



# Vendor Information Guide 2023

## DOWNTOWN FARMERS' MARKET

### Administrative Policy, "FAQ" Frequently Asked Questions, Product Categories and General Information

#### **Who owns and manages the Downtown Farmers' Market?**

The Market is owned, operated and produced by Downtown Events Group, part of the Greater Des Moines Partnership. Numerous community partners, local agencies and businesses contribute to the success of The Market by supporting The Market and Downtown Events Group initiatives. Administrative policies, participant rules and regulations are important components in the success and development of The Market. Administrative policies are produced and administered by Downtown Events Group.

#### **Where is the Downtown Farmers' Market?**

Historic Court District, Downtown Des Moines (DSM)

#### **When is the Downtown Farmers' Market?**

Saturdays, May 6 – Oct. 28, 2023

Open to the public hours: May 7 – Sept. 30: 7 a.m. – Noon

Oct. 7 – Oct. 28: **8 a.m.** – Noon

**Vendor Set-up** May – September: 5 – 6:45 a.m.; Vendor tear-down 12:15 – 1 p.m.

October ONLY: 6 – 7:45 a.m.; Vendor tear-down 12:15 – 1 p.m.

#### **How do I become a Vendor?**

All participants/vendors are required to apply. Applicants are reviewed annually and considered based on product, as well as previous commitment, attendance and conduct. All applicants who are new OR previous vendors who wish to add or change their product offerings are required to apply for the Occasional Vendor New Applicant Program. (See "If I have participated previously, how I can add/change product?")

The Market has an online application process; applicants must have access to the internet and an email address.

First-time applicants are required to "create a vendor account." This is the only way to get on the email distribution list. There is no need to "create an account" if you have already completed this step or if you participated as a vendor in the previous season. In those cases, your information will remain on file. A current email address is essential to receive notices from The Market. If your email address has changed, you can log into your account to update this email address.

Applications for 2023 Market season are anticipated to be available by Jan. 10. All who have created a vendor account will find the application in their vendor account when it becomes available. 2022 vendors and those who created an account between 1/1/21 and 1/15/23 will be notified via email when the application is available. The 2023 Vendor Application period is Jan. 10 through Feb. 12. The application will close at midnight on Feb. 12.

#### **What is a NEW Applicant (or Applicant with new product)?**

A New Applicant is:

1. Full Season or Occasional Vendor who participated in the previous Market season and wishes to change and/or add to the product category or sub category they are applying to sell. (See "If I have participated previously how can I add /change product?")
2. Someone who did not participate in the 2022 Downtown Farmers' Market.

Applicants will be reviewed based on the entire range of products they wish to sell at The Market. Selected vendors are notified by late March.

#### **What product is The Market seeking?**

It's important to know that The Market is seeking locally produced products that are unique and different from products already being offered at The Market. The Market is seeking creative and small independent businesses. The products selected will offer variety and uniqueness. We put a premium on products that are produced in Iowa and sold directly by the producer/grower; however, this does not guarantee acceptance. Duplicate products in categories that are limited will likely not be considered for The Market. \*\*\*Applications submitted for closed categories will not be reviewed.

**How are Vendors/Products selected?** (Also refer to Open/Limited /Closed Product Categories at [desmoinesfarmersmarket.com](http://desmoinesfarmersmarket.com).)

Downtown Events Group reserves the right to approve, refuse and limit products to be sold at The Market. While exclusivity does not exist, a limited number of vendors will be approved to sell certain products. Applicants are reviewed based on the entire range of products applied to sell at The Market. Vendors are not allowed to add or change product after the application process is complete or at all during season.

All New Applicants, including Previous Full Season and Occasional Vendors who wish to add/change product offerings, are required to apply for the Occasional Vendor New Applicant Program. (See "If I have participated previously how can I add /change product?")

All participants/vendors are required to apply. For applications submitted for Open Categories, an acceptance committee convenes once a year to review applications, taking into consideration product, as well as previous commitment, attendance and conduct. Vendors/products are not selected on a first-come, first-served basis, but based on what The Market needs to keep it fresh, interesting for the visitors and profitable for our vendors. Each product will be reviewed based on several criteria, including point of origin (where was the produce grown, where is the product from), hand-crafted original design, added value, how many similar products are currently at The Market and other pertinent criteria. The Market is committed to choosing a product mix that is attractive to our customer meanwhile keeping the balance of our Farmers' Market intact.

