



Farm Direct Policy

Procedures for participation in
SFC Farmers' Markets
and other SFC Farm Direct Projects



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Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| About Sustainable Food Center | 4 |
| History and Mission | 4 |
| SFC Farmers' Markets | 4 |
| Grow Local | 4 |
| Farm Direct | 5 |
| The Happy Kitchen / <i>La Cocina Alegre</i> | 5 |
| SFC Opportunities for Market Vendors | 5 |
| Farm Direct Marketing Projects | 5 |
| Farm to Work | 5 |
| Farm to Cafeteria | 5 |
| Farm to School | 5 |
| Farm to Family | 6 |
| Buy Fresh Buy Local Central Texas | 6 |
| Grow Local Gardening Program | 6 |
| The Happy Kitchen / <i>La Cocina Alegre</i> | 6 |
| Development and Communications | 6 |
| Food Access Programs: SNAP, WIC, FMNP, Double Dollars | 7 |
| Customer Process | 7 |
| Eligible Products | 7 |
| Vendor Requirements and Reimbursement | 7 |
| Signs and Pricelist | 7 |
| Accepting Vouchers and Scrip | 7 |
| Vendor Reimbursement | 8 |
| Vendor and Employee Training | 8 |
| Governance | 8 |
| SFC Farmers' Market Staff | 8 |
| Deputy Director / Farmers' Market Director | 8 |
| Farmers' Market Manager | 8 |
| Farmers' Market Coordinators | 9 |
| Other SFC Staff | 9 |
| Farm Direct Projects Manager and Coordinators | 9 |
| Food Access Projects Manager and Coordinators | 9 |
| Volunteer Coordinator | 9 |
| Development and Communications Team | 9 |
| Interns and Volunteers | 9 |
| SFC Board of Directors | 10 |
| SFC Advisory Council | 10 |
| SFC Farmers' Market Vendor Council | 10 |
| Vendor Council Role | 10 |
| Facilitation and Decision Making | 10 |
| Nominations and Elections | 10 |
| All-Vendor Meeting | 10 |

| | |
|---|----|
| SFC Farmers’ Market Operations | 11 |
| Market times, locations, services and staff | 11 |
| SFC Farmers’ Market Downtown | 11 |
| SFC Farmers’ Market Sunset Valley | 11 |
| SFC Farmers’ Market East | 12 |
| SFC Farmers’ Market at The Triangle | 13 |
| Other SFC Supported Markets | 13 |
| Vendor Categories and Product Descriptions | 13 |
| Vendors | 13 |
| Agricultural Producers | 13 |
| Value Added Producers..... | 14 |
| Artisans | 14 |
| Services | 14 |
| Non-Vendors | 14 |
| Corporate Sponsors | 14 |
| Nonprofit and Governmental Entities | 14 |
| Activity Providers | 14 |
| Rules and Regulations..... | 15 |
| All Vendors..... | 15 |
| Agricultural Producers | 15 |
| Animal Producers..... | 15 |
| Value-Added Producers | 16 |
| Non-Vendors..... | 16 |
| Onsite Market Rules..... | 16 |
| Violations | 18 |
| Producer-Only Policy Violation | 18 |
| Violation of Other Rules and Regulations..... | 19 |
| Vendor Fees | 19 |
| Application Fee | 19 |
| Annual Vendor Fee | 19 |
| Weekly Stall Fees | 20 |
| Fee Waivers and Adjustments | 20 |
| Market Interruption..... | 20 |
| Market and Vendor Development..... | 20 |
| Family Crisis or Hardship..... | 20 |
| Application Process..... | 21 |
| New Applications | 21 |
| Current Vendor Renewal | 22 |
| Farm / Ranch Visit and Inspection | 23 |
| Disputes and Grievances..... | 23 |
| On-site Resolution..... | 23 |
| Deliberation | 24 |
| Grievance Process..... | 24 |
| Your Input | 24 |

About Sustainable Food Center

History and Mission

Founded in 1993, with roots dating back to 1975 as Austin Community Gardens, Sustainable Food Center is involved in every step of our local food system. SFC's mission is to cultivate a healthy community by strengthening the local food system and improving access to nutritious, affordable food. SFC envisions a food-secure community where all children and adults grow, share, and prepare healthy, local food.

From seed to table, SFC creates opportunities for individuals to make healthy food choices and to participate in a vibrant local food system. Through organic food gardening, relationships with area farmers, interactive cooking classes and nutrition education, children and adults have increased access to locally grown food and are empowered to improve the longterm health of Central Texans and our environment.

SFC's Grow-Share-Prepare model of food systems is captured in our three main program areas: Grow Local community and school gardening, Farm Direct marketing and sales, and The Happy Kitchen / *La Cocina Alegre*® healthy cooking classes.

SFC Farmers' Markets

As a project of Sustainable Food Center, the purpose of the SFC Farmers' Markets is to provide Austin and the surrounding Central Texas region with access to locally produced foods and farm products in a diverse farm-to-consumer marketing effort that will preserve and promote regional agriculture, serve diverse populations, and improve our quality of life.

SFC believes that small family farms are essential to the local, sustainable agricultural economy, and is committed to making economic and educational connections between urban residents and local farmers. The predominant product emphasis for SFC Farmers' Markets is on farm products from the region, but the Market will also host producers of ready-to-eat and value-added products, supporting food-based entrepreneurs to increase local economic vitality.

SFC maintains a commitment to farm advocacy by supporting farmers in pursuit of a range of marketing outlets, engaging and informing policy makers on behalf of local food systems, and connecting producers to educational, training, and funding opportunities, such as conferences, grants, and emergency relief funds.

Markets operated by SFC are also set apart from other area markets in several ways - SFC Farmers' Markets are producer-only, feature meaningful educational programming such as cooking demonstrations, promote equitable food access among different economic classes and ethnicities, offer sustainability services for customers such as composting, and serve as community gathering spaces with music and children's activities. SFC also provides educational programming and outreach around local food and food systems community-wide, in order to develop more informed, aware, and committed consumers.

Grow Local

SFC's Grow Local program offers Central Texas residents the knowledge & resources necessary to grow their own food in order to alleviate hunger and bolster the health of their families, their communities,

and the environment. We envision a world in which everyone can grow food using sustainable gardening practices and with the support of knowledgeable gardening communities.

Farm Direct

SFC's Farm Direct promotes access to fresh, healthy food by connecting local farmers to schools, worksites, food service operations and Austin shoppers through a network of farmers' markets, strengthening our local economy.

The Happy Kitchen / La Cocina Alegre

Through SFC's The Happy Kitchen/La Cocina Alegre®, SFC offers community cooking classes and nutrition education classes for the preparation of meals that are delicious, nutritious, seasonal and affordable, ensuring lasting dietary changes.

