2020 St. Johns Farmers Market Vendor Handbook
A program of St. Johns Center for Opportunity

SECTION 1: MARKET OVERVIEW

Welcome to the eleventh season of the St. Johns Farmers Market!

MISSION & VALUES

The St. Johns Farmers Market (SJFM) supports a local, sustainable food supply while providing opportunity for emerging farmers, contributing to the health of all local residents, encouraging cross-cultural connections and dialogue, and enhancing the community and business vitality of St. Johns. SJFM is a program of St. Johns Center for Opportunity (SJCO).

SJCO is working to strengthen the St. Johns neighborhood through people-centered economic development and community building. We envision a thriving, diverse, and just St. Johns where everyone has access to affordable housing, benefits from economic opportunity, and is civically engaged in the community.

Our values as a Farmers Market include:

- Fresh & Local Food: we value providing our community with fresh and healthy foods sourced from their local economy.
- Entrepreneurship: we want to support our local farmers and business owners and help them succeed.
- Collaboration: we love partnering with our vendors and other community organizations to offer great programming and promotional opportunities throughout the season.
- Diversity & Inclusion: we are intentional about creating an environment that is diverse and welcoming to all people and cultures. We also love welcoming dogs at the market!
- Active Listening: we are constantly listening to feedback from our vendors and community members and incorporating their ideas when appropriate.
MARKET HISTORY

The St. Johns Farmers Market (SJFM) was founded by a group of dedicated neighbors who recognized a need for access to fresh, local produce in the community. These neighbors, with the support of the St. Johns Neighborhood Association, worked diligently to create the market.

With a deeply rooted vision and passion, these neighbors formed the Market's first Board of Directors in the fall of 2009. Once nonprofit status was achieved under North Portland Community Works (NPCW), grants from North Portland Neighborhood Services (NPNS), and Metro, and generous donations from the local community allowed the board and committed volunteers to set forth the infrastructure for the Market. By late 2009, the SJFM hired its first Market Manager and began planning for its inaugural season.

The SJFM kicked off its first market season on July 11th, 2009. Over 3000 people turned out to support the Market, and many farmers sold out of produce within two hours. A staple of the plaza in the summer months, the Market is a place for the community to gather, share the bounty of our local farmers, and access fresh produce.

In 2014, the St. Johns Farmers Market was acquired by St. Johns Center for Opportunity (formerly St. Johns Main Street). With SJCO, the market is able to further many of the market goals including increasing food justice in the community.

The St. Johns Farmers Market is an inspiring example of what neighbors with a shared vision can accomplish together. We thank all those with the vision and dedication to make the SJFM a reality and all those who continue to make it a success, in particular, our vendors.

2019 MARKET HOURS AND LOCATION

May 16th – October 31th
Saturdays, 9 am – 2 pm
New Location: N Charleston and N Central St. (parking lot of St. Johns Christian Church, next to the Bachelors Club)

CONTACT INFORMATION

Rose Williams, Farmers Market Manager
Main Contact for Farmers Market
manager@sjfarmersmarket.com
(503)-841-5522 – office
(503)-975-3327 – cell

WEBSITE

www.stjohnsopportunity.org
SECTION 2: APPLICATION & SELECTION PROCESS

Applications
Applications for the St. Johns Farmers Market are accepted via ManageMyMarket.com. Our Market Manager is available to help vendors complete the online application if help is requested at least 2 weeks before the application deadline. You may also request a paper copy of the application by emailing our staff members.

Typically, applications open up early January of each year and close early March. Accepted vendors are notified by the middle of March.

Products welcome at the St. Johns Farmers Market
All products must be grown, raised, caught, gathered or produced by the vendor in Oregon or Washington, and must be pre-approved before being sold at the market.

The St. Johns Farmers Market is interested in showcasing locally grown, raised, sourced and produced products. Non-farm businesses have priority if at least 25% of the ingredients used in their products are locally sourced directly from Oregon and Washington farms. Arts & crafts vendors have priority if 100% of their products are hand-crafted in Oregon and Washington (we will make an exception to this rule if we feel like the product aligns with the values and vision of our market).

