

Gratiot MI Market - Farmers and Artisan Market - Handbook

Mission Statement

The mission of the Gratiot MI Market (“the Market”) is to create a diverse and thriving marketplace for local farmers and crafters to sell their goods. We strive to help local businesses & entrepreneurs through promotion and partnerships; to increase community access to healthy foods; to promote healthy activities; and to be a positive and fun place in the community that customers enjoy visiting again and again.

Vendor Eligibility and Participation

Participation in the Market is limited to vendors whose products and business practices align with the Market’s mission, policies, and applicable federal, state, and local laws. Submission of an application does not guarantee acceptance. The Market reserves the sole and absolute right to approve, deny, limit, or revoke vendor participation at any time.

Vendor Application Requirements

All vendors must complete the following prior to participation:

- Vendor Application and Product Declaration
- Acknowledgement of Handbook Policies and Waiver of Liability
- Cash and Nutrition Token Agreement (if applicable)
- Submission of all required licenses, permits, certifications, appliance usage stickers, and insurance documentation (vendor liability insurance is strongly recommended)

Vendor approval is contingent upon review of submitted materials, payment of all applicable fees, and compliance history.

Payments and Fees

All vendor fees must be paid prior to or at the beginning of each approved market day unless otherwise authorized by the Market Manager.

- Payments may be made through the official vendor portal or by approved cash or check arrangement

Gratiot MI Market - Farmers and Artisan Market - Handbook

- Checks must be made payable to **Gratiot MI Market** and must include the vendor name or sponsorship in the memo line
 - Seasonal vendors are required to pay all fees in full prior to the start of the season
 - Vendors with outstanding balances may be denied setup until payment is received
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Market Locations, Days, and Hours

St. Louis – 201 N. Mill Street, St. Louis, MI

- **Thursdays (June–October):** 2:00 PM – 6:00 PM
 - Setup: 12:00 PM – 1:45 PM
 - Vehicles must exit market area by 1:45 PM
- **Saturdays (November–May):** 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM
 - Setup: 9:00 AM – 9:45 AM
 - Vehicles must exit market area by 9:45 AM

Alma – State Street (Next to True Value Hardware)

- **Saturdays (June–October):** 8:00 AM – 1:00 PM
 - Setup: 7:00 AM – 8:00 AM
 - Vehicles must exit market area by 7:45 AM

Breckenridge – Pavilion Park, 136 3rd Street

- **Wednesdays (June–October):** 2:00 PM – 6:00 PM
 - Setup: 1:00 PM – 1:45 PM
 - Due to space limitations, vehicles may not remain on-site without manager approval

All vendors must conclude sales at closing time and vacate the premises within the timeframe specified by the Market Manager.

Authorized Products for Sale

The following items may be sold only with prior approval by the Market Manager:

- Fruits, vegetables, herbs, plants, and flowers (a portion must be homegrown)
- Homemade artisan and craft goods (no resale, flea market, or mass-produced items)
- Cottage food products prepared in compliance with Michigan Cottage Food Law
- Honey, eggs, maple syrup, and cider

Gratiot MI Market - Farmers and Artisan Market - Handbook

- Licensed meat, cheese, and other value-added or processed foods
- Prepared hot or cold foods with a valid temporary food establishment license
- Wine and hard cider with proper Michigan Liquor Control Commission approval
- Non-partisan community, educational, or awareness organizations

All items must comply with applicable food safety, labeling, and licensing regulations.

Vendor Spaces, Fees, and Cancellations

- **Indoor Spaces:** 4 ft, 6 ft, or 8 ft table spaces
- **Outdoor Spaces:** Standard 10 x 10 ft canopy spaces
- **Food Trucks:** 10 x 15 ft designated spaces with required clearance

Vendors select available spaces through the vendor portal. No subletting is permitted.

- Failure to attend without notice (“No Show”) will result in a \$10 fee
- Cancellations with at least one week’s notice are eligible for a 50% refund
- Approved market dates may be exchanged for other available dates. If exchanging outdoor for indoor \$5 fee, if exchanging indoor for outdoor \$5 credit.