SFC Opportunities for Market Vendors

In addition to the sales opportunities created through the Markets, SFC offers other sales and promotional opportunities for its vendors.

Farm Direct Marketing Projects

In furthering SFC's mission of increasing food access and strengthening the local food system in Central Texas, SFC's Farm Direct Projects are designed to assist farmers in connecting their products to worksites, schools, institutions, and universities. By doing so, SFC hopes to increase farmers' sales and diversify market channels. Farm to Cafeteria and Buy Fresh Buy Local Central Texas are open to farmers and ranchers, Farm to Work and Farm to Family are open to fruit and vegetable farmers.

For information, please contact FDProjects@sustainablefoodcenter.org or call 512-220-1090.

To [apply](#) for any Farm Direct Project go to: <http://sustainablefoodcenter.org/programs/farm-direct>

Farm to Work

Farm to Work connects farmers with worksites and businesses in Austin, San Antonio, and Houston. Farmers deliver \$20 - \$25 pre-ordered boxes of diversified fruits and vegetables directly to employees at worksites on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. SFC pairs farmers with worksites, assists with promotion of the program at worksites, provides online payment system for customers, procures payments to farmer, and trains farmers on the Farm to Work website. A sample Farm to Work agreement can be found in the appendix of this policy manual.

Farm to Cafeteria

Farm to Cafeteria helps connect farmers with cafeterias interested in sourcing local foods directly from farmers, ranchers, and vendors across Central Texas. SFC staff provide consultations to cafeteria managers and refer these managers to farmers, ranchers, and vendors in SFC's network.

Farm to School

Farm to School provides schools and students the opportunity to incorporate local foods into the cafeteria and food systems education in the classroom. We've partnered with AISD schools to provide them with marketing materials encouraging the procurement of locally sourced foods, as well as and Meet the Farmer and Veggie Sampling opportunities in the cafeteria and classroom. Farmers are encouraged to apply for this opportunity if interested in teaching and

connecting with students at schools. Farmers are paid \$200 for each Meet the Farmer Visit. Farmers are paid up to \$75 if they provide vegetables for a Veggie Sampling.

Farm to Family

Farm to Family is designed to increase food access to our most vulnerable families and communities. Built on the Farm to Work model, farmers make weekly deliveries of \$20 - \$25 pre-ordered boxes of diversified fruits and vegetables directly to families at schools and community sites across Austin. Families are able to purchase these baskets using SNAP and DDIP (see section: *Food Access & SNAP, WIC, FMNP, and Double Dollars* for details and SNAP and DDIP). SFC matches farmers with community sites, assists with promotion of the program at community sites, provides online payment system for customers, procures payments to farmer, and trains farmers on logistics and operations.

Buy Fresh Buy Local Central Texas

SFC manages and operates the Buy Fresh Buy Local Central Texas campaign. This campaign promotes locally produced foods to customers in an effort to increase sales for farmers. Vendors who meet the minimum requirements for acceptance are listed on the buylocalcentex.org website, promoted and advertised through a variety of marketing channels, and are provided printed promotional materials. All SFC vendors are encouraged to apply. Applications are found here: <http://www.buylocalcentex.org/how-to>

Grow Local Gardening Program

SFC's Grow Local program provides opportunities for gardening experts to serve as instructors for a variety of gardening classes. Instructors are paid a stipend and/or have the opportunity to promote their products or services through SFC's marketing outlets.

For information, contact Grow Local staff, <http://sustainablefoodcenter.org/about/who-we-are>, or 512.236.1074.

The Happy Kitchen / La Cocina Alegre

SFC's The Happy Kitchen offers Farmer's Market vendors two ways to market their businesses to our class participants: as ingredient suppliers and as guest presenters/instructors in classes. By doing so, SFC hopes to help vendors increase their brand awareness and gain new customers. Vendors who supply to or present/instruct in our for-fee classes will be mentioned by name on SFC's web page, social media and other marketing for upcoming THK classes. Vendors who present/instruct are encouraged to bring marketing materials, business cards and merchandise for direct distribution or sale to class participants.

For information, please contact The Happy Kitchen staff, <http://sustainablefoodcenter.org/about/who-we-are>, or 512.236.1074.

Development and Communications

The Development & Communications (DevComm) Department at SFC provides Farmers' Market vendors with a number of promotional opportunities that help increase awareness and generate new customers. Our weekly newsletter (14,000+ subscribers), website (15,000+ visits per month) and social media channels Facebook (13,000+ Likes), Twitter (3,000 Followers) and Instagram (2,750 Followers) are our primary communications tools. SFC also works to create partnerships with local media, restaurants local businesses, through which we may have opportunity to promote vendors. Additional media and press opportunities to promote vendors and products are discovered regularly.

For more information, please contact the Communications staff at <http://sustainablefoodcenter.org/about/who-we-are>, or 512.236.1074.

Food Access Programs: SNAP, WIC, FMNP, Double Dollars

Participating in Food Access programs is one of the benefits SFC offers vendors at our Markets. This program brings new customers to the Market and ensures access to healthy food for low-income residents. Food Access Programs create over \$100,000 in annual sales for vendors at SFC Farmers' Markets. All vendors selling eligible items at SFC Farmers' Markets will participate in Food Access programs and accept SFC Food Access program benefits.

Food Access Programs Include:

- **SNAP** (Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program) previously known as food stamps.
- **WIC** (Women, Infants, and Children) "cash-value" fruit and vegetable benefits.
- **FMNP** (Farmers' Market Nutrition Program) supplemental benefits program for WIC eligible families that provides fruit and vegetable vouchers during March-October.
- **Double Dollars** (Double Dollar Incentive Program, DDIP) matching benefits for SNAP, WIC, and FMNP purchases.

Customer Process

Customers visit the Double Dollars booth to exchange their electronic WIC and SNAP benefits for a requested dollar amount in paper scrip that can be spent on eligible food items. FMNP benefits are distributed as \$6 vouchers printed by Texas Department of Agriculture. Customers receive a match of benefits in Double Dollars scrip, up to \$20 per benefit program per day. SNAP, WIC, and Double Dollars scrip and FMNP vouchers can be used as currency in the Market.

Eligible Products

- **SNAP benefits** (red scrip) can be used to purchase fresh produce, eggs, meats, cheese, honey, bread and some prepared foods, but may not be used to purchase non-food items, hot foods, or foods intended for on-site consumption.
- **WIC benefits** (yellow scrip marked WIC and with a date stamp on the back) can be used to purchase fruits and vegetables only.
- **FMNP** (TDA vouchers) can be used to purchase fruits and vegetables only.
- **Double Dollar** (yellow scrip Market DDIP) can be used to purchase fruits and vegetables only.

