

2010 Vendor Handbook



Urban Harvest
FARMERS MARKET

The market is located in the parking lot Behind
3000 Richmond at Eastside
Houston Texas 77098

Every Saturday
8-12
Rain or Shine

All producers work within 180 miles of Houston

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About Urban Harvest

Urban Harvest promotes healthy communities, sound nutrition and respect for the environment by educating children and adults and facilitating harvest and habitat gardens.

Our Programs

Community Gardens

Urban Harvest supports more than 100 community Gardens including school and therapy gardens and donation gardens that provide fresh produce to feed the hungry. To encourage and enhance the development of community gardens, we offer instruction on getting organized as well as ongoing gardening advice. We help recruit volunteers. We maintain a directory of gardens and web pages within the Urban Harvest website. And we offer network and social opportunities for gardens and volunteers.

Education

Teaching gardeners of all ages is one of the things we at Urban Harvest do best. We offer hundreds of classes each year, in all aspects of gardening and urban farming.

- **Gardening Education** is provided through Urban Harvest classes and courses in a multitude of subjects. Whether you're just getting started or want to sell your bountiful crops, whether you want to learn composting or pruning, permaculture or irrigation, our knowledgeable instructors offer hands-on experience. We offer classes for teachers and even for individuals involved in the horticulture business. Some classes are free to community gardeners and most are discounted to Urban Harvest members.
- **Youth Education** is another important initiative of Urban Harvest. We provide opportunities for students who might otherwise have very little access to green space to create and explore habitat gardens, ponds, vegetable gardens and fruit orchards. We partner with schools and youth centers to deliver programs with age-appropriate curriculum during and after school. Students at elementary, middle and high schools learn science, math and other core subjects through hands on experience.

Urban Harvest Farmers Market

The Urban Harvest Farmers Market brings the bounty of the garden to Houstonians every Saturday morning, year round, rain or shine. Growers offer locally produces vegetables, fruits farm products, dairy products, prepared foods, cut flowers and plants. Our colorful market supports a number of family farms and boosts the income of small growers from the area. Even school groups, community gardeners and backyard gardeners have their opportunity to sell their products and learn about the market gardening at the Gardeners' Corner.

About the Market

The Urban Harvest Farmers Market (the "market") is a Texas Department of Agriculture certified farmers market that will operate weekly, year round, in Houston, Texas for the benefit of both farmers and customers. The market is a program of Urban Harvest, Inc. Urban Harvest promotes healthy communities, sound nutrition and respect for the environment by educating children and adults and facilitating harvest and habitat gardens. The main goals of the market include:

- promoting the sustainable production, marketing, and consumption of local agricultural produce
- educating the community about local growing conditions and food crops as well as sustainable and organic growing practices
- promoting the nutritious locally grown produce and culinary benefits of eating local produce in season
- strengthening the local economy by redirecting consumers' food dollars to local growers and producers
- incubating new, small, food-based businesses
- providing a community gathering place

When & Where

The market is located in the parking lot behind 3000 Richmond. You can't see us from Richmond, so look for our cross street, which is Eastside—it's between Kirby and Buffalo Speedway. From the traffic light at Eastside; turn north and look to the right. The market is in a different part of town than the Urban Harvest office and classroom. The market is open every Saturday from 8am-12pm, rain or shine. The Wednesday market has been discontinued.



Urban Harvest Staff

Mark Bowen: *Executive Director*

Becky Blanton: *Community Gardens Coordinator*

Carol Burton: *School & Youth Gardens Coordinator*

Lilly DeHaven: *Administrative Assistant for the School & Youth Program*

Norma De La Fuente: *Membership Coordinator*

Gary Edmondson: *Director of Education*

Michael Godoy: *Classes Coordinator*

Callie Hastings: *Development Director*

Juli Jackson: *Finance Director*

Debbie Leflar: *Volunteer Coordinator who works as a volunteer staffer*

Indica Loggins: *Program Services Specialist*

Julia Trainer: *Farmers Market Manager*

Market Committee

The Market Committee has management responsibility for the operation and direction of The Urban Harvest Farmers Market. The committee is advised by the Board of Directors, and is facilitated by the Market Committee Chairperson. The committee meets once a month.

Market Committee Members:

Mike Atkinson: *Vendor Representative*

Mark Bowen: *Executive Director of Urban Harvest*

VJ Dispenza: *Board Representative*

Charmaine LeBlanc: *Member of the Community*

Debbie Leflar: *Board Representative*

Wendy Reed: *Vendor Representative*

Janice Schindler: *Vendor Representative*

Julia Trainer: *Farmers Market Manager*

Jim Wilson: *Market Chairperson & Board Representative*

Urban Harvest Board

President

Mary Frances Morris

Secretary

Shawn McFarland

Member at Large

Susan Fischer

Past President:

Laurel Smith, Ph.D.

Board Members:

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Richard C. Bost
V.J. Dispenza
David Gresham
Robert A. Hermes
Scott Howard

Vice-President

Garland Kerr

Treasurer

Edward Griffin

Member at Large

C. Patrick Waites

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Irv Robbins
Ray Sher
Brenda Beust Smith
Dr. Karen Strupp

Emeritus:

Margaret Blackstone
Leonel Casitllo
John Cleveland
Mark Cotham

Bradford Hendricks
Terry Hershey
Veon McReynolds, Ph.D.
Camille Waters

Upcoming Dates and Events for 2010

February 27th – GO TEXAN Day at the Urban Harvest Farmers Market

March 1st – Market Committee Meeting at the Urban Harvest offices

March 27th – Spring Festival at the Urban Harvest Farmers Market

April 5th - Market Committee Meeting at the Urban Harvest offices

April 17th – Empty Bowls Event at the Urban Harvest Farmers Market

May 3rd - Market Committee Meeting at the Urban Harvest offices

May 8th – Kid’s Day at the Urban Harvest Farmers Market

May 15th – Potato Fest at the Urban Harvest Farmers Market

June 5th – Tomato Fest at the Urban Harvest Farmers Market

June 7th – Market Committee Meeting at the Urban Harvest offices

Getting involved with the market

We encourage any of the vendors to get involved with decisions made that affect the market, and directly affect you as a vendor.

