

Belfast Farmers' Market By-laws

2016 version

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:

The Belfast Farmers' Market (hereinafter called "The Association") was established to provide local small growers with an outlet for the sale of fresh picked produce and related agricultural products; to foster an appreciation for Maine's rural resources; and to develop sources of marketing, management and agricultural information for its members.

The Association will operate a farmers' market at such site(s) as selected by the membership; establish market guidelines; set quality standards; promote the market; and encourage growth of the local/regional food supply.

I. MEMBERSHIP

A. Members are expected to conform with the Association's Statement of Purpose and attend at least 14 days total during the season.

B. Membership shall be for fiscal year January 1-December 31 inclusive. Seasonal membership will be offered to eligible applicants whose crop or product is determined to be seasonal by the voting members.

C. Membership is open to all interested persons regardless of residence.

D. Members must pay the annual fee for membership.

1. Said fee will be set by the voting membership, and will be reviewed annually. Fees for seasonal membership will be pro-rated. These fees will be used to defray the costs associated with the Market site and operations e.g. advertising, publicity, insurance, rent, etc.

2. The membership fee covers all members of a household unit or family.

a. All household members may attend meetings and take part in discussions.

b. Voting is limited to one vote per membership.

c. Each membership may only provide one officer.

3. Membership shall continue only on payment of the current year annual membership fee.

4. Continuing members shall submit a complete application on or before the annual meeting. Changes from the previous season will be reviewed and discussed by the membership at the annual meeting. Any changes will be subject to approval by a vote of the current membership. Products may be limited to specific days. Each continuing member shall give copies of appropriate state required licenses and proof of insurance to the President or Secretary before the market season begins.

5. Applications for new membership must be signed and received by the membership committee at least one week before commencement of the annual meeting.

a. Each application for new membership will be reviewed and voted on by the current voting membership at a business meeting held on the fourth Sunday in February, unless a different date is set at the annual meeting.

b. Each applicant for new membership may be required to make a presentation in person to the voting membership at a meeting to be held following the annual meeting.

c. Continuation of memberships will be contingent on a satisfactory farm visit conducted by the membership committee. This visit will be conducted at any time during the first season following acceptance, and every three years thereafter or as necessary.

d. At the annual meeting, the membership committee shall provide the market members with copies of all applications for new full time memberships

e. Participation in the farmers' market(s) is limited to paid up members.

f. Late applications will be reviewed only in order to fill gaps identified by the membership committee, and processed within one month of receipt using any appropriate means of member notification and vote.

g. All new members are accepted on a trial basis for one year and do not have voting rights until accepted as permanent.

G. Members of the Belfast Farmers' Market must comply with the By-Laws and Guidelines of the Association. Upon receiving a formal, written complaint of a member not abiding by the By-Laws or Guidelines, being uncooperative, or otherwise acting detrimental to the market, customers, or other members, the President or Vice-President shall appoint three members to investigate the complaint. If two of these three find that the complaint is valid, a meeting of the membership will be called with full notification of all members. If no resolution can be achieved at the meeting, any member may be removed by a written ballot vote with a majority of the market's current membership voting for removal.

II. STRUCTURE

A. The Association will be run by officers elected at the Annual Meeting.

B. The Annual Meeting will be held on the second Sunday in January unless notification of change is made in writing 30 days in advance of proposed date.

C. Regular business and educational meetings will be held during the year, the number and time to be decided by the membership.

D. Special meetings may be called by the officers or any four members on seven days advance notice to all paid up members, or at the market when a quorum is present.

E. In procedural matters, Robert's Rules of Order will be the authority for all meetings.

F. Decisions requiring a vote shall be decided by a quorum which shall consist of 51 percent of the voting membership.

G. The Association shall have two standing committees. Officers for these committees will be elected at the annual meeting. These committees are:

1. Membership. This committee shall be empowered to act on all issues of the membership as addressed in the guidelines and bylaws of the Association.

2. Publicity. This committee shall be empowered to act on the publicity needs of the Association, including but not limited to paid advertising, PSAs, press releases, special promotions and signage. Budgets and expenditures shall be reviewed and authorized by the membership at regular business meetings.

III. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

A. Elections shall be by written ballot, or by a show of hands, with each membership limited to one vote

B. A simple majority of the present eligible voters is necessary to elect a candidate.

C. Officers shall include:

1. President to preside over meetings, establish agenda, implement decisions of the membership, act as market spokesman, oversee implementation of By-Laws and Guidelines, and endeavor to handle conflict between members.

2. Vice President to preside at meetings in absence of the President and undertake such additional duties as the president or membership shall direct.

3. Secretary to take accurate minutes of all regular and special meetings; maintain a legible minutes book, handle association correspondence as directed by the president; maintain a file with copies of all correspondence; maintain a list of available stalls and eligible stall holders; maintain an annual file of copies of members licenses and proofs of insurance; and make a report at all business meetings.

4. Treasurer to keep the Association's financial accounts; make reports at all business meetings; supply account summaries to members on request with seven days notice; collect the annual membership fees, and pay costs relating to advertising, insurance, and other market expenses in a timely manner. The Treasurer may designate an Assistant Treasurer to help with the fee collection when absent. All market monies shall be deposited within 14 days of receipt.