***If in doubt about what a particular type of scrip can be used for, ask an SFC staff person.**

Vendor Requirements and Reimbursement

Signs and Pricelist

In order to accept WIC and FMNP benefits, farmers must take some additional steps to be in compliance with federal regulations. Farmers must post WIC-EBT vendor signs at every Market. During FMNP season (March-October), farmers are issued an FMNP vendor sign with their FMNP vendor number which they must post at every Market. SFC will provide the appropriate signs for each vendor. Farmers must also clearly display the prices of their products, either as a single pricelist or with a sign for each item.

Accepting Vouchers and Scrip

Vendors can accept coupons and Double Dollars at face value but they cannot give cash back for any Food Access program benefit. SFC will reimburse vendors for purchases made with WIC,

SNAP and Double Dollars scrip and FMNP Vouchers, provided the vendor and product purchases are eligible for each type of Food Access program benefit (addressed in detail during training).

Vendor Reimbursement

Towards the end of Market, the Market Coordinator will provide a receipt of collected scrip and coupons to each vendor. The receipt serves as official documentation of the total dollar amount owed to the vendor. **Vendors will be reimbursed by SFC for the total scrip and coupons collected by mail within two weeks.**

Vendor and Employee Training

On a vendor's first day at Market, the Food Access Coordinator on site will provide a brief training and written reference guide explaining the details of each of these food access programs. Vendors are responsible for making sure their employees' are in compliance with Food Access program requirements. Vendors must either provide each of their employees with the training and reference materials or notify SFC prior to a new employee starting at Market so that Food Access staff can arrange for a training session.

For more information about Food Access programs and to schedule trainings, please contact the SFC Food Access Program Manager <http://sustainablefoodcenter.org/about/who-we-are> or 512-236-0074.

Governance

SFC Farmers' Markets are managed by a team of staff housed within SFC's Farm Direct program with support from Administrative / Finance staff and members of the Development / Communications team. The SFC Board of Directors provides oversight of the organization's finances and governance. Vendors are directly represented in Market policy by the Market Vendor Council. This SFC Farm Direct Policy manual provides the guidance for staff to operate the Market and its related programs. Below is a description of key staff and their roles.

SFC Farmers' Market Staff

Deputy Director / Farmers' Market Director

- Administrative - annual operations planning and compliance monitoring, budgeting and fiscal oversight, staff support and supervision
- Policy - advocacy on behalf of the Market among local, state, federal and institutional policy decision makers, communications with Market stakeholders about policies impacting the Market
- Fundraising - represent the Market in grant writing or other fundraising efforts to ensure financial support of Markets
- Program Operations - support vendor recruitment, training, and communications about opportunities or issues of importance; ensure collaboration among Markets and other SFC programs; coordinate marketing and outreach of Markets with other staff and partners; offer dispute resolution and mediation; vendor application approval.

Farmers' Market Manager

- Program Operations - create and manage systems and processes for Market set-up and break-down, fee and scrip collection and reconciliation, new vendor recruitment and application review, vendor communications;

- Administrative - supervise and support Market coordinators, secure necessary licenses and permits; provide oversight for operations budget expenditures and tracking, including hourly payroll
 - Policy - represent SFC and Farmers' Market interests in relevant policy forums
- *The SFC Farmers' Market Manager will assist and support the Coordinator in operations decision making, and has authority to make decisions related to financial matters, to include approval of waived fees.*

Farmers' Market Coordinators

- Administrative -Collect and record vendor fees, scrip, and sales estimates; maintain vehicle and equipment upkeep logs, ensure inventory of necessary supplies
 - Program Operations - Prepare and transport equipment to and from Market sites; Set up street closures and signage; Oversee set-up and break-down crews; Provide support for special events and activities.
- *The SFC Farmers' Market Coordinator assigned to each Market has decision-making authority regarding all aspects of operations, not including financial or policy matters. The Coordinator will make necessary decisions according to this Market policy and for the good of the Market as a whole.*

Other SFC Staff

Farm Direct Projects Manager and Coordinators

Farm Direct provide oversight and management of Farm to Work, Farm to School, Farm to Cafeteria and Farm to Family programs; support farmers and other partners in their involvement with these Farm Direct projects.

Food Access Projects Manager and Coordinators

Food Access Manager and Coordinators provide oversight and management of nutrition programs (SNAP, WIC, FMNP, Double Dollars) onsite at Markets; maintain appropriate records for tracking and reimbursement; support farmers and other partners in their participation in Food Access programs.

Volunteer Coordinator

The Volunteer Coordinator ensures volunteer staffing for Taste the Place, Info, and special events at Markets.

Development and Communications Team

Staff members of the "DevComm" Team manage all aspects of communications regarding the SFC Farmers' Markets and other SFC programs, including development and execution of advertising and marketing plan, oversight of electronic communications and social media, design and production of printed materials, and coordination with community outreach efforts.

Interns and Volunteers

SFC relies on the support of unpaid interns and many volunteers to assist with Market operations, as needed, including Taste the Place, Info, and special events, plus some office and administrative functions.

SFC Board of Directors

SFC Board members are responsible for organizational governance and finance, and fulfill a fundraising and resource development function for the entire organization.

SFC Advisory Council

SFC Advisory Council members help raise the profile of SFC and the awareness of sustainable and local food systems. These activities may include, as available, being a spokesperson for SFC's mission, offering expertise to SFC, broadening our constituency base, and assisting SFC board and staff in leveraging resources.

SFC Farmers' Market Vendor Council

Vendor Council Role

The Vendor Council will support the Market by reviewing and making recommendations regarding Market policy, providing input and consultation on Market operations, and serving as a liaison between Market staff and other vendors. The Vendor Council will be notified about newly approved vendor applications but may be asked to provide input prior to acceptance. The Vendor Council will also be informed in the event that a reselling complaint has been confirmed. Members of the Vendor Council may also be asked to assist with the investigation of a reselling complaint by providing specialized, professional perspective. Members will also be asked to offer guidance on the agenda and assist with planning for the Annual All-Vendor Meeting. Vendor Council input will be sought primarily via email, phone, or in-person conversation. The Vendor Council will have at least one full meeting each year, to be held in September.

Facilitation and Decision Making

The SFC Farmers' Market Vendor Council will be elected by vendors from the roster of vendors who have participated in SFC Markets consistently for at least one year. The Vendor Council will be made up of four (4) Agricultural Producers and three (3) Value-Added Producers. At least three agricultural producers and two value-added producers must be present at a meeting in order to take action. SFC Deputy Director / Farmers' Market Director will facilitate the meetings and serve as staff liaison for the Vendor Council. Decisions will be made first by consensus and then by vote, with at least two-thirds majority needed to determine an outcome.

