Management asks that vendors park vehicles and drop trailers at least 2 blocks away from the Market in order to leave prime parking spots available for customers.

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Rule Violation Policy

- 🍏 Violation of any of the Rules and Regulations or policies laid out in this or future notices will be handled as follows:
 - 1) First violation results in a verbal warning, which may be issued by any member of the OFM Management team including the Onsite Manager.
 - 2) Second violation results in a written warning issued by the Executive Director of the Market.
 - 3) Third violation results in expulsion from the Market without refund for that day.
 - 4) Fourth violation results in expulsion without refund for the remainder of the Market season.
- 🍏 Violations resulting in a police report or protection order being filed against a vendor may result in said vendors immediate and permanent expulsion from the Market without refund of vendor fees.

Resources

- 🍏 Douglas County Health Department, Joe Gaube (402) 444-7488, Kathleen Mills (402) 444-7480, or Christine Scott (402) 444-7243
- 🍏 State of Nebraska Department of Revenue (402) 595-2065.
- 🍏 Department of Agriculture, Food Safety & Consumer Protection (402) 471-3422.
- 🍏 Nebraska Department of Agriculture, Plant Industry (402) 471-2394.
- 🍏 OFM strongly encourages qualifying produce and food vendors to accept WIC Program and Senior Nutrition Program coupons for qualifying purchases. For more information on becoming a participating vendor in these programs please contact (402) 471-2781 (WIC) or (402) 471-4876 (Senior Nutrition).

Omaha Farmers Market Contact Information

- 🍏 Vic Gutman & Associates Office (402) 345-5401
- 🍏 Wendy Bredensteiner, Project Coordinator, extension #115 or via email wbredensteiner@vgagroup.com
- 🍏 Heidi Walz, Project Manager, extension #104 or via email at hwalz@vgagroup.com
- 🍏 Vic Gutman, Executive Director, extension #101 or via email at vgutman@vgagroup.com
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