Products NOT accepted at the St. Johns Farmers Market
- Food items not grown and/or processed by the vendor
- Beverages not produced by vendor business (i.e. cans of soda or juice and bottled water).
- Nationally/Internationally distributed products (defined as distribution to 10+ states OR determined by percentage of total business sales)
- Energy drinks
- Pet foods
- Meat and dairy products treated with growth hormones such as rBGH
- Farmed salmon or salmon products
- Genetically modified crops
- Businesses that operate under a franchise agreement
- Non-food items not grown or processed by the producer (e.g., flowers, herb tinctures, beeswax candles)

Supplementing Produce
SJFM does allow farmers to supplement some produce, as needed. Farmers are allowed to supplement up to 25% of the products at their booth and must submit paperwork listing all supplemental products to the Market Manager for approval prior to bringing them to the market. These products MUST be clearly labeled in the vendor’s booth with the name and location of the original farm.
**UPDATED! Application Fee**
There is a one-time application fee of $25. Please note this is not an acceptance fee. Checks can be made out to St. Johns Center for Opportunity. The application fee can be mailed to: 7302 N Richmond Ave, Portland, OR 97203. Application fees must be received within 4 weeks of the application submission in order to be considered for the market. Vendors who have not paid the application fee by this deadline will not be considered or able to participate in the market.

**Product Samples for Vendor Selection Team**
Samples of products may be required to be submitted as part of the application process, when requested by the Market Manager.

**Selling Privileges**
Approval of selling privileges for a vendor is always for a specific period and never exceeds one market season. The market does not offer exclusive rights to any one vendor to sell any one product. Market customers benefit from having a choice. However, if SJFM believes the number of vendors offering the same or similar products is excessive, duplicate products may be denied entry at the time of application.

**Our Selection Criteria (in order of priority)**

1. **Agriculture**
   - Priority is given to those regional farmers and producers who bring products to market that are 100% grown and harvested on farmland in Oregon or Washington that they own and/or operate. Note – we do accept farmers who purchase products from other local farmers and producers, so long as those products are grown and harvested on farmland in Oregon or Washington.
   - Priority is given to farmers who use environmentally responsible and sustainable growing, breeding, raising, and harvesting methods.

2. **Equity**
   - SJFM is committed to supporting traditionally marginalized populations such as people of color, women, immigrants & refugees, and members of the LGBTQ+ community. Priority is given to vendors owned and operated by people who represent these populations.

3. **UPDATED! Seniority**
   - Number of years a vendor has sold at SJFM.
   - Positive and consistent attendance record.
   - No outstanding booth fees from previous seasons.

4. **Product quality**
   - Consistently high product quality: fresh, flavorful, and ripe.
   - Clean and attractive displays.
5. Conduct, compliance and customer service
   ● History of compliance with market rules and federal, state, and local regulations.
   ● Periodic market attendance by owner operators over the course of their season to foster a connection between the vendor business and customers.
   ● Courteous and knowledgeable at-market staff with strong customer service skills and a history of positive interactions with market staff, customers, fellow vendors and volunteers.
   ● Timely submission of application, fees, licenses, gross sales forms and other market correspondence.
   ● Vendor adheres to the highest standards in safe food production and handling.

6. Product balance
   ● Priority is given to unique or unusual products not already represented in the market
   ● Duplicate products may be denied entry.

**SECTION 3: SJFM POLICIES FOR ALL VENDORS**

Vendor acceptance, market sales by accepted vendors and/or third-party businesses, and/or specific product sales at the market are solely at SJFM’S discretion. SJFM reserves the right to deny a vendor application, prohibit anyone from selling at the market, and/or prohibit any product from being sold at the market.

The following are requirements for all vendors who participate with SJFM:

1. **Review Vendor Handbook**
   All perspective vendors must review this handbook and comply with the policies and expectations contained within.

2. **Vendor Application and Hold Harmless Agreement**
   All vendors must complete and sign the SJFM Vendor Application and Hold Harmless Agreement on an annual basis. See below for more information on the application process.

3. **Product List and Descriptions**
   All prospective vendors are required to submit a complete list of all products they wish to sell within their vendor application. Acceptance of application assumes approval of products listed within application unless otherwise specified. Any products wished to be added during the season must be submitted in writing to the Market Manager a minimum of seven (7) days prior to vending. **SJFM prohibits the sale of bottled beverages not manufactured by the vendor, and bottled water.** All drinks must be listed on the application.