Nominations and Elections

SFC Deputy Director / Farmers' Market Director along with the Market Manager and Coordinators will seek nominations in February of each year. Nominations can be made in writing using email or pen and paper. Vendors in good standing may nominate themselves or suggest another vendor, who must then confirm their interest. Ballots listing all nominees will be distributed electronically in March and voting will close on March 31 each year. The four agricultural producer nominees and three value-added producer nominees who receive the most votes will serve on the Vendor Council, with an expected commitment of at least one year. In the event of no clear winner is indicated from an initial vote, a run-off may be held.

All-Vendor Meeting

An all-vendor meeting will be held in April of each year, to present the current Vendor Council members, briefly review the status of the Markets, and gather vendor input and recommendations for future programming or policy. The meeting will last no more than two hours, will be interactive and engaging, and will include a meal.

SFC Farmers' Market Operations

SFC operates four Markets. The schedule and services for each are listed below. SFC Farmers' Markets operate rain or shine. In the event of hazardous weather conditions, SFC Farmers' Market Team will determine whether the Markets will remain open.

Market times, locations, services and staff

SFC Farmers' Market Downtown

Location: 422 West Guadalupe, Austin, Texas 78701, at Republic Square Park

Schedule: Every Saturday 9:00-1:00

5:30 Crew on site to begin setup

6:00 Road Closure

6:30 - 8:45 Vendor Setup

9:00 - 1:00 Market is open

1:00 - 3:00 Breakdown

3:00 Roads are reopened and vendors must be out

Services:

Off street parking in garage for vendors

On street parking adjacent to booth available only to Farmers and Ranchers

120v electrical

Non-potable water

ATM

(2) Port-a-Johns onsite

Staff:

(2) Market Coordinators

(1) Market Assistant

(1) Double Dollar Incentive Program Coordinator

Special event Staff as required

Support:

Information Booth supported by Volunteers

Taste Booth Supported by Volunteers

Music

Cafe

Imagination Playground (by Austin Parks Foundation)

Trash, Recycling and Compost

Dollies and carts for vendor load in and load out

Non-vendor booths, Entertainment and Education:

Capacity to support non vendor booths at a given Market including any variation of the following: Non-Profit booths, Corporate Sponsor Booth, Education Booth/Activity, Children's' Activity, Entertainment, and Health/Fitness Programs

SFC Farmers' Market Sunset Valley

Location: 3200 Jones Street, Sunset Valley, Texas 78745 at Toney Burger Activity Center and Stadium

Schedule: Every Saturday 9:00-1:00

7:00 Crew on site to begin setup

7:00 - 8:45 Vendor Setup

9:00 - 1:00 Market is open

1:00 - 3:00 Breakdown

3:00 Vendors must be out

Services:

Off street parking in lot for vendors
Off street parking adjacent to booth available only to Farmers and Ranchers
120v/220v electrical
ATM
(2) Port-a-Johns onsite

Staff:

(2) Market Coordinators
(1) Double Dollar Incentive Program Coordinator
Special event Staff as required

Support:

Information Booth supported by Volunteers
Taste Booth Supported by Volunteers
Music
Cafe
Imagination Playground
Trash and Recycling

Non-vendor booths, Entertainment and Education:

Capacity to support non vendor booths at a given Market including any variation of the following: Non-Profit booths, Corporate Sponsor Booth, Education Booth/Activity, Children's' Activity, Entertainment, and Health/Fitness Programs

SFC Farmers' Market East

Location: 2921 East 17th Street, Building A, Austin, Texas 78702 at Sustainable Food Center

Schedule: Every Tuesday 3:00-7:00

1:00 Crew on site to begin setup

1:00 - 2:45 Vendor Setup

3:00 - 7:00 Market is open

7:00 - 9:00 Breakdown

9:00 Vendors must be out

Services:

Off street parking in lot for vendors
On street parking adjacent to booth available
Limited power off of a generator
Potable Water (must be carted to site)
Bathroom Facilities in Sustainable Food Center Building

Staff:

(1) Market Coordinators
(1) Double Dollar Incentive Program Coordinator
Special event Staff as required

Support:

Information Booth supported by Volunteers
Taste Booth Supported by Volunteers
Music
Café
Trash, Recycling and Compost

Non-vendor booths, Entertainment and Education:

Capacity to support non vendor booths at a given Market including any variation of the following: Non-Profit booths, Corporate Sponsor Booth, Education Booth/Activity, Children's' Activity, Entertainment, and Health/Fitness Programs

SFC Farmers' Market at The Triangle

Location: 4660 Triangle Avenue, Austin, Texas 78751 at Triangle Commons Park

Schedule: Every Wednesday 3:00-7:00

1:00 Crew on site to begin setup

1:00 - 2:45 Vendor Setup

3:00 - 7:00 Market is open

7:00 - 9:00 Breakdown

9:00 Vendors must be out

Services:

Off street parking in garage for vendors

On street parking adjacent to booth available

120v electrical

Non-potable Water

ATM

Bathroom Facilities in Leasing Office

Staff:

(1) Market Coordinators

(1) Double Dollar Incentive Program Coordinator

Special event Staff as required

Support:

Information Booth supported by Volunteers

Taste Booth Supported by Volunteers

Music

Café

Trash, Recycling and Compost

Non-vendor booths: Sponsors, Entertainment and Education:

Capacity to support non vendor booths at a given Market including any variation of the following: Non-Profit booths, Corporate Sponsor Booth, Education Booth/Activity, Children's' Activity, Entertainment, and Health/Fitness Programs

Other SFC Supported Markets

Springdale Farm Stand (Food Access Program Support)

Green Gate Farm Stand (Food Access Program Support)

Downtown Austin Alliance Holiday Stroll (Annual Holiday Event)

Community Farm Markets (School and Neighborhood Farm Stands)

Vendor Categories and Product Descriptions

SFC Farmers' Markets have two distinct types of booths: Vendors and Non-Vendors. Vendors are divided into two main categories - Agricultural Producers and Value-Added Producers, plus Artisans and Service Providers. A vendor's primary product will determine their vendor category.

Vendors

Any Market participant that submits a vendor application, pays an application fee, is approved as a vendor by SFC staff, submits an annual vendor fee, and pays required booth fees to attend the Market and sell their product is a vendor.

Agricultural Producers

Any vendor who grows, raises, and/or wild-harvests a food product.

- **Farmers** - Growers of vegetables, herbs, fruits, nuts, mushrooms, cactus, nursery products, grains, pulses, flowers, and other horticultural crop
- **Ranchers** - Producers of animal-based products, including meat, eggs, and dairy products
- **Other** - Producers of other raw, unprocessed products that are grown or raised on a farm or ranch or wild-harvested in accordance with relevant regulations, to include honey, seafood, and foraged foods.

