



MARKET HANDBOOK

The Official Guide to Helping You Get the Most Out of Your Market Experience

2024



WELCOME TO THE MARKET!

Congratulations on becoming a vendor at the NGFM!

This guide was designed to help new vendors coming into the Market and to act as a reference guide for existing vendors. It will help you with what to expect and give you all the tools you'll need to make your time at the market a success!

OUR HOURS & SEASONS:

HOURS: Every Saturday from 9am until 1pm, January until December

WINTER/SPRING: January - May

PEAK SEASON: June until the end of October

HOLIDAY MARKETS: November & December

WEBSITE: www.ngfarmmarket.com

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ABOUT US

The New Glasgow Farmers Market (NGFM, the Market) is a non-profit co-operative organization and certified Farmers Market with the Farmers' Markets of Nova Scotia (FMNS).

We are governed by a volunteer board of directors. We have one paid full-time staff member, the Market Manager and a part-time Market-Co-ordinator that works mainly on Saturdays.

We are an independent organization, relying solely on money collected from table & membership fees and fundraising to operate.

We enjoy a close working relationship with the Town of New Glasgow.

We are headed into our 16th year and now welcome more than 100 farmers, food producers and artisans throughout the year.

“

What makes the farmers market such a special place is that you're creating community around food

- Bryant Terry



Being a co-operative organization, co-operation is at the very heart of our Market. It's what makes us tick. We are all a team and the Market's success requires involvement and contribution from everyone.

The board, fellow vendors and the Market Manager are all here to help you succeed. Your board members are all business people, fellow vendors and they volunteer their time to run the Market.

Talk to your neighbours for suggestions on your display or maybe where they get their supplies from, etc. They are a great tool in your toolbox!

We can all help answer your questions...if you don't know where to find something or if you have a question, just ask!

One vendor's success is a success for the entire Market!

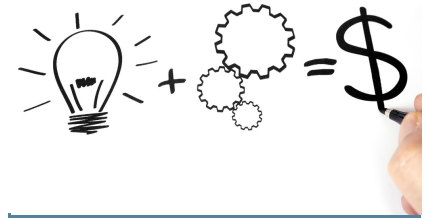
WHAT TO EXPECT

It is understandable and normal to be a little unsure for your first weeks at the Market. How much do you make or bring? What is the best way to maximize your space?

You will be spending the first weeks perfecting your display, getting to know your customers, your fellow vendors and building a clientele. You will find out what works for you and what doesn't and make tweaks to maximize your sales.

It typically takes 4 - 6 weeks when attending on a weekly basis for you to be able to build this solid foundation and for your customers to get to know you. If you are a casual vendor it may take a little longer. The more you can be at the Market and the more adaptable you are, the more customer engagement you will have and the better your success will be. Being consistent and reliable for your customers is vital.

If your sales are not where you expect them to be for the first few weeks, don't panic! It's normal. Don't get discouraged. It does get better, just ask anyone, we've all been there!



Looking for feedback or display ideas?

Your Market Manager is here to help! The Market Manager is more than willing to observe and help you with suggestions on new approaches, packaging ideas and display ideas and can also put you in touch with other resources if you need them.

VENDOR MEETINGS



We hold vendor meetings once every two months and an AGM in April.

While it is not mandatory for you to attend these meetings, we strongly encourage you to make it out to as many of these meetings as possible. It is part of being a co-operative, how you stay connected and have your say.

These meetings keep you in the loop and if there's something you would like to talk about, you will also have the opportunity to ask questions. Just send your questions 3 days before the meeting so that it is sure to be answered as accurately as possible.

It's also a great way to meet vendors you may not see on Saturday.



COMMUNICATION

E-mail is the primary and preferred method of communication. This is how we communicate to you and it's how we prefer you communicate with us.

We send out weekly (or mostly weekly) e-mails with the subject "Market Mail". E-mails contain important information that you need to know and may have time sensitive information.

E-mail is also the fastest and most reliable way for you to get a response. It is your responsibility to keep up to date on what's happening.

