



Square Market
Batesville



Farmers Market Vendor Handbook

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Welcome Message

Welcome to the Historic Downtown Batesville Farmers Market family of growers and vendors. We like to think of ourselves as one big happy family of people who like growing food and making food products. We enjoy talking about what we do, and how we do it, while making money doing something we enjoy. However, like any other group of people, we need certain guidelines to make sure we are all operating in a way that will allow us to be good neighbors with one another, and responsible sellers of our products.

While we do not like to impose rules just for the sake of imposing rules, some rules are necessary for the smooth and safe operation of our market. Some of these are required by the Mississippi Department of Agriculture (MDA) and/or the Mississippi Department of Health (MDH), while others may be unique to our market. As an MDA Certified Farmers Market, there are certain guidelines that we must follow, so we will ask all vendors to cooperate with us as we try to ensure that all our products meet health and safety guidelines as determined by the MDA and the MDH.

We look forward to a great season of fellowship, fun, and oh yeah, making a little money, while providing locally grown, farm fresh products to our customers and friends.



When is Square Market open?

The market is open from 8:30 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. every Wednesday, from the first Wednesday in June until the last Wednesday in August. We recommend that vendors arrive early to claim a spot and get set up before time to open.

What Can I Sell at the Downtown Batesville Square Market?

You can sell any of the following:

- Vegetables
- Fruit
- Canned goods (We recommend going through an acidified food class)
- Honey
- Baked Goods
- Eggs (permits & egg license required)
- Meat (with proper licensing & equipment)
- Baked goods and other food products that do not require temperature control
 - *See Cottage Foods on pg. 5*
- Yard & Garden related items (approved by the managers)
- Cut Flowers
- Hand crafted items. These may not be mass produced items and must be approved by market manager prior to market day.

Vendor Fees

Great news! Our vendor fee is only \$10 per week or \$170 for the season. Vendors may only pay the season rate if they pay on the first Wednesday the market is open.

What do I need to do to sell at Square Market?

All vendors must fill out a vendor application. You can pick up an application from the Panola Partnership office or from the market managers at the market on any Wednesday morning that the market is open. You can also e-mail mamieavery@panolacounty.com and request an application and we will be glad to e-mail an application to you.

Cottage Foods

General Information

Cottage foods are specific types of foods that you make in the kitchen of your private home.

Not all food products can be sold as Cottage Food products. The following criteria are necessary for a food product to be sold as a Cottage Food:

1. Must be non-potentially hazardous foods that do not require time/temperature controls for safety.
2. Do not require refrigeration even after opening.
3. Have not been found by FDA to support the growth of pathogens.
4. Must be prepared and stored in your private residence

What products qualify as Cottage Foods?

- Baked goods without cream, custard, or meat fillings, such as breads, biscuits, cookies, pastries, and tortillas
- Candy
- Chocolate-covered nonperishable foods, such as pretzels, nuts, and fruit (except melons)
- Dried fruit (except melons)
- Dried pasta
- Dried spices
- Dry baking mixes
- Granola, cereal, and trail mixes
- Dry rubs
- Fruit pies
- Jams & Jellies
- Popcorn
- Vinegar and mustard

What products are not allowed to be sold under the Cottage Foods bill?

- Meat, fish, and poultry
- Dairy products (including custard pies)
- Eggs (other than air-fried hard cooked eggs with intact shell)
- Cooked vegetables
- Raw seed sprouts,
- Sliced melons
- Garlic and other fresh herbs in oil
- Cooked potatoes
- Legumes, Bean, Nut butters
- Fruit/vegetable juices

Labeling Requirements for Cottage Food Products

All cottage food products must be labeled with the following information:

- Name and address of the cottage food operation
- Name of the cottage food product
- Ingredients in descending order by weight
- Allergen information (If nuts, you must identify the specific type of nut)
- The following statement in at least 10-point type:
 - *Made in a cottage food operation that is not subject to Mississippi's food safety regulations.*

Label Example:

Chocolate Chip Cookies	
Joe Baker 1234 County Road 567 Batesville, MS 38930	
Ingredients: Flour, butter, chocolate chips, Walnuts, sugar, eggs, vanilla extract, baking soda	
Contains: Wheat, eggs, milk, walnuts	Net Wt. 3.5 oz.
<i>Made in a cottage food operation that is not subject to Mississippi's food safety regulations.</i>	

Cooked/Prepared Foods

- Selling cooked foods (other than cottage food items) requires commercial food licensing and a special permit from the Department of Health. Examples include cooking food for sale on site or bringing cooked food such as casseroles, etc. For more information, see the Mississippi Department of Health or market managers.