4. **UPDATED! Relevant Licenses and Certificates**
   All vendors need to acquire and provide SJFM with copies of all relevant licenses and certificates (i.e., organic certification, ODA licenses, etc.) in order to comply with local, state and federal requirements.
governing the sale and production of their products. All qualifying vendors must be certified in the WIC/Farm Direct Nutrition Program, and must abide by the program’s requirements. Documents may be submitted by mail, email, hand-delivery, or uploaded to the vendor record in Manage My Market at least 2 weeks prior to market start date. All appropriate documentation must be available in vendors’ booths at the market. Vendors who do not comply with applicable regulations may be excluded from the market and may forfeit stall fees.

5. **UPDATED! Liability Insurance**

   Liability insurance naming “St. Johns Center for Opportunity” as an additional insured party is required for all vendors ($1,000,000 minimum). Insurance certificates may be submitted by mail, email, hand-delivery, or uploaded to the vendor record in Manage My Market at least 2 weeks prior to market start date. Vendors who do not comply with this requirement may be excluded from the market and may forfeit stall fees.

6. **Scale Certification**

   All vendors who sell by weight are required to have their own state-licensed scales. Unit pricing is an alternative to licensed scales.

7. **Organic Certification**

   Only growers who are certified organic may use the word organic in their signage and in verbal claims. Non-certified organic growers must use other descriptive terms for their products.

8. **Uncertified Claims**

   Growers using verbal or written claims where certification cannot be established (e.g. unsprayed, no spray and pesticide free) must submit a written statement with the vendor application attesting how these procedures are followed.

9. **Gross Sales Reporting**

   We know that there is sensitivity in reporting gross sales, but we strongly believe that this data is crucial in helping to grow the market and to better understand market trends. All vendors must report estimated gross sales totals to the Market Manager each week. This is a requirement. The Market Manager will collect gross sales totals from vendors at the end of each market day, when collecting tokens and other currencies. We ask that all vendors notify their employees about this requirement at the beginning of the season. Please note that there will be an option to submit your gross sales anonymously.

10. **Vendor Signage**

    All vendors must have a sign with the name and location of their business. The sign must be legible and easily seen. All approved WIC and SNAP vendors must display those signs in an easy to see location. SJFM encourages all vendors to provide clear signage regarding their products (herbicide/pesticide free, wild harvested, etc.) for customers.
11. Weekly Communications with Vendors
SJFM circulates weekly vendor updates by email to communicate market news, market layouts, and other information relevant to our market community. Vendors are expected to read these communications thoroughly as they contain important and time sensitive information. If an owner or manager is receiving the weekly communications, they are expected to pass on the relevant information to the employees who attend the market.

12. Shopping Bag Restrictions
The City of Portland does not allow the use of plastic, compostable or “biodegradable” checkout bags with handles as of October 1, 2013. These bags are also known as T-shirt bags. Vendors are allowed to use recycled paper bags or reusable bags as checkout bags for customers. Recycled paper bags must contain at least 40% recycled content and be accepted into the City of Portland’s curbside recycling program. The policy allows bags without handles used to protect a purchased item from other purchased items, such as produce, bulk food and meat.

More information about the City’s ban on plastic bags can be found at https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/56157. Questions may also be directed to Patty VanAntwerp, City of Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability; Patty.VanAntwerp@portlandoregon.gov; 503.823.8468.

13. UPDATED! Orientation Meeting
All vendors are required to attend a mandatory vendor orientation meeting prior to each market season. This meeting is generally in late April/early May. All vendors will be expected to attend this meeting.

14. Non-Discrimination
The market does not discriminate against vendors or customers due to gender, race, class, age, sexual orientation, etc. If any vendors are found to violate the market’s non-discrimination policy disciplinary action will follow, including the potential for the offending vendor to be barred from vending at the market.

15. UPDATED! Attendance & Cancellations
Once a vendor is approved for market dates they are obligated to attend and pay for all scheduled market days. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis for seasonal delays for farmers.
- Attendance tracking begins with the first scheduled market day.
- Vendors who must cancel a market date are responsible for providing 48-hours notice.
- Notice must be given by calling the SJFM office or Market Manager’s cell phone, by emailing the Market Manager, or text messaging the Market Manager. If a vendor needs to cancel on the morning of the market, they must notify the Market Manager via a phone call to their cell phone. Vendors who cancel the morning of the market will still be charged the booth fee. Market Manager may make exceptions under extenuating circumstances.
● Vendors are allowed two excused absences per market without penalty (meaning they have provided 48-hours notice or the Market Manager has approved their absence because of illness or other unusual circumstances), after which they are required to pay for all absences.
● More than four cancellations may result in a change of status as a “vendor in good standing”.
● Vendor cancellations of market dates due to health, business failure, or other extraordinary circumstances will be taken into consideration regarding any fees due.