Go to a Market Committee Meeting

We have monthly Market Committee Meetings that *usually* occur on the 1st Monday of each month at 2pm, at the Urban Harvest offices. Please contact the market manager if you would like to come so that the time and date can be confirmed, because the times will sometimes change.

Get an item on the agenda for the Market Committee Meeting

Jim Wilson, who is the Chairperson for the Market Committee accepts agenda items via e-mail, and will honor your request to discuss your concern. Agenda items must be turned in to Jim no later than 5 business days *before* the meeting date.

Join the Special Events Task Force

The Special Events Task Force was organized by Market Committee Members who wanted to only discuss ways that we could improve the market and make it a lively place to shop. We also discuss creative ways to market the market. Usually, we meet on the third Thursday of every month at the Urban Harvest offices, at 3pm. Please contact the market manager if you would like to come so that the time and date can be confirmed, because the times will sometimes change.



Urban Harvest

FARMERS MARKET

Urban Harvest Farmers Market Rules

Revised September 14, 2009

INTRODUCTION/MISSION

The Urban Harvest Farmers Market (the "market") is a Texas Department of Agriculture certified farmers market that will operate weekly, year round, in Houston, Texas for the benefit of both farmers and customers. The market is a project of Urban Harvest, Inc. Urban Harvest is a nonprofit organization that uses fruit, vegetable and habitat gardens to improve quality of life in the greater Houston area. These gardens serve to educate, strengthen community spirit, create therapeutic environments and provide food and income. We teach organic gardening techniques, help neighborhoods build successful community gardens, create outdoor classrooms at schools that teach core curricula, nutrition and respect for the environment, provide fresh, locally grown food, and encourage responsible land use. Our work benefits all of us by improving food, diet and health. It also builds engaging schools, neighborly communities, and valuable local businesses that together sustain and improve our environment. The main goals of the market include:

- promoting the sustainable production, marketing, and consumption of local agricultural produce
- educating the community about local growing conditions and food crops as well as sustainable and organic growing practices
- promoting the nutritious locally grown produce and culinary benefits of eating local produce in season
- strengthening the local economy by redirecting consumers' food dollars to local growers and producers
- incubating new, small, food-based businesses
- providing a community gathering place

The predominant product emphasis will be on locally-produced agricultural products.

DEFINITIONS

Agent: a representative of a producer who is working on contract with the producer and may sell for the producer at the market.

Agricultural products: produce or minimally processed product (such as beef, honey or herbal tea) created from food grown or produced at a farm or ranch operation)

Approved product: a product that has been approved by the Urban Harvest Farmers Market Committee

Board of Directors: the Board of Directors of Urban Harvest

Conventional: This grower uses common agricultural practices. They may or may not use chemical or synthetic fertilizers, or synthetic fungicides or pesticides or added hormones. They may be a large or small grower.

Cooperative: a legally incorporated collaboration of producers or growers who market their produce or agricultural products collectively.

Craft vendor: a person who creates a hand-made craft to sell at the market.

Event Permit: a permit from the City of Houston that allows vendors to serve food or drinks that are prepared onsite.

Executive Committee: The Executive Committee of Urban Harvest.

Executive Director: The Executive Director of Urban Harvest.

Family: the producer's spouse, parents, children, cousins, aunts, or uncles.

Local product: any product grown or produced within 180 miles of downtown Houston.

Market Manager: the Urban Harvest staff member who supervises the operations of the market.

Naturally Grown: This grower practices organic principals of soil enrichment and is certified by a collection of peers involved with www.naturallygrown.com. They cannot use synthetic fertilizers or synthetic fungicides or pesticides or added hormones. Certified Naturally Grown farmers reflect a commitment to work within the natural biological cycles that are necessary for a truly sustainable farming system - a system that works in harmony with micro-organisms, soil flora and fauna, plants and animals, to maintain and increase the long-term fertility of soil, leaving it even more vibrant and alive for the next generation of farmers.

Organic: This grower practices strict organic principals of soil enrichment and pest control and is certified either by the state or a third party certification firm that has been approved by the Market Manager and the Executive Director. They may or may not use natural fertilizers, or synthetic fungicides or pesticides allowed by the law when a natural alternative is not available. Food manufacturers only utilize certified organic ingredients following organic labeling requirements. Guidelines are available at www.ams.usda.gov/nop/nop/standards.html.

Producer: the farmer or grower of any raw agricultural product or the person who produces any value-added, ready-to-eat, or craft product.

Ready-to-eat-or drink products: food and drink prepared (either on-site or off-site) by chefs, bakers, confectioners and beverage makers, and sold by these producers at the market.

Sustainable: Growers using the Sustainable label pledge to use only organic products and practices; however the term Organic is not used on their Urban Harvest provided signage since they are not certified. Urban Harvest advises consumers to ask these growers any questions they might have about their production practices, since it is hard to know how closely organic principles are followed.

Urban Harvest Farmers Market (UHFM) Committee: A committee of Urban Harvest, having management responsibility for the operation and direction of The Urban Harvest Farmers Market. Its composition is as defined by the Urban Harvest Board of Directors.

Value-added product: a processed food item that is ready to be sold at the market. The item may be edible, such as jelly or pickles, or it may be inedible, such as a wreath from dried okra pods.

Value-added vendor: a vendor who produces food and other products that are derived from agricultural products.

Vendor: a seller at the market.

Vendor Representative: a representative of the vendors who serves on the UHFM Committee.