Value Added Producers

Any vendor who uses one or more ingredients to create a product by processing, blending, packaging, or altering using other preparation methods.

- **Ready-to-Eat Vendors** - Any vendor who prepares foods either on-site or in an approved production facility and sells these foods with the intention of their being consumed on-site.
- **Prepared Food Vendors** - Any vendor who prepares foods in an approved production facility to be consumed off-site or to be used as an ingredient.
- **Cottage Food Vendors** - Producer of foods prepared under the Texas Cottage Food Law (Texas Department of State Health Services, Health and Safety Code, Title 6, Chapter 437).

Artisans

Artist or craftsperson who produces originally designed hand-crafted products that are unique and of high-quality, to include crafts, artwork, inedible products such as herbal products, personal care and beauty products.

*In order to maintain the farm and food focus of the markets, only a very limited number of artisans will be approved as vendors.

Services

An individual or group who provides a specific service relevant to the mission and function of the Market for customers and/or vendors

Non-Vendors

Any participant that is not a vendor of the Market but enhances the Market in some meaningful and mission-aligned manner may be allowed to participate as a Non-vendor. Non-Vendors are not allowed to sell products or services at Market, fundraise or attend the Market on a regular basis. They must provide additional advertisement via social media and other media outlets.

Corporate Sponsors

SFC Farmers' Market may provide an informational or activity booth to a business or organization that contributes financially to support the Market.

Nonprofit and Governmental Entities

Organizations registered as either a federal or state nonprofit, or local, state, federal, or foreign governmental agencies that support the Market's mission and purpose and are not in direct competition with Market vendors or function.

Activity Providers

Groups or individuals interested in attending Market who will enhance the quality of the Market, support the Market ideals, are not in direct competition with the Markets' mission and purpose, and who fall under one or more of the following categories:

- **Kids Activities** - An activity focusing on engaging children
- **Educational** - An activity focusing on increasing knowledge or skills pertaining to a particular topic

- **Health and Fitness** - an activity focusing on nutrition, physical activity or healthy lifestyles
- **Entertainment** - an activity focusing on providing entertainment at the Market

Rules and Regulations

All Vendors

1. SFC Farmers' Markets are **producer only Markets**. Therefore vendors may only sell products that they grow, raise, make, or harvest themselves. **No reselling will be tolerated.**
2. All production must take place within **150 miles of downtown Austin**, and must be performed using land and facilities that the Vendor controls through ownership, lease, rental, or other legal agreement.
3. Products must be produced and sold in compliance with all applicable **federal, state, and local laws and regulations**.
4. Vendors are responsible for maintaining **required permits, licenses, and certifications** for all products they produce. A copy must be submitted to Sustainable Food Center.
5. New products intended for sale by current vendors but not included on the most recently approved application must be **approved by SFC prior to their sale** at Market. Vendors may use the Renewal Application to submit changes.
6. All products sold by weight shall be weighed using an **approved, tested and sealed scale**. The weighing device must be positioned so that the weight is visible to the customer.
7. Vendors, including farmers and ranchers, must support **fair labor practices**, pay a living wage, and provide for safe and sanitary working conditions for their workers.
8. **Discrimination in any form is prohibited**. Discrimination is the treatment or consideration of, or making a distinction in favor or against, a person based on the group, class, or category to which that person belongs, including but not limited to race, color, national origin, age, disability, economic class, sex, gender expression or sexual orientation.

Agricultural Producers

1. Agricultural Producers in Texas whose products are **not produced at all or are not currently produced in sufficient quantity** within the 150 mile radius may petition the Market Manager for inclusion as a vendor, provided the product meets all other requirements.
2. Agricultural Producers who operate **pre-pay CSA or subscription programs** may use SFC Farmers' Markets as a distribution point. Items included in CSA or subscription shares, including agricultural products or value-added items, must be produced by the vendor or obtained from another Market vendor.
3. Inclusion in pre-paid CSA or subscription shares of **products from non-vendors or which are not available within the 150 radius** may be petitioned for allowance through the Market Manager, provided that agricultural products are produced in Texas, that products are not visible to the general public at Market, and that the primary producer of the product submit an SFC Farm Direct application and application fee.
4. Fresh, raw, or unprocessed horticultural products may not be grown on or harvested from plants that have been **genetically engineered or are based on genetically modified organisms**.
5. All items sold as organic must meet the **requirements of the National Organic Program**. Sellers of organic items must have a copy of their certification on file with SFC. Only certified organic growers may display signs using the word organic.
6. Vendors may sell **plants and trees, fresh and dried flowers, herbs and decorative vegetation** grown or legally gathered themselves. Purchased nursery stock must be repotted and grown for a minimum of two weeks before being sold.

Animal Producers

1. Animals used in production of products for sale at Market must be raised and managed using humane husbandry practices and environmentally sound methods.

2. Animals must be raised on the vendor's property for a substantial period in the animal's life, according to the following guidelines:
Fowl and Rabbits - 75% of the life of the animal shall be raised on the vendor's land
Pigs, goats, sheep - 75%
Bison, cattle, large animals - 50%
3. Live animals are not allowed to be sold.

Value-Added Producers

1. Value-Added and ready-to-eat products must be processed and packaged by the vendor in their own facility, or created and developed by the vendor and produced in a processing facility under the direction of the vendor.
2. If an ingredient in the product can be grown or produced in Texas and is generally available, then that Texas ingredient shall be used in a value-added product.
3. In reviewing new vendor applications, preference will be given to those producers who can verify the use of local ingredients. (SFC will assist vendors with sourcing if necessary).
4. The use of compostable and recyclable packaging for all products is strongly encouraged and preferred, unless the use of such packaging interferes with or undermines the safety or quality of the product, violates health department or other regulation, or otherwise inhibits the sale of the product.
5. Vendors cooking food on site must have their own 2A10BC fire extinguisher and a Class K extinguisher if using a deep fryer.

Non-Vendors

Corporate Sponsors, Nonprofit and Governmental Entities, and Activity Providers must comply with the following:

1. Non-vendors are allowed up to a 10 foot by 20 foot space with the exception of special requests including Activities. Additional space may be available upon request and with the Market Manager's approval.
2. Up to (2) Tents, 25 pounds of weights for each corner, (2) 8 foot tables and (3) chairs will be provided to all Corporate Sponsors and may be available upon request to other Non-Vendors. The Market Manager will determine the availability. Water and power may be provided if available.
3. The selling of any products on site is prohibited, but free giveaways are allowed.
4. Non-vendors may not offer food samples at Market, with the exception of educational activities reviewed and approved by the Market Manager.
5. Fundraising is prohibited.
6. Non-vendors may collect contact information and use this list to solicit individuals after Market.
7. Non-vendors may pass out information about their organization, and about a future event(s).
8. Non-vendors must arrive no later than 45 minutes before the start of SFC Farmers' Market and be set up 15 minutes before Market opens.
9. Non-vendors may not break down or leave before the close of Market.
10. Non-vendors are required to promote their appearance at Market via their media outlets including but not limited to social media and on their website where events are listed.
11. Non-vendors will use the full name of SFC Farmers' Markets listed in this document.
12. Non-vendors must sign a contract and indemnity waiver prior to coming to Market.
13. Non-vendors must follow all other applicable Market rules.