IV. AMENDING THE BY-LAWS

A. Amendments to the by-laws shall be in accordance with Roberts Rules of Order.

B. All such amendments shall be duly recorded in the minutes, with copies provided to all members by the next business meeting.

BELFAST FARMERS' MARKET GUIDELINES 2012-2013

I. PARTICIPATION

A. The Farmers' Market consists of local small growers of vegetables and other related agricultural products; local producers of "added value" items such as baked goods, pickles, preserves, etc.; local people involved in catching, processing and distributing Maine seafood products; and any other category deemed acceptable to the voting membership.

B. It is recognized that although members sell as individuals, the market is a cohesive unit- its success depends on the cooperation and joint effort of all the vendors as a whole.

C. Members must make, grow, process, or catch all the products they sell at the Market site.

II. ACCEPTABLE PRODUCTS

A. Products for sale at the Belfast Farmers' Market must be in compliance with the guidelines of the Association. The Market was established as an outlet for local Maine agriculture and related products, and to help promote small-scale agriculture and rural enterprise.

1. Craft items offered for sale must be made by the vendor, or a family member and must be a secondary product to the agricultural products offered for sale. All craft items must be of good quality and should be clearly marked with the makers' name.

2. All produce and agricultural products must have been grown or produced by the vendor or a family member. Items purchased for resale are strictly forbidden.

3. Fresh produce must be grown by the vendor or family member. A high standard of freshness is required. Produce should be picked as close to Market time as possible and handled in such a way as to preserve the fresh quality until Market opens, and throughout Market hours.

III. MARKET SITE

A. The Market(s) will be conducted at such site(s), upon such days and at such hours as decided by the voting members at the Annual Meeting.

B. The Market will be conspicuously identified by a neat, legible sign place at the Market site(s), subject to approval of the property owner.

C. Layout of the Market stalls will be determined by joint agreement of the membership and the property owners.

D. Customer parking will be clearly designated by conspicuous signs and arranged in insure safety and Market visibility. Parking arrangement are subject to approval by a vote of the current voting membership.

E. Rent, if any, will be negotiated annually with the property owner or his agent by designated representatives of the Association, subject to approval by a vote of the current voting membership

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F. Vendors must post their name and farm location at their stall each market day.

G. Vendors must leave the Market site by time agreed to with the property owner.

IV . STALL ALLOCATION

A. Number and size of stalls available at Market site(s) will be determined by the association officers based on site size and topography.

B. Stalls at the Market site will be occupied by paid up members on a daily first-come-first-served basis, or by any other means determined by a majority of the voting membership.

C . Disputes over stall spaces shall be heard and settled by the officers; all such decisions are subject to appeal, to be settled by a vote of the current voting membership.

V. MARKET OPERATION

A. Knowledge of and compliance with all state regulations regarding the production, labeling, display and sale of all products at the Belfast Farmers' Market is the responsibility of the individual vendor.

1. Sales tax must be collected as required by Maine State law. Maine's sales and use tax law requires tax collection on non-edibles such as crafts. It is the responsibility of each vendor to obtain their own tax numbers, and be familiar with which of their items are taxable, and to collect such taxes and forward them to the State Treasurer.

2. Processors of homemade foods such as pickles, baked goods etc. must comply with Chapter 345 of the Department of Agriculture requirements and assume responsibility for licensing, inspection, etc. Copies of these licenses must be given to the Market President or Secretary annually.

3. Eggs, fish, meat, and dairy products must be handled in a manner acceptable to state regulations, e.g. product must be kept in a cooler or on ice or under refrigeration.

4. Department of Agriculture law requires that fresh produce must be displayed at least 6 inches off the floor.

5. All produce sold by weight must be weighed for the customer at the Market site. Only scales carrying current certification by the Department of Weights and Measures will be allowed, in compliance with State of Maine law.

6. Vendors engaged in growing and selling plants of all kinds must obtain a license from the Maine State Department of Agriculture.

B. Prices should be displayed clearly, either by use of a price list or with individual signs for each product.

C. Each vendor selling at the Market will have a good understanding and knowledge of his product, its handling etc.

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VII. APPEARANCE AND CONDUCT

A. Vendors will be neat, suitably dressed, and deal with the public in a courteous and appropriate manner.

B. All vendors will display their products neatly and attractively, with consideration for the other vendors and the general public.

C. Vendors are responsible for their own stalls, and will supply all necessary trash containers, and will leave their site clean and in a condition suitable to the officers and property owner.

D. Hawking and false advertising is forbidden.

VII. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

A. Applications shall include full name(s), address, and contact information.

B. Applications shall include primary and secondary products with rough estimate of quantity.

C. Applications shall include intended days and season of attendance.

D. Applications shall include all present and prior membership in Farmers' Markets.

E. Applications shall include at least two references.

F. New and continuing applications will include copies of all appropriate licenses and proof of the applicant's current insurance policy.

G. ELIGIBILITY:

1. All farmers, gardeners, bakers and others who produce 100% of what they offer for sale and who carry general liability for \$500,000 and possess applicable state permits and licenses are eligible for membership in the market.

2. No one will be accepted into the market without a completed application and all necessary state permits, licenses, proof of liability insurance and payment of annual dues.