Due to the number of vendors we have, we kindly ask that you forward any important requests to us via e-mail.

The e-mail address to use is manager@ngfarmmarket.com. If the issue is urgent, please contact Kristi, the Market Manager at 902-754-9114. If you need to contact the board directly, you can reach them at board@ngfarmmarket.com

SOCIAL MEDIA

The NGFM is very active on social media. If you do not have any social media accounts, you may want to consider using them. They are an inexpensive yet valuable marketing tool. We compose our own organic posts but we are also glad to share your relevant Market posts to help you spread the word. Due to the ever-changing social media algorithms, we don't see all the tags on Facebook. It is best that you send the post to the Manager to let them know it's there and that you would like it shared. You are also welcome to send an e-mail with photos about new products or specials and the gist of what you'd like the post to say and we can create it for you. We typically begin advertising for Saturday on Wednesday so if you have anything, please send it our way by then.



[facebook.com/ngfarmmarket](https://www.facebook.com/ngfarmmarket)



[@ngfarmmarket](https://www.instagram.com/ngfarmmarket)

Social media is an extension of the Market. The public will lump everyone into "the Market." You should never disparage the market, another vendor or their products on social media or entertain it on your page. It reflects poorly on you, your business and the Market and could put your space at the Market in jeopardy. Please refer to the Social Media Policy in the Rules & Regulations.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Important Things You Need to Know

We do have Rules and Regulations, a Code of Conduct and By-Laws that you are expected to follow as vendor. This includes non-members as well as members and casual as well as full-time vendors. They are available under the "Become a Vendor" tab on our website.

It is your responsibility as a vendor and business person to read these. If you cannot find them, please let us know and we will help.

The onus is on you to keep informed.

Below are some of the important things you should know.



1. We are open Saturday mornings from 9am until 1pm, January to December
2. You must be at the Market no later than 8:30 am and set up and ready to go for 9:00am. Customers tend to come much earlier in the summer months. You are welcome to set up earlier to take advantage of sales, someone will be at the market by 7:30am. If you are later than 8:30, you will receive a warning. Your space is forfeit after 8:45 and you must stay set up until 1pm
3. You can unload out front but please to move your car to one of the areas designated in the attached photo BEFORE setting up. Your fellow vendors will appreciate it!
4. We provide a 6ft table, you will need to bring a tablecloth. Please do not use bed sheets or thin plastic tablecloths. Any customer racks or displays must be approved by the Market Manager before you come to the Market. Remember, your display has a direct impact on your sales!
5. Table fees are collected during the morning.
6. If you need to cancel, you must give 72 hours notice (Weds, 9am) otherwise, you will be responsible for your table fee. If you cannot make it, please contact Kristi, the Market Manager by e-mail at manager@ngfarmmarket.com, by text at 902-754-9114 or call the same number
7. You are expected to clean your space & surrounding area. That means you need to sweep (food vendors need to mop) your space and the main aisles around you. Garbage in, garbage out. Take your boxes and other garbage home with you. We pay for garbage removal so we appreciate your attention to this. Brooms and mops can be found in the storage room, just put them back when you're done! Leaving your displays are a privilege, but if things aren't kept clean, it will not be something we can continue.