Onsite Market Rules

1. **Smoking**
Smoking is prohibited at the Market.

- 2. Alcohol and drugs**
The consumption of alcoholic beverages or drugs is prohibited at the Market.
- 3. Firearms**
Vendors are required to comply with state laws concerning firearms, and may not openly display firearms while selling at the Market.
- 4. Pets**
Vendors are not allowed to keep pets in proximity to any food products, although pets on a leash are allowed. Service animals are allowed at the Market.
- 5. Accessibility**
A pre-determined fire lane and ADA pathway must be maintained.
- 6. Soliciting**
Soliciting is prohibited at market.
- 7. Stall Assignments**
 - 7.1. Stall assignments will be made based on attendance, product mix and logistical constraints as determined by the Market Manager and Coordinators.
 - 7.2. Stall size shall be 10 foot by 10 foot.
 - 7.3. Transactions between customers and vendors may only occur within the stall.
 - 7.4. Vendors may request a maximum of two stalls. The request may be made on a seasonal or year-round basis to the Market Manager in writing.
 - 7.5. Vendors shall provide all of their own equipment and must not exceed the 10 foot by 10 foot Stall. Tents must be weighted with 25 pounds for each corner.
- 8. Signs**
 - 8.1. Vendors shall post a sign with the name of their business and business location.
 - 8.2. Vendors shall post an itemized list of products which includes pricing.
 - 8.3. Signage must be accurate and truthful in claims of production practices, sourcing, or other claims.
 - 8.4. All vendors accepting Food Access Program scrip or vouchers shall post signage with their identification number on it.
 - 8.5. Signs outside of the Stall will be reviewed and approved by Market Staff prior to displaying if they do not restrict movement or physically interfere with the sale of another vendor.
- 9. Attendance**
 - 9.1. Start date for new vendors will be mutually agreed upon by the vendor and Market Manager.
 - 9.2. All vendors are expected to attend Markets on a regular, year-round basis, unless the application was otherwise approved as a seasonal vendor. Vendors must attend at least one Market for a minimum of 35 weeks in their 12-month period, with no more than 8 consecutive weeks of absence.
 - 9.3. Vendors must give at least a 14-day notice to the Market Manager of their intent to return to Market from an absence of more than 4 weeks.
 - 9.4. Vendors must notify the Market Manager and the respective Market Coordinator no less than 48 hours prior to the Market if they are not attending.
 - 9.5. In the case of an emergency which prohibits attendance, notify the Market Coordinator as soon as possible and then follow up with the Market Manager.
 - 9.6. Vendors must have their booths completely set up at least 15 minutes prior to the start of Market and may not sell any products prior to the scheduled start-time.
 - 9.7. Vendors shall not breakdown their booth or depart a Market prior to the close of the Market without approval of the Market Coordinator.
- 10. Parking**
 - 10.1. Vendor vehicles must be kept within assigned parking spaces.
 - 10.2. Vendor vehicles may not be parked in customer parking zones or areas.
- 11. Pricing**

- 11.1. Vendors will determine the prices of their own products.
- 11.2. The sale or likely sale of goods at less than fair value (dumping) is prohibited.
- 11.3. Vendors shall give refunds to customers that are dissatisfied with products they have purchased.

12. Professional manner

- 12.1. Vendors asked by Market Staff to remove products of poor quality or products that present a threat to health must do so immediately.
- 12.2. Products that are cosmetically inferior or bruised may be sold as 'seconds' and must be labeled appropriately.
- 12.3. Vendors must represent their products in an honest manner, whether written or verbal.
- 12.4. Vendors must conduct themselves in a courteous and professional manner at the Market. Vendors must treat customers, staff, volunteers of SFC, and fellow vendors with respect.
- 12.5. Inaccurate, inappropriate, threatening, or harassing words or statements construed as disparaging or harmful to other vendors, vendor-to-customer relationships, the Market, Sustainable Food Center, or other Market stakeholders are prohibited.
- 12.6. All vendors should be attentive at Market to reflect a professional presence.
- 12.7. No music other than that provided by the Market is allowed.
- 12.8. No disruptive or aggressive promotion is allowed.
- 12.9. Vendors are responsible for keeping their area clean during Market, and are responsible for cleaning their stall location after Market is over.

13. Gross Sales Reports

All Vendors must give the Market Coordinator their best estimates of gross sales for each Market. The data will be kept anonymous, but is required for accurate market analysis and reporting.

Violations

Producer-Only Policy Violation

Vendors, customers, SFC staff or others who have reasonable evidence of reselling by a vendor must submit a written complaint to the SFC Farmers Market Coordinator, Manager, or Director. The complaint should include as much detail as is available. The name of the person submitting the complaint will be kept confidential; however, anonymous complaints cannot be accepted.

Upon receipt by SFC staff of an official complaint asserting violation of the Producer Only rule by a vendor, SFC staff will conduct an inspection of the farm, ranch, or other production facilities, if the Market Director determines that the inspection will provide evidence to prove or disprove the violation.

The Market Director will designate an SFC staff person to conduct the inspection, which will take place within seven (7) calendar days of receiving the complaint. The SFC staff person who is conducting the inspection will notify the vendor to be inspected 24 hours in advance. An inspection may require observation and documentation of production or processing sites, historical evidence including invoices or receipts of relevant purchases, dated photographs or video, reliable third-party testimony, and certification documents.

Upon completion of the inspection, the SFC staff person will compile the documentation and notes from observations and submit a written recommendation, along with justification, for proving or disproving the violation to the Market Director. The investigation must reveal irrefutable proof that reselling has taken place in order for SFC to take further action. The Market Director will issue a decision on the violation of Proven, Disproven, or Insufficient Evidence in writing to the vendor, and provide the vendor with a copy of the documentation, the decision and justification, and the next steps relevant to the decision. Results of the inspection, including documentation, recommendation, and decision will remain confidential,

with the exception of “Proven” reselling complaints, which will be provided to the Vendor Council.

