

Rules for membership in the Mountain Tailgate Market Association

Preamble

The purpose of the MTMA is to encourage and establish successful tailgate markets in Western North Carolina. We believe that tailgate markets are significant means to two social ends. A tailgate market is where a grower can sell directly to the consumer is perhaps the small farmer's best opportunity to profit from their land and efforts. And a tailgate market where consumers can talk directly to the grower, get the freshest produce possible, and experience the health-giving effects of that freshness, is the consumer's best access to quality.

Basic Consumer Expectations

The market will be dominated by growers selling produce that they have raised on their own nearby farm. All the produce sold will predominantly come directly from a nearby farm and will be fresh. All the crafts sold will be handmade by the vendor. All processed foods sold will be made by the vendor.

How Does a Market Qualify for Membership?

The MTMA is committed to an agriculturally based market system, and has implemented the following minimum qualifications for membership.

Membership Policies

- To qualify for membership benefits in the Mountain Tailgate Market Association, the applying tailgate market must submit a vendor roster showing at least five (5) vendors who are **Farmers*** selling their own farm products:
- Total combined gross annual sales of **Processors*** shall not exceed the total gross annual sales of **Farmers***.
- Total gross annual sales of **Others*** shall not exceed total gross annual sales of **Producers***.
- MTMA member markets are required to keep a current list of their vendor-members, including vendor name, type, address, telephone number and e-mail address.
- MTMA member markets shall provide MTMA annually with updated vendor lists*, bylaws, market rules/policies, and examples of any other documents (e.g., newsletters, applications, etc.). (*for vendors requesting privacy, list business name, vendor type, and the words "contact vendor through market".)
- No commercial items, no imported items and no second hand items shall be sold by ANY vendor at any MTMA member Tailgate market.
- No Franchises allowed at any MTMA member market.
- All member markets' vendors must conform to all applicable health laws and regulations.
- If a member market is found to be in violation of stated MTMA policies, the MTMA President shall, within 10 days of the alleged violation, submit a description of the violation, via registered mail, to the member market contact person. The member market in question then has 10 days from receipt of the violation notice to appeal. The MTMA Association members, or an Association member appointed committee, shall then meet to discuss the appropriate action to take. All decisions made by the Association members shall be final and binding. The MTMA Association members reserve the right to suspend membership for any violations of these membership policies.

* as defined below

Producers

Farmers

One who raises the produce, plants or animals that they sell at a MTMA member tailgate market on land they own or lease/rent in the state of North Carolina, or counties that border North Carolina. This is meant to exclude those who might work on or manage a corporately owned farm and have permission to dispose of surplus product. It may include someone who processes produce grown on their own property into a value added product such as jams, cider, salsa. It may also include farmers who raise the basic ingredient(s) of a product, but who must send it out for fundamental processing before creating the value added product. Such Vendors might include those farmers selling mint oils, emu oils, smoked meat or fish, etc.

Processors

One who sells processed foods, which they have personally prepared on their own or leased/rented property. Processors are persons or entities offering fresh food products (such as meats, seafoods, ciders, baked goods, jams, etc.) that have added value to their product through some sort of “hands-on” processing (e.g., hand filleted fish, smoked or butcher meats, handmade candies, etc.). Processors must produce their products in North Carolina or in counties that border the State of North Carolina. Processed food products should use ingredients from North Carolina farms or waters as much as possible, and MTMA member markets should give stall preference to processors using ingredients from North Carolina farms or waters.

Others

Crafters

Crafters are persons or entities that craft with their own hands the products they offer for sale at MTMA member markets. To qualify as a crafter, a majority of the tools and equipment used by the crafter to produce their products must require skills, personal handling and/or guidance by the crafter. Crafters should incorporate materials produced in North Carolina as much as possible. Crafters must create their craft products in North Carolina, or in counties that border the State of North Carolina.

Prepared Food Vendors (Concessionaires)

Prepared Food Vendors offer freshly made foods, available for sale and immediate consumption on-site at MTMA member markets. Prepared Food Vendors shall possess and maintain all required state, county and local permits. Prepared Food Vendors should use ingredients produced in North Carolina as much as possible. When selecting Prepared Food Vendors, MTMA member markets are encouraged to provide a good variety of healthy foods, and to give preference to vendors using ingredients produced in North Carolina.

I have read and agree to these Rules for Membership to the Mountain Tailgate Market Association.

Market Name

Name

Signature

Date