WHO MAY SELL AT THE MARKET

Who may sell at the market is determined by the UHFM Committee of Urban Harvest as explained below. Decisions of the UHFM Committee are subject to review by the Executive Director and the Urban Harvest Board of Directors.

a. Farmers, growers and producers of agricultural products grown or produced within 180 miles of Houston (*a special exception to this rule may be approved on occasion by the UHFM Committee*), providing:

- their vendor application has been submitted to and approved by the UHFM Committee.
- they are growing or producing their own local product; no re-selling is permitted.
- hold all required permits, licenses, and insurance policies necessary for their business operation.
- sign the indemnity agreement included in the vendor application, holding Urban Harvest harmless.
- allow market representatives to inspect their farm and production facilities prior to selling at the market and from time to time.
- pay the annual vendor fee.

b. Value-added vendors, those who are not growing the ingredients, but who obtain and process ingredients to produce food or craft items within 180 miles of Houston may sell their products at the market, providing:

- they are growing or producing their own local product; no re-selling is permitted.
- hold all required permits, licenses, and insurance policies necessary for their business operation.
- sign the indemnity agreement included in the vendor application, holding Urban Harvest harmless.
- allow market representatives to inspect farms and production facilities prior to selling and from time to time.
- pay the annual vendor fee.

c. Legally incorporated producer cooperatives may be allowed. In addition, farmers, growers, producers, cooperatives and value-added vendors may send family members, employees or members of cooperatives to sell for them at the market.

d. Agents and Partnerships - Future vendors may NOT represent or be represented by other growers or producers as agents. Current vendors working with agents are still allowed to be represented by their agent providing:

- the grower or producer participates in person for the duration of the market day at least twice a year or at least once during the season their produce is sold at the market.
- the product is labeled with the name of the actual producer and signage that identifies that name of the producer.
- they are growing or producing their own local product; no re-selling is permitted.
- hold all required permits, licenses, and insurance policies necessary for their business operation.
- sign the indemnity agreement included in the vendor application, holding Urban Harvest harmless.
- allow market representatives to inspect their farm and production facilities prior to selling at the market and from time to time.
- pay the annual vendor fee.

e. Non Profit Groups: Non-profit groups may participate at the market as space permits. Non-profits who are accepted to participate in the market are identified by criteria chosen by the UHFM Committee, but are chosen at the discretion of the Market Manager and the Executive Director. Such groups may set up information-only tables free of charge provided that the non-profit fill out the application and return it to the Market Manager within a minimum of a month before the proposed date of participation in the market.

f. Gardener's Corner: The market will provide a cooperative area of the market for backyard and community gardeners and small producers to sell their produce, provided they complete a Gardeners Corner application before selling. The annual vendor fee is waived. If the sales of such a gardener consistently exceed a certain amount established annually by the UHFM Committee, they must become a vendor as described in section 2a, 2b, or 2c.

g. Chef's Corner: Chefs are allowed to buy and prepare food at the market in the purpose of promoting locally grown and produced food. Chefs are encouraged to interact with the customer, and demonstrate how they are preparing the food. Chefs may pass out information leaflets on their restaurant, but may not sell anything else during market hours. Participating chefs must already be affiliated with a certified kitchen and sign both the Participation and Indemnity Agreement prior to participating in the market. Urban Harvest will provide the chef with a stipend to spend on ingredients at the market, as well as a sanitation station and hand washing station. The chef is asked to make time to speak with the Market Manager or Chef's Coordinator about further details regarding the demonstration.

WHAT CAN BE SOLD

- a. Agricultural products grown or produced by the seller, including but not limited to:
- vegetables
 - fruits, nuts, berries
 - ornamental plants and flowers
 - eggs

- milk and cheese
- meat and poultry
- seafood, either farm-raised or wild-caught
- honey
- firewood
- edible plants and plant starts
- other agricultural products

b. Value-added products produced by the seller, including but not limited to:

- prepared foods
- jams and jellies
- pickles, vinegars, salsas
- seasoning mixes, sauces
- dried flower arrangements
- baked goods
- herbal lotions, soaps, teas, etc

Vendors of other goods and services may be admitted at the discretion of the UHFM Committee if they enhance the variety and appeal of the market as a whole.

All vendors must comply with all applicable city, county, state, and federal health regulations at all times. The Market Manager will keep in each vendor's file copies of all applicable permits and licenses. It is each vendor's responsibility to provide current copies to the Market Manager, as well as to keep copies with them at the market to be available for inspection by government officials.

5. Market Operations

a. The market will operate year round, rain or shine. Market times will be established by the UHFM Committee.

b. The market will operate at locations approved by the Executive Director.

c. A stall is a selling area 10 feet wide and 10 feet deep. The Market Manager may permit a vendor to occupy more than one stall if the amount of product brought justifies it and if the market can accommodate it. Requests for additional stall space must be made in advance.

d. The Market Manager will assign stalls based on the best interests of the market as a whole, as well as criteria identified by the UHFM Committee. While vendors may have a customary location, this location is subject to change at the discretion of the Market Manager. The Market Manager will consider the various needs of particular vendors and accommodate them to the extent possible, particularly for space to park a truck containing backup merchandise and for need for access to electricity.

e. Vendors must pay a day fee for each market attended. Each additional stall incurs an additional day fee.

f. Each vendor must supply the Market Manager with their best estimate of gross sales at the end of each market. This data will be collected in order for the market to provide reports of total aggregate sales to various funding sources and no individual information will be released.