16. Market Promotional Efforts
SJFM organizes a number of promotional efforts for customers throughout the season. Generally speaking, SJFM covers the cost to organize these events. Occasionally, we will ask vendors to contribute a gift card or non-perishable item to support these efforts. For example, we organize a “Passport to Produce” program. Shoppers get stamps for every $5 spent at the market. Once they fill up their playing cards, they are entered into a raffle for 2 market goodie baskets that are filled with donations from vendors.

Enforcements and Disputes
The Market Manager has the ultimate authority on-site to enforce all of the vendor rules contained within the Vendor Handbook and agreed to in the Hold Harmless Agreement. Enforcement may include removal, suspension, and/or expulsion from the market. The enforcement process includes, but is not limited to:

1. A verbal warning issued by the Market Manager
2. A written warning (signed by the SJCO Executive Director) after multiple violations
3. Suspension/expulsion of vendor from the market

SJCO’s Executive Director can be contacted in writing (via email) after a warning has been issued to appeal the warning.

Have a concern or feedback you want to share with us? Please contact SJCO’s Market Manager (manager@sjfarmersmarket.com) first and foremost. If you don’t feel like you can approach the Market Manager, please reach out to SJCO’s Executive Director at (info@stjohnsopportunity.org). We strongly urge you to express your questions or concerns with at least one of the above contacts as we care about your feedback.

SECTION 4: MARKET OPERATIONS & SAFETY GUIDELINES

UPDATED! No vehicles are permitted in loading zones after 8:45 am. In the event that you are late, please call to alert the Market Manager. They will identify a location for you to unload. All vendors must be set-up and ready to sell by opening bell at 9 a.m.
**UPDATED! Booth Set Up and Presentation**
SJFM provides stall space only. Vendors must provide their own canopy with weights, display cases, tables, chairs, etc. Vendors are responsible for arranging their space attractively and safely. Vendors must have sufficient weight on their canopies at all times (minimum of 10 pounds on each leg), as the safety of our customers, vendors, staff, and volunteers is of utmost importance. Please also avoid setups that may cause potential hazards. All products and displays must be contained within the vendor’s allotted booth space. If more space is needed, the vendor may request additional booth space (see fee chart below) which the Market Manager will review. Vendors are responsible for any damage caused by their setup. All vendors must be set up and ready to sell by opening bell at 9am.

**Food Sampling**
Vendors providing samples of products to market customers must be knowledgeable of and in compliance with all Oregon Department of Agriculture Food Handling Regulations. These vendors must have a hand washing setup and must comply with ALL hand washing requirements. Vendors offering food samples that produce waste must provide a trash receptacle at their booth.

**UPDATED! Unloading 7:00-8:45 am**
Vendors may begin set up at 7:00 a.m. Vendors will be given designated loading and unloading spaces and will be expected to adhere to these locations. All vehicles must be off-site by 8:45 am to ensure the safety of customers arriving early.

Once on-site, the vendor is to unload completely within their assigned stall, promptly move vehicle from site, then return to begin set-up. Late vendors who have notified the Market Manager to verify space and are arriving after 8:45 am, must park outside the market and carry all supplies to their booth. Unless notified in advance, reserved spaces are held until 8:45 am. After this time the Market Manager may allow another vendor to utilize the space.

**Vendor Parking**
To ensure customers can park close to the market, vendors must not park anywhere on Lombard St., on any other street within two blocks of the market, or in the US Bank parking lot. SJFM does not have a designated parking lot for vendors at this time. The Market Manager has the right to ask vendors to move their vehicle if parking/unloading becomes hazardous to local traffic, customer safety, or does not comply with market policy. SJFM is not responsible for any towing fees incurred by the vendor.

**Opening Bell 9:00 am**
Vendors may begin to sell after the ringing of the opening bell at 9:00 am. We do have a 10-minute grace period, so that vendors may begin selling at 8:50 a.m., but not any earlier.

**Closing Bell 2:00 pm**
Booths must remain set up from 9:00 am until 2:00 pm even if vendors sell out earlier. This allows the market to continue without disruption. Vendors may begin breaking down their stalls when the bell signals the end of the market at 2:00 pm. **Vendors may not begin breakdown before closing bell.** See the "Weather Related Cancellations and Early Closures" policy below regarding closing the market early due to dangerous weather conditions.