**What type of product will not be considered in the New Applicant program?**

Products that will not be considered or reviewed in the New Applicant Program include:

1. Mass produced and/or manufactured food product (i.e. jam, salsa, barbecue sauce, etc.); catalog companies; franchise or chain companies; direct selling businesses, imported items such as clothing, jewelry, trinkets, crafts, home décor, etc.; duplicate or inappropriate prepared food offerings; synthetic or silk flowers and plants.

\*\*\*Applications submitted for closed categories will not be reviewed.

**What is an Occasional Vendor?**

Occasional Vendors provide a week-to-week variety of product to The Market. The Market can offer this opportunity to more than 200 additional local growers, artisans and small businesses by utilizing the Occasional Vendor Program and rotation. An Occasional Vendor is:

- a.) an Iowa-grown food producer that is new to the Downtown Farmers' Market.
- b.) a grower wishing to sell seasonal Iowa raised product and does not have the capacity or amount of product to serve The Market during the entire Market season.
- c.) a vendor who does not sell exclusively Iowa-raised product grown by vendor such as crafts, packaged food, clothing, jewelry, etc.

After an Occasional Vendor has been accepted, information regarding scheduled dates for the season will be available in their online account. Occasional Vendors are not assigned a permanent stall location, alternatively they are rotated and assigned stalls throughout The Market based on vendor product, space availability and strategic Market balancing. The Market staff tries to keep Occasional Vendors in the same spot or area, but no spots are guaranteed.

Previous Occasional Vendor applicants are considered based on commitment, attendance, conduct and product. Request to change product or product category may be considered as a New Applicant. Refer to policy info regarding vendor and product selection within "Vendor Info Guide 2023".

**What is a Full Season Vendor?**

Full Season Vendor status is not available for New Applicants or for previous Full Season Vendors applying to sell a different product. A waiting list does not exist; alternatively, new vendors are invited to participate in The Market Occasional Vendor Program.

In order for an applicant to be considered for the Full Season Category, applicants must first participate in the Occasional Vendor Program for at least one full Market season.

Previous Full Season vendor applicants are considered based on commitment, attendance, conduct and product. Request to change product or product category may be considered as a New Applicant. Refer to policy info regarding vendor and product selection within "Vendor Info Guide 2023".

**If I have participated previously how can I add /change product?**

Many previous Full Season and Occasional Vendors apply to return to sell at the Market from season to season, however if a previous vendor wishes to change or add to the product or product category they participated in the previous year that vendor will be considered a New Applicant. Variations within subcategory such as produce varieties (if open) or flavor change for jam may be acceptable. (“See How Are Products Selected?”)

**How often are Occasional Vendors scheduled?**

Approved Occasional Vendors are scheduled approximately 2 – 20 times throughout a Market season based on product, as well as previous commitment, attendance and conduct. Applicants request dates they are available.

**How much space do vendors lease?**

The Market is limited in regards to useable space available for vending stalls. Vendors are leased one stall. If a returning vendor, may ask for more than one stall if needed and approved. Stall is approximately 10’ x 10’, however vendors assigned to the south side of Court Avenue will have approximately 10’ x 15’. (Vendors assigned to vend on Court Avenue are required to show product and sell toward sidewalk and toward street (toward “front” and “back” of stall).

**How much is the fee to participate?**

There is an annual non-refundable application fee of \$60. An Occasional Vendor pays \$65 day/per Market stall. Full Season Vendor fee is based on the product sold and assigned stall. Additional details are noted in application.

**How is the fee invoiced and paid?**

Fees are invoiced in online vendor account and paid online by credit card or e-check. No-show or cancellation date fees are not refunded or waived. Full Season Vendor fee is due in full by date noted in invoice. Occasional Vendor fees are based on dates scheduled and accepted by vendor.