- g. Vendors will determine their own pricing.
- h. All vendors must represent their products in honest and non-deceptive manner at all times, both in written form on signs and in oral form during conversation.
- i. All items sold or labeled as organic must meet the requirements of the National Organic Program. Only certified organic growers or as allowed by law may display signs using the word "organic." If a vendor offers both organic and non-organic items in the same stall, individual signs should make it clear which items are organic and which are not.
- j. Prepared foods, unless sold by a licensed mobile food vendor, should be labeled with the name of the product, producer's name and address, a list of all the ingredients, with the highest proportion ingredients listed first in descending order and quantity or weight of contents as required by the State of Texas.
- k. As part of the application and vendor approval process, produce vendors will be provided with an educational sign that must be displayed in a consistent and predetermined location during market hours. Urban Harvest will provide a sign to all farmers about what their growing practices are: conventional, certified naturally grown, certified organic, and sustainable. Each vendor must display a large sign or banner identifying their farm or business to be allowed to participate in the market beyond a two week period. Additional educational signs and materials will help their sales and are strongly encouraged, including photos of the farm, descriptions of growing practices, history of the farm, biographies of the growers, and other material likely to be of interest to customers. Farm open house days are strongly encouraged as well. If a vendor fails to show up with an adequate sign identifying their farm or business and growing or manufacturing practices, they must buy a temporary sign from Urban Harvest for a nominal fee that approximates its cost. The sign will be completed with their name and will identify their growing practices using the standardized terminology reflected in UHFM's "Terminology of Growing Practices." Please refer to the "Terminology of Growing Practices" definition page for further information.
- l. Vendors that choose to bring products that fall under more than one growing practice category are required to purchase a separate 10x10 booth space for each additional category represented on that day. Additional booths purchased for multiple products must be side by side booths; like a storefront.
- m. No reselling is permitted. Vendors may only sell products that they have grown, raised or produced themselves or as defined in 3(d).
- n. All vendors must keep their stall in a safe, clean, and hazard-free condition. At the end of market, each vendor must leave their selling area clean, with all trash removed.
- o. All vendors must conduct themselves in a courteous and professional manner. Vendors must treat all customers, staff and volunteers of Urban Harvest, and fellow vendors with respect at all times.
- p. No loud or aggressive promotion is permitted. Radios or stereos may only be operated with the permission of the Market Manager.
- q. No smoking is permitted at the market. No consumption of alcohol beverages or illegal drugs is allowed at the market.

- r. Vendors must arrive a minimum of thirty minutes prior to the start of the market. Vendors must remain set up until the close of market, even if they have sold out.
- s. Vendors must supply their own tents, tent weights and tables. For the safety of all present at the market, tent weights must be a minimum of 25 pounds PER tent leg. Urban Harvest will rent tent weights for \$30 per leg, per market, to vendors without tent weights. Cement, sand and dumbbells are acceptable forms of tent weights. Unacceptable forms of tent weights include the bumper of a car, a bucket of water and sharp objects. Bungee cords can only be used to make sure that the tent weight will not rock back and forth in the wind. Because of how bungee cords stretch out, they cannot be used to connect the weight to the top of the tent. Ropes that connect the weight to the tent must be taut at all times to prevent the tent from blowing around in the wind. Tent weights must be attached IMMEDIATELY after pitching the tent.
- t. Vendors must inform the Market Manager by 5pm on Friday if they are unable to make it to the market on Saturday. Unless prior timely notice is given, vendors will be required to pay their booth fee even if you are unable to make it to the market. Market Manager will work with a vendor if something comes up at the last minute.
- u. No storage space for vendors is available at the market site. Vendors should be prepared for all kinds of weather.

NON-COMPLIANCE

Non-compliance with market rules will result in disciplinary action at the discretion of the Market Manager and Executive Director. Such disciplinary action may include exclusion from the market for a period of time as well as termination of the vendor's participation in the market. Any vendor aggrieved by the Market Manager's decision may appeal for review to the Executive Director of Urban Harvest.

COMPLAINTS AND SUGGESTIONS

Suggestions for market improvement are always welcome. Complaints or grievances should be brought to the attention of the Market Manager or a vendor representative, who will investigate the issue and if a problem is found, address it. Vendor complaints must be made to the Market Manager *in writing*. Upon request, the Market Manager will provide an update on the status of the effort to resolve the complaint, to the extent that vendor confidentiality permits. The Market Manager will respond to the complaint in writing within 14 days of receipt of the written complaint, and will promptly provide all parties involved a copy of the complaint. In most situations, vendor problems will *not* be addressed during market hours.

If a vendor has a complaint or a grievance which they feel the Market Manager has not sufficiently addressed, he/she may appeal in writing to the Executive Director.

GOVERNANCE

The Urban Harvest Board of Directors governs the market and has final authority in regard to all matters relating to the market.

The Market Manager will be a staff member of Urban Harvest. The Market Manager shall conduct the day-to-day operations of the market. The UHFM Committee approves

vendor applications, considers and proposes changes to the market rules, acts in an advisory role to the Market Manager, and addresses vendor appeals of the Market Manager's decision(s). The UHFM Committee will be comprised of three Urban Harvest Board members, three vendor representatives, one member of the public, the Market Manager and the Executive Director as established by the Board of Urban Harvest in conformance with State and local regulatory requirements for Farmers Markets.

The Market Manager will hold an annual meeting for all participating vendors to report on and discuss the market's performance and to facilitate election of vendor representatives to the UHFM Committee. The elected vendor representatives may organize additional meetings of market vendors. Vendor representatives will have two year terms, with no more than three terms. Vendor representatives must be an owner of the business, and not an employee. The vendor representatives are delegates for three categories: 1) Value Added, 2) Conventional Growing Methods, and 3) Sustainable, Naturally Grown and/or Organic Growing Methods. Category assignments for UHFM vendors are based on annual sales volume per category. For example, if you make \$100,000 a year annually in sales, and \$80,000 would be in value added, and \$20,000 would be in conventional vegetables, then as a vendor, you would fall under the value added category.

Amendments

The market rules may only be amended with the approval of the Urban Harvest Board of Directors. The UHFM Committee may update market procedures and criteria at any committee meeting.