**UPDATED! Clean-Up**

Stall spaces must be packed, cleaned and cleared out by 3:00 pm. Vehicles cannot obstruct through-way traffic on Philadelphia after 3:00 pm and therefore should be moved onto the US Bank lot for further loading. Vendors are responsible for cleaning up and taking home all debris, garbage and compost generated by their operation.

Dumping of waste water is **not allowed**. Water or ice that has touched products of any kind (i.e., produce, ice used to keep products cold, etc.) may not be dumped anywhere at the market. Clean drinking water is okay to water the plaza plants.

**Good Neighboring**

Vendors are expected to act as good neighbors to the businesses and community members near the market. This includes respecting property, keeping the neighborhood clean, as well as utilizing space and parking appropriately. SJFM strives to maintain positive partnerships with neighboring businesses. Please help us keep these relationships thriving!

**Garbage**

SJFM provides a garbage set-up for market customers and encourages vendors to direct their customers to this station to help keep the market clean. Vendors may use the station as well for small amounts of trash. Large amounts must be taken away from the market by the vendor.

**UPDATED! Utilities**

**Water & Ice:** Vendors are to provide their own water and ice for products at their booth or for hand washing stations (if needed).

**Electricity:** Power will be unavailable for the 2020 market season. Vendors are responsible for supplying their own power (i.e. a generator).

**Restrooms**

St. Johns Coffee Roasters has donated use of their restrooms for the market.

**Smoking**

SJFM is a non-smoking venue and those who wish to smoke must do so well outside the boundaries of the market.
**Weather Related Cancellations or Early Market Closures**

SJFM is an open-air event and our policy is to not close the market or close up early due to weather unless SJCO determines that it will be unsafe for attendees. We rely on the NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) as well as other weather predictors to make the best decision for the safety of vendors and shoppers. The market manager will communicate any market closures to all affected vendors with the most notice possible. If extreme weather is predicted and a vendor chooses to cancel their market with less than 48 hours notice, SJFM will determine on a case-by-case basis whether to require payment for that market or not. If unexpected extreme weather occurs during a market, and SJFM decides to cancel the market, none of the vendors scheduled for that day will be charged a stall fee for the day.

**SECTION 5: VENDOR DEFINITIONS, FEES AND PAYMENT**

**VENDOR DEFINITIONS**

A **vendor** is an owner/operator of a business entity approved to sell at the market by Market Management. A vendor may not operate under a franchise agreement. A vendor may not share stall spaces with other entities.

Different categories of vendors at the market are farmer and non-farmer:

**Farmer** – Those actively involved and invested in the planting, growing, and harvesting of agricultural product on owned, rented, leased, or share-cropped land. This includes ranchers, dairymen, fishermen, etc. Farmer category also includes vendors who sell value-added products made from a majority of their own farms’ products.

**Non-Farmer** – Those who are actively involved and invested in the processing of product sold at the market. Non-farmer vendors may sell processed foods, value-added foods, baked goods, hot foods, etc. Non-farmer vendors must provide SJFM with all applicable copies of licenses as appropriate to their product. Vendors are responsible for knowing and acquiring all necessary licenses. Non-farmer vendor categories are outlined below:

- **Food artisan:** Those who sell processed or value-added foods such as pickles, condiments, jams and charcuterie. These vendors do not grow/raise/catch/gather the ingredients in their products. This category may also be appropriate for farmers who sell value-added foods that are not made from a majority of ingredients that they grow/raise/catch/gather.

- **Bakery:** Those who bake breads, pastries, and desserts and do not grow/raise/catch gather the ingredients in their product(s). This category may also be appropriate for farmers who sell value-added foods that are not made from a majority of ingredients that they grow/raise/catch/gather.
- **Hot Food Vendor**: Those who sell food that is freshly made and available for immediate consumption on-site. Hot food vendors must have a Multnomah County Temporary Restaurant Permit.

**Product Representative** – Those who do not meet the above categories. Product representative is defined as either:
- An individual who does not grow, raise, process, or gather the product they sell.
- An individual who produces and sells items comprised mainly of non-local ingredients such as chocolate.

This type of vendor sells particular types of products not otherwise available at the market and is only admitted to sell on occasion. These vendors are subject to strict guidelines and selling dates. Items that directly compete with regular market vendors’ products are not allowed.

