

STEPHENS COUNTY MARKET

MARKET POLICIES AND OPERATING RULES

MISSION: To promote and encourage the development of local small-scale agriculture and to provide and administer a seasonal market place for local producers of agricultural products and hand-made arts and crafts.

TIME AND PLACE: The Stephens County Market operates every Saturday from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and Tuesday from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. from April 15 through October 31. Specific dates and times will be announced each year AS DETERMINED BY THE Stephens County Market Manager. The Stephens County Market is located at 325 North Broad Street, Toccoa, Georgia.

VENDORS: Shall be local farmers or gardeners, processors of agricultural commodities, artists, or handcrafters who have produced the items for sale. All vendors must reside and produce items they sell in a county contiguous with Stephens County (Franklin County, Habersham County, Banks County, Rabun County, and Oconee County, South Carolina). Those selling must be the original producers, family members of producers, employees of producers or have a business relationship with the producers within a qualifying county.

Food Processors are responsible for meeting any and all county, state and federal requirements. For more information please call the Georgia Department of Agriculture at 1-800-282-5852 and the Stephens County Health Department at 706-282-4507.

Vendor fees are \$10.00 per day or \$25.00 for an annual membership.

WHAT CAN BE SOLD AT THE MARKET?

- A. Raw Agricultural Products: Includes fruits, vegetables, grains, herbs, flowers, bedding plants and potted plants. Nurseries must grow plants from seed, plugs, cuttings, bulbs, and bare-root. Woody plants and bedding plants may be re-potted and sold as long as they have been owned for forty-five (45) days. No resale of pre-finished plants is allowed. Plants must be in the possession of the vendor a minimum of forty-five (45) days. All vendors selling plants must obtain a live plant license from the Georgia Department of Agriculture.
- B. Value-added Agricultural Products: This category includes products made of raw agricultural commodities that have been processed. Examples are jams, jellies, sauces, oils, vinegars, baked goods, molasses, cider and picked-out nuts. Sellers must abide by all applicable federal, state, and local health regulations. In addition vendors must adhere to federal guidelines on all labels.

- C. Arts and Crafts and Non-agricultural Products: Includes approved items such as arts and crafts, handmade soap, handcrafted furniture, pottery, quilted products, and jewelry. Members selling these items must have created them. These items must be handcrafted, original, and exhibit a high level of quality and design. The direct resale of commercially available products is not allowed.
- D. Meat and Other Animal Products: Includes meats, trout, catfish, poultry, milk, cheese, eggs, honey, wool, leather and other products derived from animals. Vendors must abide by all applicable federal, state and local regulations and inspection regimes. In addition, they must adhere to federal or state guidelines on all labels. For example, those persons selling eggs must obtain an egg candling license and be certified by the Georgia Department of Agriculture. Licenses must be posted. Organic products must post a license.

The following products can only be sold at the market if all applicable laws are met:

Meat Products (including trout and catfish), Dairy Products and Organic Products (Farms must be certified through the United States Department of Agriculture to be labeled as an organic product). Certifications must be posted.

National, State and Local Laws and regulations may over-ride any policies that are currently in place at the Stephens County Market. To find out more information please visit the Georgia Department of Agriculture website at www.agr.georgia.gov.

All produce must be of the highest quality which is subject to the judgment of the Market Manager. Only USDA certified organic growers may display signs using the word “organic”.

Commercial produce stand vendors will not be allowed to sell.

Nursery plants sold at the Stephens County Market must be in possession of and cared for by the vendor for forty-five (45) days prior to being sold at the Market. Anyone selling live plants must have a live plant license available at www.agr.georgia.gov.

Baked goods must be fresh (made within 24 hours of market day). There shall be nothing sold using commercially prepared mixes. Baked goods must be individually wrapped or, if warm, must be covered and protected from the environment at all times. All baked goods must comply with Georgia Department of Agriculture regulations.

All crafts are reviewed on a case by case basis. All crafts must be of excellent workmanship in quality and design. All crafts must be “handmade” or “hand crafted”. All applications must include a photograph or sample of the craft.

FARM INSPECTION: No reselling of any products is allowed other than the items previously mentioned. The sale of any product not grown or produced by vendor will result in the expulsion of said vendor from the Stephens County Market. Stephens County Market management reserves the right to inspect any member's farm or business to determine whether the member is producing all the said vendor is selling at the market. The Market Manager, or their designee, will be visiting produce farms in May and June for inspections.

PRICING: The pricing of goods is at the discretion of the individual vendor. Vegetables and other products will be sold by the piece, by volume, or by the pound. The use of scales at the Stephens County Market is allowed, they must be certified and bear the certification documentation. Prices should be fair market value.

MARKET DAY RULES: Market space will be available 60 minutes prior to the opening. Please call the Market Manager at 706-491-0883 or 706-599-2277 before 6:30 a.m. on market day if you will be late. The Market Manager is responsible for all space assignments.

Each produce vendor is allowed one or more spaces. Crafters area limited to one space. Spaces may be reserved for the entire season; otherwise they can be obtained on a first come first served basis. During the registration process, applications are accepted at the discretion of market management. If spaces are needed for special reasons, the Market Manager has the power to reserve a specific area. If space becomes a factor, agricultural producers are given top priority.

1. All vendors are expected to conduct themselves in a courteous and respectful manner in dealing with customers and other vendors.
2. No "hawking" of products, distraction of customers from another vendor's booth, or disparaging remarks about another vendor's goods will be tolerated.
3. Vendors shall not participate in arguments or make threatening remarks toward other vendors or customers.
4. Vendors shall not interfere with communication between other vendors and their customers; i.e.-singing or loud music.
5. Vendors will not be allowed to solicit for political or religious purposes.
6. Each vendor is responsible for cleaning up the area around his or her space.
7. No vendor signs, shelving, tables, or furniture of any kind may be left at the market during the off season.
8. Nails or screws shall not be mounted to any structure in the market.
9. Anything left at the market in the off season will be removed by the Market Manager. Any unauthorized vehicles left at the market in a vendor's space will be towed.
10. No smoking under and/or near the buildings is tolerated.
11. No pets (customer or vendor) are allowed at the Stephens County Market.

12. Any vendor items left during the season will not be the responsibility of the Market Manager or Stephens County Government.

Electrical power demands are limited to 20 watts on any circuit (comprised of 2-4 outlets). If a particular machine is using more energy than the demand, the Market Manager will remove that machine from the circuit.

Safety of customers and vendors at the Stephens County Market is a priority. Vendors arriving and departing the market must drive slowly and carefully especially during hours of operation at the market.

MARKET MANAGER: The Market Manager is empowered to answer questions, solve problems and amend market policies. The Market Manager will inform the Stephens County Market committee of issues demanding the committee's attention. The Stephens County Market Committee is comprised of vendors, the Market Manager, and personnel from the County Commissioner's Office. The committee's purpose is to advise the Market Manager about changes in policy at the Stephens County Market.

ENFORCEMENT OF MARKET POLICY: Vendor failure to adhere to any Stephens County Market Policy set forth herein results:

First Offense: Verbal warning issued.

Second Offense: Expulsion from the Stephens County Market.

The Stephens County Market Committee reserves the right to amend these policies as is necessary and bring forth the amendment to the Stephens County Board of Commissioners.

NON-DISCRIMINATION CLAUSE: The Stephens County Market will not discriminate against anyone because of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, age, disability or sexual orientation.