Eggs

The following is required if you would like to sell eggs at the market:

- Your chickens must have passed an NPIP inspection from the Board of Animal Health.
- You must have an egg vendor's license.
 - *The managers must see these documents before you can sell eggs.*

Other requirements for selling eggs:

- Eggs must be kept refrigerated using mechanical refrigeration (no ice chests).
- The temperature inside the refrigerator must be 45 degrees or below.

Canned Goods

Canned goods will be closely monitored by the Market Managers. Please make sure of the following if you are selling canned goods:

- All lids must be completely sealed! No exceptions!!!
 - Please check your lids before packing them to bring to the market to avoid having to remove them from your display.
 - Vendors who habitually bring canned goods with poor seals to the market are subject to being banned from selling canned goods.
- Do not sell canned goods more than 1 year old. While they may still be safe, quality diminishes after one year.
- Use attractive labeling, listing the ingredients of the product.
 - Include the month and year the product was canned.
- We **STRONGLY ENCOURAGE** any vendor selling canned to take an acidified foods safety course. Even if you've taken the course in the past, it's good to get a refresher every few years. Courses are offered through the Mississippi State University Extension Office.

Other Information

Pricing

When considering prices for your products, please keep the following in mind:

- Price your products competitively, but please do not undercut your fellow vendors.
- Display your prices so customers don't have to ask how much an item costs.
- Consider accepting digital payments through apps like PayPal, Venmo or CashApp, or debit card payments through Square.
- Value your product. People pay for quality, and they value the fact that they are buying fresh, locally grown product.
- Any product sold by weight must be weighed on an NTEP certified scale.

Sell only what you grow.

We are not a resale business. There are times that, due to the unavailability of a product locally, we may allow vendors to resell. However, this must be approved by the market management. We do not want to import products that are being grown and sold at the market by a local grower.

As an MDA Certified Farmers Market, it required that all produce is grown within the state of Mississippi, and that 80% is grown by the vendor selling the produce.

Farmers Market Nutrition (FMNP) and WIC Vouchers

If you sell fruits, vegetables, and honey, you can qualify to accept FMNP and WIC vouchers. However, you must first be trained and submit an application to the MS Dept. of Agriculture. Ask the managers for more information.

Tips for Success

1. Create an attractive display that draws the attention of customers.
2. Use attractive signs that catch the eye.
3. Be friendly and talkative.
4. Answer questions while selling.
5. Be there consistently.
6. Display prices.
7. Display photos from your farm.
8. Share recipes using the products you are selling.
9. Keep your booth space neat and organized.
10. Display your best items, and only sell high quality products.
11. Stack items high.
12. Have a variety of products.
13. Market/promote yourself. Use your social media accounts to let people know you will be selling and what you will have each week.
14. Be a good neighbor at the market. Never speak disparagingly of other vendors or their product. Be willing to direct customers to vendors who sell a product they are looking for.

Marketing

We will promote the market and our vendors as much as possible through social media and traditional media. Every Saturday we will take pictures and/or video and post to our Facebook page. During the week we will post information for those who follow our page, including what to expect at the market that week.

Vendors

Be your own marketer/promoter! Use social media to let people know that you are selling your product at Square Market. Tell your friends, church members, and family about the market and encourage them to visit.

It is in your and everyone else's best interest to get as many people as possible to come to the farmers market to see what we have to offer. The person who just came to see you may also end up buying from other vendors. It is everyone's responsibility to promote Square Market at every opportunity!

Let's have a great year on the Historic Batesville Square at Farmers Market!