Electricity fees apply for vendors utilizing power, based on equipment specifications.

Sales Reporting and Recordkeeping

Vendors are required to complete an electronic sales slip within 24 hours of each market day. Sales data is used exclusively for market operations, statistics, and grant requirements and is not shared with regulatory agencies.

Failure to submit sales slips will result in progressive enforcement:

1. Reminder
 2. Written Warning
 3. Removal from the Market for the remainder of the season
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Token and Nutrition Assistance Programs

Vendors must accept Market-issued Cash Tokens and, if eligible, are encouraged to accept nutrition assistance tokens, including:

Gratiot MI Market - Farmers and Artisan Market - Handbook

- SNAP/EBT
- Double Up Food Bucks
- Senior Project Fresh
- Prescription for Health

Tokens must be accurately recorded on sales slips and submitted prior to departure. Reimbursement is issued monthly.

Vendor Conduct and Booth Operations

Vendors are required to:

- Arrive on time and notify the Market Manager of lateness or absence
- Operate only within their assigned space
- Maintain orderly, professional, and sanitary displays
- Keep all food and produce off the ground
- Provide all necessary equipment, including tables, chairs, and canopy weights (minimum 24 lbs per leg)
- Remove all waste and leave the area clean at the end of each market
- Minimum Vendor Age

The minimum age to independently participate as a vendor is **16 years old**. Vendors under the age of 18 must have adult supervision present at all times. The Market reserves the right to request proof of age or supervision if necessary

Required Signage and Labeling

Each vendor must clearly display:

- Business name and physical address
- Posted prices for all items
- Produce origin signage (homegrown or location of production)
- Applicable nutrition program signage
- Cottage food labels in compliance with state law

Products with unknown origin or improper labeling are prohibited.

Food Sampling

Gratiot MI Market - Farmers and Artisan Market - Handbook

Food sampling is permitted only in accordance with applicable state and local regulations and is subject to approval by the Market Manager.

- All samples must be prepared in advance in an approved kitchen
- Samples must be individually portioned, covered, and protected from contamination
- No on-site food preparation or cutting is permitted unless expressly licensed
- Vendors must follow MDARD Safe Food Sampling Guidelines

Failure to comply with sampling requirements may result in immediate suspension of sampling privileges or removal from the Market.

Health, Safety, and Sanitation

- Vendors must follow proper handwashing and sanitizing practices
 - Smoking is prohibited within the market
 - Vendors who are ill must not participate
 - Animals are prohibited in food handling areas, except for service animals as defined by law
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Parking and Vehicle Access

- One vehicle or trailer may be permitted behind a booth with manager approval
 - Vehicles must exit market areas by posted cutoff times
 - Late-arriving vendors must transport goods from offsite parking
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Enforcement, Disputes, and Grievances

The Market Manager has full authority to enforce all Market policies. Violations may result in warnings, fees, suspension, or termination of vendor participation.

Written grievances must be submitted within 24 hours of the incident and will be reviewed in accordance with Market grievance procedures.

Weather, Emergencies, and Closures

Gratiot MI Market - Farmers and Artisan Market - Handbook

The Market reserves the right to close or cancel events due to weather or emergencies. Vendors will be notified as soon as possible. Weather-related closures will result in a vendor credit.

Appendix A: Regulatory References

The following regulatory agencies and resources are provided for vendor reference. Vendors are solely responsible for understanding and complying with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and licensing requirements. Inclusion of these references does not constitute legal advice or approval of vendor compliance.

- **Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD)**
Cottage Food Law, food sampling guidelines, and farmers market regulations
- **U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) / Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS)**
Regulations governing meat, poultry, dairy, and other regulated food products
- **Mid-Michigan District Health Department (MMDHD)**
Temporary Food Establishment licensing and prepared food requirements
- **Michigan Liquor Control Commission (MLCC)**
Licensing requirements for wine and hard cider sales at farmers markets

Regulatory requirements are subject to change. Vendors are responsible for ensuring their operations remain compliant at all times. The Market reserves the right to request updated documentation or proof of compliance as needed.

Contact Information

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