After Occasional Vendor is accepted into The Market they will be scheduled for specific dates. Vendor accepts the scheduled dates (by date noted in acceptance email), then invoiced appropriate stall fee(s) in online vendor account. Scheduled dates are considered accepted by the vendor after date noted in acceptance email, fees are invoiced according to scheduled dates. Any changes and/or cancellations to an accepted vendor schedule must be made by date noted in acceptance email for the vendor to forgo the fee charged for a scheduled date. Cancellation or no-show date fees are not refunded or waived. For more details, please see the cancellation/refund policy, which is part of the online application under Rules and Regulations.

**Is there access to electricity at The Market?**

Electricity is not available at The Market. Generators may be approved under certain circumstances. If a vendor requires electricity at The Market, they are required to request approval. All generators must meet Market guidelines AND be approved by Market management in advance. If approved, vendor provides generator, extension cord and cover for the part of the cord that lies in walkways and all areas utilized by public. Generators must be quiet to respect Market vendors, customers and residents. Generators causing disruption or complaints will not be permitted.

**What are the requirements for General Commercial Liability Insurance?**

Each accepted vendor, in all product categories, is required to furnish proof of insurance before Market acceptance. Applicants do not need to show proof of a policy upon submitting application but will be required to provide a certificate of insurance prior to final acceptance. Vendor agrees to purchase and provide Certificate of General Commercial Liability insurance with \$1,000,000 limits and name Downtown Events Group as Additional Insured and Certificate Holder. Certificate must be on file at Downtown Events Group prior to vending at The Market. Applicants can submit Certificate of General Commercial Liability Insurance by uploading to the Farmspread Vendor account or email to [farmersmarket@downtownDSMUSA.com](mailto:farmersmarket@downtownDSMUSA.com).

**What kind of licenses/permits do I need?**

Each applicant/accepted vendor is required to furnish several documents upon Market acceptance; the completed online vendor application, certificate of insurance and the necessary licenses and permits. Listed are general permits and requirements. *Other requirements may apply, it is the responsibility of the vendor to know and comply with all requirements.*

**Sales Tax:** Vendors are required to comply with Iowa Sales Tax law. It is the responsibility of every vendor to know if they are required to collect and remit Iowa Sales Tax based on the product they sell. Questions/concerns regarding Iowa Sales Tax obligations should be directed to: <https://tax.iowa.gov/businesses>.

**Food Safety:** Vendors are required to comply with State Public Health regulations governing the preparation, handling and presentation of food. It is the responsibility of every food handling vendor to know if they are required to obtain specific food

handling licensing. Contact Food and Consumer Safety at the Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals with questions at (515) 281-6538. Generally, vendors that plan to cut, pierce, cold hold, hot hold, can or preserve any edible product will be required to purchase the seasonal permit.

**Fire Extinguishers:** Food vendors using gas or other fuel sources for cooking are required to have **on site, in their stall**, a portable fire extinguisher, with a DMFD Extinguisher Service Tag affixed. These service tags may be obtained from most fire extinguisher companies in the DSM region. Contact Des Moines Fire Department Prevention Bureau at (515) 283-4240 for additional information.

**Additional Permits and Opportunities:**

- Wireless EBT project (USDA food stamp program): Contact Iowa Department of Human Services, EBT Wireless Project (Electronic Benefits Transfer), (515) 281-4935; [tpenick@dhs.state.ia.us](mailto:tpenick@dhs.state.ia.us)
- FMNP, Farmers Market Nutrition Program (WIC and Senior Checks program): Contact Paul Ovrom: (515) 242-6239, [paul.ovrom@iowaagriculture.gov](mailto:paul.ovrom@iowaagriculture.gov)

### **What happens if I don't get accepted after submitting an application?**

There is a non-refundable application fee of \$60, which will be charged via credit card or online check upon submitting the online application. Information and notification of acceptance will be sent via email. Read all info within Vendor Info Guide 2023 regarding "Closed Categories" prior to submitting application.

### **When will Applicants be notified?**

Accepted applicants will be notified of acceptance via email by date noted within application.

### **How are nonprofits able to participate?**

If your organization would like to apply to participate as a Saturday Salute, please follow this link to complete the request form: [Saturday Salute Form](#). An email notification will be sent when the 2023 application is available. Applicants must be a local nonprofit 501(C)(6) or charitable 501(c)(3) or political organization with the purpose of showcasing and promoting their specific organization or event. Sales are not permitted. Space is limited and participants are accepted on a first-apply-first-scheduled basis. Organization must request approval from The Market before appearing at The Market and pay the participant fee prior to scheduled attendance.