**Arts & Crafts** – For Arts & Crafts vendors, 100% of the products must be handcrafted in Oregon or Washington (we will make an exception to this rule if we feel like the product aligns with the values and vision of our market). We encourage vendors to apply for a maximum of 3 to 5 market days per season. This will allow for a variety of arts & crafts vendors throughout the market season.

**NEW - 2019 Stall Prices**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VENDOR TYPE</th>
<th>UMBRELLA (5 x 5)</th>
<th>SINGLE BOOTH (10 X 10)</th>
<th>DOUBLE BOOTH (10 X 20)</th>
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<td>Farmer</td>
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<td>$37</td>
<td>$74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonprofit Farmer (501c3 status)</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bakery</td>
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<td>$42</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Arts &amp; Craft</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
<td>$50</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Emerging Vendor Rate
The St. Johns Farmers Market offers a reduced rate for emerging vendors. Contact the Market Manager to find out more details. Emerging vendor is defined as being in your first year of business.

UPDATED! Payments
Booth fees are due each market day. The Market Manager will come to each booth to collect payment. Vendors may pay via cash, check (made out to St. Johns Center for Opportunity), or card via Square.

Returned Check Policy
Checks returned for insufficient funds will be charged a $25 fee. Vendors will not be able to attend the market until the matter is resolved.

Pre-paying for Season
Vendors may choose to prepay for the entire season by making out one check in advance of the market season for their entire season. There is a discount of 10% for vendors who pay for the entire season (24 weeks) in advance and of 5% for vendors who pay for half of the season (12 weeks) in advance. Please note – if a vendor has an excused absence and they have pre-paid for the season, we will reimburse them for their days missed (limit 2 excused absences per season). See our policy above about excused absences (“Attendance and Cancellations”).

SECTION 6: AT MARKET CURRENCY

Tokens/SNAP
To facilitate sales between customers and vendors, we distribute tokens to customers who have debit cards or SNAP benefits. Customers who use the debit cards receive $5 tokens and customers using SNAP benefits receive $1. You cannot accept $1 tokens if you are selling alcohol or prepared food. You can give change for $5 tokens but cannot give change for $1 tokens. Also, you cannot use the $1 tokens to purchase from other vendors at the market. At the end of the market, please bring the tokens to the Information Booth where you can exchange them for cash.

SJFM Food Bucks (SNAP matching)
Despite the support of government programs like SNAP (formerly Food Stamps), many families struggle to put food on the table. To help fill the gap and get more farm-direct produce into the hands of our low-income neighbors, our SNAP matching program matches up to $10 SNAP dollars each market day.

Products eligible for the SNAP matching incentive are fresh, dried, or frozen whole or cut fruits and vegetables without added sugars, fats, oils, or salt. This includes mushrooms, fresh herbs, dried beans, nuts and SNAP eligible seeds and plants intended for cultivation and consumption (e.g., tomato seeds or tomato plants).
SNAP matching Prohibited items: meat, eggs, cheese, baked goods, pickles, jams, jellies, or other foods that do not fit into the above guidelines; nonfood items.

No change may be given for purchases with SNAP match. The customer can add product to bring the purchase up to the whole dollar amount.

**Veggie Vouchers**

Our Veggie Voucher program distributes $20 monthly vouchers during the market season to low-income community members. We distribute the vouchers through strategic partnerships with local social service organizations.

*Program History*

There is mounting concern about food access nationally and locally. Teachers see the evidence in their classrooms while social service organizations have experienced a spike in numbers of individuals and families who aren’t able to put adequate food on the table. Since its inception, the St Johns Farmers Market committed to making a difference by initiating what we now call our Food Equity work.

We are strongly committed to what we believe is a more effective approach to food outreach. Rather than waiting for individuals and families to come to the market and ask for vouchers, this program goes into the community, partnering with organizations who identify participants eager to benefit from access to the farmers market. Our goal is to take advantage of the “up close and personal” feel of the market in order to build trust and interest among participants so the program can expand its reach.

**Power of Produce (POP) CLUB**

We run the state-wide POP Club program at our Farmers Market. Each week, we have a different activity set up at the POP Club booth where kids can learn a bit more about local food systems and receive a $2 ticket to purchase **fresh fruits and veggies** (for the first 20 kids each week, ages 5-12).

POP empowers children ages five through twelve to make healthy food choices by offering educational activities, cooking demonstrations, and food sampling, in addition to providing each child with at least two dollars in market currency to spend on fresh produce. This incentive provided an effective way for children to engage in the local food system through conversations with farmers, buying local, and understanding the importance of healthy food choices.