Urban Harvest
FARMERS MARKET

Gardeners' Corner Rules

The “Gardeners’ Corner” is designed to promote interest in selling at the market for small and mid-size producers. Produce and herbaceous edible plants (herbs) may be sold in the Gardeners’ Corner. Transplants, starters, and seedlings are allowed to be sold, but containers larger than one gallon are not allowed. Plants larger than eighteen inches are not allowed. Soaps, prepared foods, crafts and woody plants (ie. Trees and shrubs) are not allowed to be sold at the Gardeners’ Corner.

The by-laws specify that persons with total sales under \$300 per market day would be eligible to sell in a co-operative manner. When your sales exceed that level for more than two consecutive weeks, you will be asked to apply to become a vendor. At the next Market Committee meeting, your application will be reviewed. You may sell at the Gardeners’ Corner until the meeting is held.

To increase your chances of success, and make the experience more enjoyable, you should attend a “Selling at Urban Harvest Farmers Market” class to learn techniques for successfully selling your product, which is held once of month. Gardeners’ Corner participants may not use agents to sell your product, per Urban Harvest Farmers Market Rules.

You must contact the market manager by 5pm on Thursdays to reserve table space. We can only accommodate sixteen (16) gardeners. Tomato season (June) and citrus season (December, January) tend to be when we have the most people at the Gardeners Corner, so please plan accordingly. The first people that contact us are the ones that will be able to sell at the Gardeners’ Corner. We will have a waiting list, and the Market Manager will call you if space opens up.

Gardeners’ Corner participants must follow Urban Harvest Farmers Market Rules. Because Gardeners’ Corner participants are allowed to sell under Urban Harvest’s Certified Farmers Market Permit, we ask that you follow the rules accordingly. Since Gardeners’ Corner participants follow the Urban Harvest Farmers Market rules, they are subject to the same vendor citations that our regular vendors are subject to. Each participant of the market is subject to 3 strikes before they are asked to leave the market permanently. All vendors are regulated by the state, county, city, federal and UHFM regulations.

Producers must be at the market by 7:15, and will not be able to participate if you have arrived late. If you are unable to get to the market on time, contact the Market Manager

or coordinator, otherwise the table space will not be available to you. All Gardeners' Corner sellers are asked to not tear down or leave before market close at 12:00 noon. The history of the market is that people who left before closing has made the market look closed, and we ask all of our vendors to stay until the end of the market.

Urban Harvest will provide a booth space with cloth covered tables, a banner type sign, inventory control sheets and growing practices sign (please refer to the Glossary of Terminology). A Gardeners' Corner box is provided for participants and is located in the shed. You are responsible for helping other Gardener's Corner participants in setting up the tents and tables, and are also responsible for helping break down the Gardeners' Corner at the end of the market as well. You must fill out an inventory sheet – this will be used to calculate how much you sold, and how much you will pay Urban Harvest. Indicate on the inventory sheet whether your produce is sustainable, certified naturally grown, or conventional. If a farmer is making less than \$5,000 a year, it is allowed by state and federal law to use the word organic. However, Urban Harvest has decided to prohibit the use of the word “Organic” at our market unless properly certified by the state, the USDA or a third party firm. A growing practice sign will be provided for you to display at your booth in order for customers to understand your production practices. At the end of the market, you are responsible for total breakdown of the Gardener's Corner and returning it to the shed.

Provide your own product signage (include pricing), as well as a sign with your farm or garden name and location. If possible, produce should be identified by name & variety – i.e. Homestead tomatoes, Suyo Long cucumbers, not simply “snap beans.” Recipe cards or suggestions on how to prepare will enhance sales.

We have created a web page to showcase Gardeners' Corner Participants and their gardens on www.urbanharvest.org, and additional information about farmers markets and becoming a vendor can be found there. Please do not hesitate to ask the Market Manager any questions that you may have.

Provide your own pricing guidelines (nothing will be sold by weight – there is no scale available). You may not use a scale unless it is certified. Guidelines will be covered in the “Selling What You Grow” class, which will give you an idea of the market prices for various retail outlets. Provide packaging (or pre pack) your produce; or have baskets or other containers. You should provide sacks (or recycled plastic grocery bags for your customers). You are responsible for having sufficient cash to make change for your customers.

Product inventory sheets must be filled out completely signed and turned in at the end of the market with your daily fee, and must be turned into the Gardeners' Corner coordinator or the Market Manager. For the participants in the Gardeners' Corner, the fee is \$2 to Urban Harvest for every \$30 that you make. Fees are subject to change.

For more information please call the Urban Harvest office at 713/880-5540, or email julia@urbanharvest.org

Fees & Payment Procedures

All annual and weekly booth fees are subject to change per the committee's request.

There is a \$110 annual fee. Fees are collected every May, and will *not* be prorated for the applicant that may enter at a later date. The annual fee includes an Urban Harvest membership.

The booth fee is \$30 each Saturday for a 10x10 space. Any additional tent will be an additional \$30. Payment is required to be paid during market hours. Urban Harvest is working on our automated payment system so that vendors will be able to pay online for their booth fee in advance. We hope to get this up and going as soon as possible and will inform you of when we can get that started.

Tools to Monitor and Enforce the Rules

UHFMs' viability requires careful consideration for the safety of all vendors, customers and the community. UHFMs operational rules have been constructed to minimize the risk of accidents or additional liability. Without vendor compliance, our risk management strategies are compromised. The result to UHFMs and other vendors can be costly to manage, insure and operate.

Vendor on-site compliance will be evaluated regularly using the following checklist. Management uses this checklist as a tool to regulate food safety, products sold and operational safety. Both UHFMs manager and vendor's on-site sales personnel will sign and date the Compliance Form.