### **How are Corporations and Businesses able to participate?**

The Downtown Farmers' Market does not accept vendor applications from corporations/businesses such as banks, realtors, insurance, cell phone or other service provider businesses. Also see "**What type of products will not be considered.**"

If a corporation/business is interested in being involved with the Downtown Farmers' Market as a Corporate Sponsor, please contact The Market Manager, Megan Renkel at [mrenkel@downtownDSMUSA.com](mailto:mrenkel@downtownDSMUSA.com).

## **DOWNTOWN FARMERS' MARKET** **PRODUCT CATEGORIES 2023**

Open/Limited /Closed Vendor Product Categories

To find out what Product and Applicant Categories are open for enrollment for the 2023 Downtown Farmers' Market season, review this information.

Due to Market commitment to balancing product mix, some categories are closed for application. Closed categories will not be open for application for New Applicants OR previous Occasional or Full Season Vendors who wish to add or change their product offerings. \*\*\*Applications submitted for closed categories will not be reviewed and the application fee will not be refunded.

It's important to know that The Market is seeking locally produced products that are unique and different from products already being offered at The Market. The Market is seeking creative and small independent businesses. The products selected will offer variety and uniqueness. We put a premium on products that are produced in Iowa and sold directly by the producer/grower; however, this does not guarantee acceptance. Duplicate products in categories that are limited will likely not be considered for The Market.

### **Farmer/Producer 100 Percent Grower (Includes Greenhouses and Nurseries) – Open for 2023**

Defined as a vendor who is responsible for both planting and harvesting the produce or raising and harvesting the product regardless of whether or not they own the property. The grower is responsible for the product from beginning to end or "seed

to table.” In this category, The Market is seeking organically raised, chemical free and producers using sustainable growing techniques. Products include but not limited to:

- Vegetables and fruits, raised by vendor – Open for 2023
- Flowers fresh and dried from your fresh cut flowers – Open for 2023
- Herbs fresh and dried, raised by vendor – Open for 2023
- Honey, grains and nuts raised by vendor – Open for 2023
- Meat and eggs from livestock raised by vendor – Open for 2023
- Bedding plants, house plants, seedlings and saplings raised by the vendor – Open for 2023

**Farmer with Iowa Grown Supplement/Carrying** – Closed Category

Carrying is described as a grower who, in addition to his/her crop, sells produce or plants bought from another Iowa grower. This includes produce/plants purchased from a known source such as a friend or neighbor, not from a local co-op, auction or wholesaler.

**Wholesale/Resale and Imported Goods** – Closed Category

Defined as a vendor whose produce/nursery/food/art/craft/clothing etc. item is purchased from co-op, auction or wholesaler and similar entities, then resold. A vendor in this category is not growing or producing this specific product. Their products have been purchased or consigned for the purpose of resale without the investment of production labor by the vendor.

Products in this category include:

- Vegetables/fruits/meats/cheese/plants and flowers/specialty food item purchased wholesale or at retail and resold – Closed for 2023
- Imported /wholesale art, craft, clothing, food and other products – Closed for 2023
- Products purchased from and sold for another vendor or business – Closed for 2023

**Artist/Crafter Vendor** – Open for 2023

Defined as a vendor whose product is hand-crafted, personally designed and created by the vendor. Production materials optimally come from regional sources or are fabricated by vendors themselves. The handcrafted component must dominate the commercial component. The commercial component must be transformed in a way that makes the work original and unique. Items included in this category include; crafts, artwork, inedible such as herbal products, personal care and beauty products.

Items not allowed for sale in this category include:

1. Anything not made or altered by the vendor;
2. Anything the vendor is selling on consignment or have purchased wholesale;
3. Anything commercially produced, assembled from commercial parts, plans and kits.