Tips & Tricks



QUICK TIPS

- Bring a good-sized float with change. The Market does not carry change and with an ATM, you will get 20's and Murphy's Law says it will be first thing in the morning!
- Please do not go buy small items from other vendors to help you make change, or expect them to make change for you. A minimum \$100 to \$150 float is suggested for most items.
- An ATM is located in the Market building next to the kitchen in case your customers need cash. Both buildings are equipped with Wi-Fi for you to use Square, etc.
- Come early and take advantage of making sales to early shoppers. Set up begins at 7:30am.
- First impressions are everything and your body language says it all. Rather than sitting and scrolling through your phone, show customers you're open for business! Smile, engage your customers and have business cards ready so they can contact you later.
- Thinking of two tables? Think about going vertical instead of spreading to two tables. This will save you money and increase your profits.
- Professional signage. Steer clear of quickly put together, hand written signage like paper or bristol board with pen or sharpie...especially if your penmanship leaves a little to be desired! There are ways to get nice signage without breaking the bank. Ask the manager or other vendors for suggestions.
- Price everything. If customers don't see a price, they'll keep on moving. They may not want to approach you for several reasons. The absence of pricing can also make customers feel like you have two sets of prices and are making them up on the spot.
- While you should talk to your neighbours, keep an eye on traffic flow. Don't get so caught up in talking that customers are afraid to interrupt you and be mindful of your neighbour. If they are busy with a customer, wait until later. Keep conversations professional and if you are discussing personal stuff, keep it out of earshot of customers.
- Don't leave your table unattended. People can't buy it if you're not there to sell it!



Market Money

What is Market Money?

Market Money is a currency specific to the NGFM. It's basically like a gift certificate that can be used throughout the market, with any vendor.

Market money comes in two forms, paper and wooden tokens. The paper ones will vary and some will have expiry dates on them. The tokens do not expire. All Market Money is in \$5 increments.

When a customer pays for a product with Market Money, you treat it like cash. Give them the change in cash. NEVER exchange Market Money without a purchase. The idea is to keep the money at the Market so that it's spent with you.



When the Market Manager comes to collect table fees, exchange your Market Money for cash value. Yes! You can pay for your table fee with Market Money.

Market Money should only be exchanged with the Market Manager or Market Coordinator, please do not exchange with a volunteer. You should exchange it the day you get it and please do not spend paper market money with another vendor as we track some paper money and it will skew our data.

Nourishing Communities

The NGFM participates in a program called [Nourishing Communities](#). This is program that helps support households in our community that are experiencing food insecurity. This program helps them, but when households spend their money with you, you also benefit from the program. On average it means, there's roughly \$20,000 extra dollars that are being spent with vendors at the Market.

NGFM Cafe & General Store

The NGFM operates a cafe and General store in the dome. The cafe sells coffee, ice cream, drinks. The General Store has products from other vendors that do not have the ability to staff a table or fills a need within the Market.

Proceeds help to keep table fees low for you and helps to offset operating costs.

Do's + Dont's



DO engage customers, talk to them and educate them about your products. Our customers appreciate quality and they shop at the Market because of that. They like the personal touch, so if they give you the opening, take it!

DO look around and see what's at the Market. This will help you to provide the best service possible to your customers. If you run out of a like product point someone to another vendor. You are not giving your customers away, but you are giving your customers a great Market experience. They won't leave disappointed or empty handed and they will remember your kindness.

DO take advantage of social media. Have a business page, make frequent posts and don't forget to tag the Market! We will share if we know it's there!

DO spread the word about the Market everywhere you go. When you are talking to people at the store, in a checkout line, at the post office, etc. Share social media posts. It benefits everyone at the Market.

DO respect the Rules & Regulations and your fellow vendors. Be courteous and kind.



DON'T gossip or talk negatively about another vendor, their products or the Market in public, in front of customers or on social media. If you have a concern, address it privately with the parties concerned or with the Market Manager. It reflects badly on you and the Market and creates unnecessary drama and negativity.

DON'T be afraid to ask questions! We're here to help! If you have a question, chances are someone else has had the same one. You are not alone! If we can't answer your question on the spot, we will get back to you.

Most of
all...
DO have
FUN!





VOLUNTEERS

The Market takes a lot of work from a lot of people and we couldn't do it without our volunteers. They are a large part of the reason that we can offer the services and programs we have. Volunteers are customers and community members who are champions of the Market and they deserve your gratitude and respect. They go above and beyond to help and are happy to answer questions to help when they can.

From set up, to handing out your products online to fundraising, they are a crucial part of the Market and of course supporting you!

Please be kind. A simple smile and a thank you goes a long way.