Vendors under investigation may continue to sell at the Market. If the Market Director determines that any vendor has violated the restriction against reselling at the Market, the Program Director may suspend the vendor from the Market for one year, or expel the vendor from the Market permanently. No vendor will be expelled from the Market without definitive proof that the farmer is reselling.

Violation of Other Rules and Regulations

Violation of Rules and Regulations outside the *producer-only policy* will result in corrective and/or punitive action, to be determined by the SFC Farmers’ Market Manager according to the following standard for the year of their vendor term:

| Violations | 1st | 2nd | 3rd | 4th | 5th |
|---|---|---|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Does not endanger the public or wellbeing of the Market | Verbal Warning by Coordinator | Written Warning by Coordinator or Manager | \$50 Fine | Suspension from the Market | Expulsion from the Market |
| Endangers the wellbeing of the Market | Written Warning by Coordinator or Manager | \$50 Fine | Suspension from the Market | Expulsion from the Market | |
| Endangers the public | \$50 Fine | Suspension from the Market | Expulsion from the Market | | |
| Endangers the public and wellbeing of the Market | \$50 Fine and Suspension from the Market | Expulsion from the Market | | | |

Vendor Fees

SFC Farmers’ Markets are supported in part by grants, donations, earned revenue (sponsorships, merchandise sales, events) and vendor fees. Fees paid by vendors contribute to a portion of Market operations expenses, such as staff time, insurance, permits, marketing and advertising, equipment maintenance and replacement, musicians, and general supplies. Additional funding from grants, donations, earned revenue and in-kind contributions from partners and volunteers helps to support our staffing needs and our vital educational programming and food access initiatives. SFC publishes an organizational financial report in the annual report, available on the SFC website, and will provide vendors with a Market operations budget showing expenses and revenue at the Annual Vendor Meeting.

Application Fee

A nonrefundable processing fee of \$25 must accompany new vendor applications. Payment of the fee offsets the staff time and resources expended in reviewing and processing applications. Applications not accompanied by the processing fee cannot be reviewed. The \$25 processing fee can be paid by check to Sustainable Food Center or by credit card at <http://sustainablefoodcenter.org/programs/farmers-market-faq>.

Annual Vendor Fee

All vendors must pay a \$125 vendor fee, due at the time of renewal for returning vendors or prior to starting a Market for newly approved applications. Vendor fees will be valid for a 12-month period

from the time that a renewal is received or on the starting date of a new vendor. Returning vendors will receive a renewal notice at least one month prior to their renewal date, and payment must be received by SFC on or before the renewal date in order to continue selling at SFC Markets. Annual vendor fees cannot be refunded if a vendor decides to leave the Market before the end of their 12-month period.

Weekly Stall Fees

Stall fees for all markets must be paid by check or cash on the day of the market.

| Vendor category | Market Location | | | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------|---------------|------|----------|---------------------------|--|
| | Downtown | Sunset Valley | East | Triangle | Neighborhood Farm Markets | |
| Agricultural Producers | \$45 | \$40 | \$15 | \$30 | NA | |
| Value-added Producers | \$50 | \$45 | \$15 | \$35 | NA | |
| Artisans/Services | \$50 | \$35 | \$15 | \$35 | NA | |

Fee Waivers and Adjustments

Market Interruption

In the event of inclement weather, displacement from regular Market site, or other major interference which considerably reduces average per-vendor sales at a specific Market, the Market Coordinator will determine the impact of inclement weather, displacement, or other interference on vendor sales. The Coordinator will then submit a recommendation to a Manager or Director (SFC staff with fiscal oversight authority) for an adjustment of stall fees based on their assessment. The Manager or Director will provide a verbal response to the Coordinator, either approving or denying the adjustment. The amount by which fees can be reduced is up to \$20 for Saturday markets and up to \$10 for weekday markets, and will be assessed on fees collected that day, unless a response is deferred, in which case the adjustment will be made the following week. Only five (5) adjustments can be made per Market fiscal year (July - June).

Market and Vendor Development

The Market Director may offer a full or partial waiver of the application or annual vendor fees if the payment of the fees is a barrier to participation by that vendor AND the participation of that vendor will serve to develop a particular Market. Priority for waivers will be given to vendors who meet this standard, and are traditionally under-represented farmers/ranchers or vendors, or offer high-demand / high-priority products. The Market Director may also offer new vendors who meet the same standards an adjustment of weekly fees for up to 6 weeks at the start of their vendor fee period.

Family Crisis or Hardship

In the event of severe family crisis or business hardship, the Market Director may offer a vendor currently in good standing a deferment of the annual vendor fee if the immediate payment of the fees is a barrier to participation. The deferment will allow a payment plan of the annual vendor fee to be paid incrementally over no more than 8 weeks from the renewal date. The Market Director may also offer a vendor in good standing who meets the same standards an adjustment of weekly fees for up to 6 weeks.

Application Process

New Applications

1. Applicants must [apply](#) online

Information on becoming a vendor may be found at:

<http://sustainablefoodcenter.org/programs/farmers-market-faq>, “How do I become a vendor?”

2. Submit in the non-refundable application fee of \$25 online using credit card or check mailed to:

Attn: Farmers’ Market Manager
Sustainable Food Center
2921 E. 17th Street
Building C
Austin, TX 78702

3. Review of the application

An email will be sent confirming the application was properly submitted. Once the application has been submitted it will be listed as Pending, and will be reviewed within two weeks of receiving the Application Fee.

Upon review of the application by the Farmers’ Market team the applicant will be notified of their status:

- **Approved** - The application has met the minimum requirements to be a vendor and is approved as a vendor. They will need to submit a copy of additional forms and documents.
- **Hold** - The application has met the minimum requirements to be a vendor, however at this time we cannot admit the vendor to the Market because we have too many vendors serving similar products.
- **Rejected** - The application does not meet SFC Farmers’ Markets minimum requirements to be a vendor.

Refer to “Vendor Categories and Product Descriptions” and the “Rules” section for criteria for application review.

4. Additional required information to be a vendor:

All approved vendors:

- Signed copy of the Application which will include the Indemnity Waiver
- Signed IRS W-9.

5. Category / Vendor Type Specific Requirements:

Farmers:

- Accommodate a scheduled farm visit and inspection within two weeks of approval for SFC staff member.
*SEE DESCRIPTION OF FARM VISIT / INSPECTION
- If eggs are sold, a copy of their permit must be submitted to SFC Farmers’ Market Manager prior to attending Market.

Ranchers:

- Accommodate a scheduled inspection within two weeks of approval for SFC staff member.
- Submit to SFC Farmers' Market Manager a copy of their permit prior to attending Market.
*SEE DESCRIPTION OF FARM VISIT / INSPECTION
- If eggs are sold, a copy of their permit must be submitted prior to attending Market.