Vendor must correct any noncompliance by the following week. If the situation has not been remedied by the following week, disciplinary actions may be taken including:

- Vendor may be suspended from the market for a week and forfeit his/her stall fee.
- Vendor may lose reserved space privilege.
- Vendor may be issued a fine.

If a vendor is issued a fine due to non-compliance, vendor must pay the fine on the day it was issued, or 24 hours before setting up on his/her next market day, and the violation must be remedied.

In cases of serious violation, the typical disciplinary progression will be as follows:

- Vendor will be asked to shut down at the market immediately.
- Vendor will be suspended from the market until the next Market Committee meeting where their involvement in the market will be reviewed.

A serious violation would include food safety violations, general safety violations breaking the law and losing control of one's emotions in an extreme manner.



Urban Harvest
FARMERS MARKET

Compliance Agreement

- I understand that if I am late to the market, I will not be able to set up.
- I understand that if I am late to the market once, I will be fined \$15.
- I understand that if I am late to the market more than once, I will be fined \$30.
- I understand that if I do not show up and have not informed the market manager of my absence, I may be asked to pay for my booth on the previous Saturday.
- I understand that if I loose my temper, I may be asked to leave the market for the day.
- I understand that if I leave a mess, I will be fined \$30.
- I understand that when I set up my tent, I must immediately put a weight on each tent leg.
- I understand that each tent leg must be weighted down with 25 lbs.
- I understand that if I have set up without a tent weight, I will be fined \$30 per leg.
- I understand that the market manager holds the right to refuse sale of a product if it is kept at improper temperatures. I understand that I may appeal with the market committee.
- I understand that if I violate the City of Houston Ordinance and any additional food safety standards I will be asked to leave for the day, and fined \$30.
- I understand that I may not participate in the market if I have not paid the annual fee.
- I understand that any consistent violation of these rules will result in a review of my business by the market committee.

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Business Name: _____

Date: _____



Urban Harvest
FARMERS MARKET

ON-SITE VENDOR COMPLIANCE FORM

Date: _____

Vendor: _____

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> UHFM Rules | <input type="checkbox"/> Texas Dept. of State Health Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> City of Houston Ordinance | <input type="checkbox"/> Houston Dept. of Health & Human Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> City of Houston Health Code | <input type="checkbox"/> Texas Dept. of Agriculture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dept. of Parks & Wildlife | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

Violation cited in detail:

By signing this form, the vendor acknowledges the system used to enforce safety standards laid out in detail on the back of this citation form.
A signature is required in order for a vendor that has been issued a citation to return to the Urban Harvest Farmers Market.

Vendor Signature: _____

Date: _____

Market Manager Signature: _____

Date: _____

Executive Director Signature: _____

Date: _____



Urban Harvest
FARMERS MARKET

Vendor Concern Form

UHFV Vendors who have concerns about market operations, vendor policies, or other vendors' compliance with market rules should submit this Concern Form. UHFV will not reveal the inquiring vendor's name to anyone. Please submit this form directly to market management on the market day or within a week of the market during which the alleged violation occurred.

Date:

Vendor Business Name:

Your Name:

Contact Information (phone, e-mail or mailing address):

Your Concern:

Market Date and Approximate time at which the violation occurred (if any):

Please state the specifics of the violation of the rule. Provide any evidence that supports your concern.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____



Urban Harvest
FARMERS MARKET

Product Challenge Form

Vendors can submit this challenge form when they believe another Vendor is misrepresenting their product. Please submit this form directly to market management on the market day or within a week of the market during which the alleged violation occurred. UHFMM will not reveal challenger(s)' identities to anyone.

Name of the vendor about whose product you are inquiring:

Specific product(s) about which you are inquiring:

Market date and approximate time at which the product is being sold:

Please state the specifics of the violation. Please provide any evidence that supports your challenge:

Your Name:

Contact Information (phone, e-mail or mailing address):

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Market Tips for First Time Vendors

For All Vendors:

- Grow your market by cultivating a loyal clientele.
- Achieve success by delivering excellent customer service.
- If you are not a “people person”, send another family member or hire a well-trained employee.
- To encounter friends, appreciative customers, remember:
 - o Customers shop at farmers’ markets because they want to meet the people who grow their food, and they want fresh, high-quality products.
- Invest your time wisely:
 - o By preparing and leaving enough time for travel.
 - o Be ready to sell at the open of the market.
- Bring everything you need.
- Most market stalls are a 10’ x 10’ bare piece of concrete. See the sample checklist on page 25.
- How can Urban Harvest help you market your business?
 - o Urban Harvest sends out a market e-newsletter to close to 6,000 readers each Thursday. If you are interested in putting in a blurb advertising your business, e-mail the market manager, at Julia@urbanharvest.org by Wednesday evening at 5pm to include that information in the newsletter. Send me what you think would be best. I keep all sentences in the 3rd person, so please structure your sentence that way. Even though Urban Harvest believes in all of our vendors, we cannot print that you are selling “the best tomato ever,” even if that may be the case. Urban Harvest holds the right to edit blurbs that may be controversial or inflammatory.
 - o Urban Harvest has a website, and a page devoted just to the vendors. Details that we are looking for are business name, proprietor name, description and/or products, contact and/or website. Please be specific with how you would like to have the customer contact you, because it is not uncommon that I get a phone call from a customer asking for a specific vendor’s contact information. Urban Harvest would like to honor the way that you would like to be contacted.
- Keep your booth clean.
- Have hand sanitizer for both you and your customers.
- Have an attractive table cloth that won’t show blemishes or spills.
- Have a clear sign about what products are for sale.
- Keep your food at temperature at ALL TIMES.

For Farmers:

- Urban Harvest offers a class entitled “Sell What You Grow” that discusses how to plan your planting for market, package for market, and market what you grow.
- Unusual vegetables are in high demand and we suggest planning in advance by asking others what they plan on planting so that you can see what is not going to be at the market.