The following subcategories are Open for 2023

- Jewelry products – necklaces, rings, bracelets, earrings and broaches – Open for 2023
- Health and beauty products include hand soaps and lotions – Open for 2023

**Processed Value-Added Farm Products** – Limited Openings

Are considered farm products made from raw ingredients, a majority of which are *grown and produced* by the farmer/vendor in the region. Products include all farm products that must in some way be *produced AND processed* by the farmer/vendor. The following subcategories are LIMITED or OPEN for the 2023 application process.

Submissions of these products from NEW Applicants will be Limited for the 2023 Market.

- Cheeses and dairy – Open for 2023
- Meats – Limited for 2023
- Dried fruits, fruit juices – Open for 2023
- Jellies/Jams – Limited for 2023
- Wineries – Limited for 2023
- Salsa – Open for 2023
- Other processed agricultural food products – Open for 2023

**Processed Value-Added products** – Limited Openings

Some processed farm products are not processed by the vendor but are processed products which the vendor made from raw ingredients purchased from a local farmer which have been cooked, canned dried, baked, preserved or otherwise treated. The Market recognizes the distinction between processed farm products made/grown by the farmer and those that are purchased then processed. This includes

Dried fruits and vegetables – Open for 2023  
Cheeses – Open for 2023  
Baked goods – Limited for 2023  
Jams/jellies – Limited for 2023  
Wineries – Limited for 2023

**Processed Non-Food Value-Added Agricultural Products** – Limited Openings

Consist of agricultural by-products of products which the vendor has grown/produced that are not edible, have been altered for their raw state and are handcrafted or processed at the farm by the vendor. These products must be handcrafted or processed at the farm by the vendor and could include:

Beeswax product made from bee hives the vendor produces – Open for 2023

Milk soap or lotions made from milk the vendor produces – Open for 2023

Items not included: Items containing a majority of product not grown on vendor's farm

**Prepared Food/Drink** – Open for 2023 *\*\*Review ALL details and restrictions below\*\**

**What is The Market seeking in the Prepared Food/Drink Category?**

This category is **Limited**, it's important to note these application requirements and specifications:

The Market seeks applications from Prepared Food/Drink applicants whose business is independently owned in the state of Iowa, who use products from participating farms, process the products themselves and who highlight regional produce and seasonal ingredients. Please note, meeting this criterion does not guarantee acceptance.

Prepared Food/Drink applicants are selected based on a number of variables, including, but not limited to: the uniqueness of the food product, the availability of space, past experience and the needs of The Market.

Prepared Food is: Ready-to-eat food such as takeaway meals and includes all prepared ready-to-eat foods, drinks and snacks. Food that is freshly made on Market site or prepped in certified kitchen and available for immediate consumption on Market site. For example: Breakfast-style and lunch-style food/drink, sandwiches, burritos, wraps, crepes, smoothies, coffee, ice cream and other varieties of prepared hot or cold food/drink.

All Prepared Food/Drink Applicants: Please review below information related to space available and on-site setup requirements before submitting vendor application. Due to the space constraints, we encourage applicants to be familiar with this information, as accepted participants must be able to set up and work within the noted requirements.

- Vendor stalls do not allow space for a vehicle, trailer or food truck.
- All vending tables, tents, merchandise, inventory and signage must be set up in the street, within assigned stall space.
- Most Market stalls are 10x10, except for stalls located on the south side of Court Avenue, which are approximately 10' x 15'.
- Stall location and amount of space leased to vendor is based on many factors and criteria, including (but not limited to): the needs of the Farmers' Market (such as pedestrian walkways, vendor/product mix and City of Des Moines requirements), specific set up needs for vendor, previous use of space by vendor, local construction or similar street disruptions, etc.

Chain/Corporate Ownership/Franchise restaurants and food establishments – Not Available. Applications submitted in this category will not be reviewed. (The Market does not accept chain, corporate ownership or franchise restaurants or food establishments.)

Food Trucks – Limited for 2023. Applications submitted that require the use of a vehicle, trailer or food truck will not be reviewed. (Due to space constraints and set up requirements, The Market is not able to accept the use of vehicles, trailers or food trucks.) Please see bulleted points above related to space available and on-site setup requirement details, for explanation. There are special events throughout the season where food trucks may be allowed. If interested in additional information please follow this link to complete the form: [Food Truck Form](#)