PARKING

As mentioned, you may unload your product first, but you are expected to move your vehicle after unloading to one of these designated areas.

If our customers can't park, they can't shop with you! If you are parking close to the building, you will be asked to move.

If you require assistance, we can get someone to move your vehicle and bring it back to the doors for you after Market.

WHERE IN THE WORLD...is my table?

Everyone always wants to know where they'll be and that's great because you are planning ahead! There are several factors that come into play when it comes to vendor placement. Government requirements for food safety, line-ups, traffic flow, distribution of product, cancellations. For that reason, we can't always guarantee a particular spot or a particular building.

So, one of the best resources for you (and our customers) is our website: ngfarmmarket.com There, you will find a tab called 'Who's at the Market?'. There is a drop down menu for [Market Maps](#). If you click on that, you will be able to see the floor plan for the upcoming Market. You should look Friday evening as changes are still being made until then (and sometimes even after that if there's an unexpected last minute change). This will tell you and your customers where you'll be.

Since things don't always go according to plan, you should always come prepared to be in either building..so bring warmer clothes in the shoulder season.

Other stuff on our website & additional resources:

On our website, you'll find the Rules & Regulations, Code of Conduct and By-Laws. You'll also find information pertaining to permits and other information.

This is a great resource for customers too! They will find your profile, the dates you'll be at Market and your contact information if they need to reach you outside of the Market.

This is an extra handy tool for Casual vendors

There are or resources available for you from Farmers markets of Nova Scotia. Sign up for their newsletter [HERE](#). This ensures you are up to date on sector information.

Additionally, you will find a great amount of resources on their website at <https://farmersmarketsnovascotia.ca/> under the 'For Markets & Vendors' page.



Raise the Barn

'Raise the Barn' is our fundraising initiative to replace the dome with a temperature stable & secure improved space.

This building will allow us to increase access to local food, provide an enhanced space for our community and improved venue for our vendors.

We are actively undertaking several fundraising initiatives while also seeking funding from other sources. These initiatives require support from all our vendors and the community to reach our goal.

To find out more, please [visit our website](#) and read all about it.

For active fundraisers, [click here](#).

If you would like to be involved, please contact Kristi at manager@ngfarmmarket.com





Do I get a Tax Receipt?

Yes! However, if you need one, you need to let us know. We have many vendors and not everyone requires them so we provide them as requested. They will be issued by the end of February for the previous season. If you need them for quarterly reporting, please let us know.

What's the advantage to being outside??

Any vendor outside can bring their own tent and are provided with one 6ft table. You'll have more room to spread out as well. You will need to bring your own tent and you must have weights. If you wish to have an additional table, you can do that as long as you have a tablecloth and it fits in your space!

People tend to stay longer outside and may need to pass you more than once

What's a casual vendor?

Casual vendors are with us on an occasional basis. All rules, regulations, participation etc., are still applicable no matter what type of vendor you are.

Why can't I have a permanent spot?

Although we try our best to give weekly vendors the same space and frequent casual vendors the same space when they are with us, we just can't make any promises. As mentioned before there are many factors that come into play but a big one that we didn't talk about above, is the fact that we must condense and expand depending on the season.

What's the Membership for?

The NGFM Membership fee is \$50 per year and runs January until December. Being a member offers you a discount of \$5 per week and gives you voting privileges at the AGM.

Can I pay by the season or by the month?*

Yes! If you pay by the season, you will save 10%. The season is usually about 22 or 23 weeks and runs from June until the end of October. If you miss a week, we are not able to reimburse you for missed dates during the season due to the already discounted rates.

At this time, we cannot offer a seasonal rate for winter because of the weather and rotational nature of the winter market.

If you attend weekly, you can pay by the month. While it doesn't offer you any discount, many of our vendors find this a convenient option

How do I change/add or delete dates?

Date changes must be submitted using the vendor portal at ngfm.mymarket.org

This is the only way we will accept changes. It cuts down on errors, ensuring we're on the same page. A reminder that if you are cancelling, it needs to be within 72 hours.