What to Bring

Careful planning for market is essential to your success. Be on time and ready to sell by the opening of the market. Make a checklist! Examples of items to include:

- 10x10 Canopy tent (We suggest EZ Up Tents from Academy because they have a lifetime warranty. Make sure you save your receipt)
- weights for each leg of the canopy. You need a minimum of four 25lb. weights per tent leg. Please note that tent weights are the first thing that you put on in the morning and the last thing that you take down after the close of the market. Please note that the Market Manager is a stickler about maintaining that all vendors make this a habit in the set up and breakdown of each vendor's booth. Let's keep the market safe!
- Large sign or banner that includes your business name, location, products, and contact information, if possible. The more personal the signage, the better! Consider using pictures.
- Stall structure: tables, table covering, racks, shelves
- Display containers for your product
- Plastic and paper bags
- Cash box and bank (be ready to make change for \$20 bills!)
- Miscellaneous display items: sign making materials including chalk, paper, cardboard, markers, scissors, tape, pens, bags, price tags, pocket knife, duct tape.
- Check out items: pencils, pens, calculator, sales record/receipt book, notepad, bags, boxes, flats.
- Trashcan, broom
- Individual product names and prices alongside of the items—how the item is sold (by weight, piece, quantity)—highlight different varieties, heirlooms, product qualities (sweet, spicy, bitter), storage tips, etc.
- Signage extras: recipes, how-to's, seasonality information, new item, product information.
- Information about your farm, CSA or other on-farm activities, promotional materials, business cards—you never know when you will meet a chef!
- Personal comfort items: weather gear, gloves, hats, rainwear, and drinking water.
- Your customer service personality—a big smile is your best asset.

Food Safety Guidelines for Farmers Markets

Minimum Requirements for Food Safety

This publication is a guideline for Texas farmers' markets and their vendors outlining minimum requirements that must be met in order to ensure food safety. It is issued by Urban Harvest in cooperation with the City of Houston's Department of Health and Human Services & the Texas Department of Agriculture.

The Department of Health and Human Services at the City of Houston performs inspections for compliance with these guidelines. Some market vendors are licensed by county health departments or the Texas Department of State Health Services.

Market Operation Requirements

Farmers' markets should make reasonable efforts to ensure that all vendors selling products requiring licenses have obtained them and are maintaining those licenses. Each vendor is required to inform the management IMMEDIATELY if any addresses or information has changed, and Urban Harvest holds the right to exclude anyone who does not keep their paperwork up to date.

Each Market Manager — or other responsible person designated by the organization operating the market — should maintain a copy of vendor licenses or a record of the number of the license. It is the responsibility of the vendor to inform the Market Manager of any changes, and if it is discovered that the vendor does not share that information, that vendor will be subject to review by the Market Committee.

A list of all licenses required by law is listed on page 29 of the Vendor Handbook.

Cleanliness is next to Godliness

Fun Fact: The term above was coined by Edward Bernays, who was widely regarded as the first public relations expert. He was hired by Ivory Soap to create a blurb for their new marketing campaign in the 1930's, and he created the "Cleanliness is next to Godliness" campaign. That being said, there are several recommendations that we strongly encourage all of the vendors to follow.

- 1) All coolers and boxes are expected to be cleaned out and disinfected after each market. Bleach is your friend!
- 2) Vendors are expected to wash their hands regularly.
- 3) Vendors are expected to wear gloves while sampling. Each glove is for a single use only, and vendors are then expected to throw those gloves out.
- 4) Vendors are encouraged to be mindful of their personal hygiene and general appearance.
- 5) Vendors are encourage to have hand sanitizer for both the vendor and their customers.

Labeling

All vendors selling processed food must include the following on a label:

- 1) Common usual name of product
- 2) Name and Address of Manufacturer

- 3) List of ingredients in descending order of predominance by net weight.
- 4) Ingredient statements must be at 1/16 of an inch or larger.
- 5) Ingredients must include components of the ingredients. (i.e.: Enriched Flour (flour, malted barley flour, niacin, iron, thiamin mononitrate, riboflavin)
- 6) All certified colors must be identified in the ingredient statement
- 7) Preservatives must be followed with statement of use. (i.e.: Calcium Propionate (preservative)
- 8) For beverages containing juice or that imply juice content, the percentage of juice must be declared on the information panel.

"Specific details on the four basic labeling requirement list above can be found on <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/foods/labeling.shtm>

Handle with Care

Even though market farmers consider their products to be the most wholesome foods available, some foods sold at farmers' markets are legally classified as potentially hazardous foods because they allow fast growth of germs that may cause food poisoning. This term includes common foods like eggs, meat, poultry, seafood, dairy products and many foods that contain those ingredients. Even foods that are not potentially hazardous can become potentially hazardous once water has been added and/or they have been cooked.

Certain baked goods are potentially hazardous foods. Cheesecake is one example, but some foods may not be as obvious. Vendors should talk with their food safety inspector at the City of Houston to determine whether the licensed foods they sell fall into this category. They are more than willing to help you out, and any important phone numbers are located at the back of this handbook.

Potentially hazardous foods in general must be stored, displayed and offered for sale packaged and refrigerated at or below 41 degrees F. Frozen products must stay frozen. Maintaining these foods at appropriate temperatures in an outdoor environment ALWAYS requires use of ice chests or other containers filled with ice or dry ice surrounding the product. Care MUST be taken to prevent accumulation of water from melted ice. It is against the health code to let any food sit in water, and so each cooler must have a way to drain melted water.

Other products sometimes used to keep food cold, such as blue ice packs, are often not effective enough because they do not surround food products. Vendors should carry a thermometer to monitor product temperatures of refrigerated foods.

Off the ground

Food of all kind can be displayed and sold in open air. The only caveat is that they must be stored 6 inches off the ground. Vendors can accomplish this in a number of ways.