Value Added Vendors:

- May need to accommodate a scheduled inspection within two weeks of submission of the application at the discretion of SFC.
- Submit to SFC Farmers' Market Manager a copy their Food Handler and Food Manager Certificates prior to attending Market.
- If the vendor is not cottage food industry, they submit to SFC Farmers' Market Manager a copy their Farmers' Market Permit prior to attending Market.
- If the vendor is not cottage food industry, they submit to SFC Farmers' Market Manager a copy their Certificate of Occupancy for the commissary or kitchen they are using prior to attending Market.

Prepared Food

- May need to accommodate a scheduled inspection within two weeks of submission of the application at the discretion of SFC.
- Submit to SFC Farmers' Market Manager a copy their Food Handler and Food Manager Certificates prior to attending Market.
- Submit to SFC Farmers' Market Manager a copy their Farmers' Market Permit prior to attending Market.
- Submit to SFC Farmers' Market Manager a copy their Certificate of Occupancy for the commissary or kitchen they are using prior to attending Market.

Artisans

- May need to accommodate a scheduled inspection within two weeks of submission of the application at the discretion of SFC.

Other documentation that may be required

- Floral Nursery License, Sales Tax Permit, other professional certifications

Current Vendor Renewal

1. Applicants in good standing must [reapply](#) online at the end of their 12-month vendor period.
 - Use the renewing vendor application:
 - <http://sustainablefoodcenter.org/programs/farmers-market-faq>
 - How do I become a vendor?
 - List any changes to products, locations, or ownership from the previous years' application.
2. **Review of the application**
 - An email will be sent confirming that the application was submitted. Once the application has been submitted you are approved for Market.
3. **Additional information required to be a vendor:**

- Submit to SFC Farmers' Market Manager any required forms which require amending based on the renewed application
- Submit to SFC Farmers' Market Manager a copy of all updated jurisdictional permits as listed under their category as a new applicant prior to attending Market.

*** All new vendors' Annual Vendor Fees are due at the first Market the vendor attends. Annual Vendor Fees from current vendors are due on or before the annual renewal date.**

Farm / Ranch Visit and Inspection

Prior to any farmer or rancher starting as a new vendor at an SFC Farmers' Market, SFC Farm Direct program staff must conduct a farm/ranch visit. The purpose of this visit is to establish a basis of compliance with the Producer Only rule by verifying general production capacity, while also providing the new vendor with an orientation to Market policy and operations, and generally initiating a strong and lasting professional relationship between the farmer/rancher and SFC. The farm/ranch visit will be scheduled with consideration of the farmer's/rancher's intended start date, so as not to unduly delay the start.

The farm/ranch visit will occur as the final step in approval of a new vendor application, once all other application requirements have been met. Documentation of the farm/ranch visit will include a review and confirmation of the information submitted on the initial application. SFC staff will also record in writing a general description of the farm or ranch, a listing of all production sites, scale and purpose of each site (including processing or value-added facilities, if applicable), and a review of certifications, such as organic certification or regulatory inspection. Photos or video footage may be taken for further documentation or for marketing purposes. Additionally, SFC staff will provide a review of Market policy during the farm/ranch visit, will provide training on SFC Food Access programs, will secure requisite signatures on authorizations to accept Federal Food Assistance Program benefits where applicable, and will provide details on other SFC programming opportunities.

Upon completion of the farm/ranch visit, the SFC staff member will file the documentation for reference, make a recommendation to the Market Director for approval or denial of the application, and provide the farmer/rancher with a copy of the documentation, recommendation, and justification.

Site visits are not required for other vendor categories, although all vendors agree, by signing the application, to allow SFC staff to visit or inspect their facilities at any time.

Disputes and Grievances

The following procedures are in place to provide any vendor with a clear process for settling a dispute or addressing a complaint or grievance.

On-site Resolution

SFC Farmers' Market Coordinators and Managers are the first step in addressing any matter, and will make every effort to resolve an issue. Vendors are asked to provide the senior on-site SFC staff person with a clear explanation of an issue, and to work with staff to reach a resolution. After gathering all available information, the SFC staff will make a determination regarding the issue based on their interpretation of the best interest of the Market as a whole and the specific circumstances. Vendors must abide by the determination on that Market day so as to maintain order in the Market. If a vendor disagrees with the determination, the formal Grievance Process is in place.

Deliberation

A vendor may request deliberation for an issue with another vendor, with SFC staff, or other partner/stakeholder. SFC will contact the other party to suggest deliberation. Upon agreement, SFC will facilitate the deliberation between or among directly involved parties to reach a commonly acceptable resolution based on the written policies of the Market, or failing a written policy, based on the best interest of the Market as a whole. Any resolution reached as a result of deliberation will be binding for all parties. If there is any remaining disagreement, the formal Grievance Process is in place.

Grievance Process

1. Director of the SFC Farm Direct Program

A vendor should send written statement of the grievance to the Program Director within thirty (30) days of the incident. The Program Director shall use best efforts to resolve the grievance within five (5) working days of receiving the written statement. At the end of this time period, the Program Director shall issue a written response to the grievant with either the resolution or next steps if additional time is needed to address the issue. The Program Director shall issue a final written response to the grievant within thirty (30) days of the initial complaint.

2. Executive Director of Sustainable Food Center.

If unsatisfied by the Program Director's response, the grievant can appeal to the SFC Executive Director. A written statement of the grievance should be submitted to the Executive Director within three (3) working days of the Program Director's response. The Executive Director will use best efforts to resolve the grievance within five (5) working days of receiving the written statement. At the end of this time period, the Executive Director will send a written response to the grievant with either the resolution or next steps if additional time is needed to address the issue. The Executive Director will issue a final written response to the grievant within thirty (30) days of the appeal.

3. President of the Sustainable Food Center Board of Directors

If unsatisfied by the Executive Director's written response, the grievant can appeal the decision to the SFC Board President. The grievant should submit a written request for an appeal to the Board President and the Executive Director within three (3) working days of receipt of the Executive Director's written response. A hearing with the Executive Committee of the SFC Board of Directors will be scheduled within thirty (30) working days of receipt of the request for an appeal. The grievant can be accompanied at the hearing by another individual for representation or support. The Executive Committee will render a decision on the appeal in writing within sixty (60) days of the hearing. The decision of the Executive Committee of the SFC Board of Directors will be final.

Your Input

Input from vendors, customers, and all SFC Farmers' Market stakeholders is valued. If you would like to share any thoughts about this Farm Direct Policy, the SFC Markets or other aspects of Sustainable Food Center's work, please contact us at 512-236-0074 or via email at info@sustainablefoodcenter.org. Learn about ways to get involved on our website, <http://sustainablefoodcenter.org/get-involved>.