- Many vendors use plastic tubs to transport and protect their produce.
- Empty crates or boxes underneath the ones holding produce can do the job if impervious tubs are not available.

Hand washing

This section applies directly to anyone who prepares and serves samples at the market or who prepares food on-site for immediate consumption.

Hand washing is an important task that many people do — or fail to do — without thinking. To protect public health, all farmers' market vendors, like workers in other food establishments, must make a special effort.

Here is what health authorities mean by hand washing: a cleaning procedure of about 20 seconds that includes vigorous friction, for at least 10 to 15 seconds, on the surfaces of lathered fingers, finger tips, areas between fingers, hands and portions of arms exposed to direct food contact, followed by thorough rinsing under clean, running water.

- When does the requirement apply?

- Whenever vendors use the restroom, contact bodily fluids (sneezing or coughing into hands, nose-blowing, etc.), touch animals, have soiled hands, or return to their work stations after leaving for any reason.

- What about hand sanitizers and moist towelettes?

- Vendors may use these products but not as a substitute for hand washing.

- How about single-use gloves?

- Gloves do not eliminate the need for hand washing, although they may be helpful in some circumstances to avoid bare handed contact with food. If used, they must be limited to a *single task* and discarded when damaged or soiled or when tasks are interrupted. Non-latex gloves are preferred because of allergy considerations and are required in temporary restaurant operations.

- What about money handling – isn't it a problem?

- Not in the way that most people would expect. Research indicates that money handling is not a danger in food establishments, but public opinion is another matter. This may be a case where it is prudent for vendors to ignore science and structure their operations to please customers.

- How do vendors set up a hand washing station?

- Vendors may find they already own many of the components, and the rest are available at minimal cost. One key piece is an enclosed container that holds an adequate amount of water for the duration of a market day. Water containers should have a spigot that can stay open to allow a constant flow of water for two-handed washing. Such containers are available at stores that sell camping supplies. Other required components include: water, soap, single-use paper towels and some sort of catch basin for the wastewater.

Animals

Vendor & customer's animals are allowed to come to the outskirts of the market, but must be kept a minimum of 20 feet from any food handling, display or storage.

What kind of Licenses do I need?

Vendors are responsible for complying with local, state, and federal requirements governing the sale and production of their products, and for acquiring the necessary permits and licenses. The following is a list of common permits and licenses required; however it is NOT exhaustive.

For more information, contact the issuing agency.

Product	License	Issuing Agency
Plant & Nursery Growers (for annual sales over \$250)	Nursery/Floral Certificate of Registration	Texas Department of Agriculture
Organic Farmers	Organic Certificate	Texas Department of Agriculture OR Third Party Firm
Processed Foods	1. Food Manufacturer License	TX Dept. of State Health Services Regulatory Licensing Unit
	2. Food Dealers Permit (certifying kitchen)	Dept. of Health & Human Services of City/County of your kitchen
	3. Food Service Manager's Certificate	Dept. of Health & Human Services of City/County of your kitchen
Canned/Pickled Foods	1. Food Manufacturer License	TX Dept. of State Health Services Regulatory Licensing Unit
	2. Food Dealers Permit (certifying kitchen)	Dept. of Health & Human Services of City/County of your kitchen
	3. Food Service Manager's Certificate	Dept. of Health & Human Services of City/County of your kitchen
	4. Canning License	any FDA approved school

On-Premise Prepared Foods	1. Food Dealers Permit (certifying kitchen)	Dept. of Health & Human Services of City/County of your kitchen
	2. Food Service Manager's Certificate	Dept. of Health & Human Services of City/County of your kitchen
	3. Temporary Food Establishment Permit	City of Houston Dept. of Health & Human Services
Cheese	1. Food Manufacturer License	TX Dept. of State Health Services Regulatory Licensing Unit
	2. Food Dealers Permit (certifying kitchen)	Dept. of Health & Human Services of City/County of your kitchen
	3. Food Service Manager's Certificate	Dept. of Health & Human Services of City/County of your kitchen
Pasteurized Milk	1. Grade A Dairy License	TX Dept. of State Health Services Milk and Dairy Products Division
Meat	Meat Slaughter Establishment License	TX Dept. of State Health Services
Seafood	1. Retail Fish Dealer's Permit	TX Parks & Wildlife
	2. Food Dealers Permit (certifying kitchen)	Dept. of Health & Human Services of City/County of your kitchen
Eggs	Eggs may be sold at the market without an egg handler's license, but there must be labeling on the carton stating the farm name, address and grade A eggs.	
Poultry	Poultry Slaughter Establishment License	TX Dept. of State Health Services

Contacts for Further Information

Texas Department of State Health Services

Environmental and Consumer Safety Section

Foods Group MC 1987

Texas Department of State Health Services

P. O. Box 149347

Austin, Texas 78714-9347

Phone: (512) 834-6670

Fax: (512) 834-6681

Texas Department of Agriculture

1700 N. Congress

11th Floor

Austin TX 78701

Phone: (512) 463-7476

Nationwide Toll Free Phone: (800) TELL-TDA (835-5832)

For the Hearing Impaired: (800) 735-2989 (TTY)

Fax: (888) 223-8861

Texas Parks & Wildlife Department

4200 Smith School Road

Austin, TX 78744

Toll Free: (800) 792-1112

Austin: (512) 389-4800

Houston Department of Health and Human Services

8000 North Stadium Drive

Suite 200

Houston TX 77054

Phone: (713) 794-9200

AgriLife Extension Better Process Control School at Texas A&M

Contact: Dr. Al Wagner

Phone: (979) 845-7023

E-mail: a-wagner@tamu.edu

Urban Harvest

2311 Canal

Suite 200

Houston TX 77003

Phone: (713) 880-5540

Fax: (713) 223-0227