

# Sweetwater Local Foods Market Mission & Market Rules

## ***Mission Statement***

The Sweetwater Local Foods Market (SLFM) is Michigan's first farmers' market to offer exclusively locally grown fruits & vegetables produced according to organic standards and meats, eggs & cheese from humanely raised animals. The market is operated for the benefit of farmers and consumers alike.

Sustainable agriculture is a commitment to both growing and distributing food to meet the needs of current and future generations in a manner that is environmentally sound, economically viable, and socially just. SLFM believes that small family farms are essential to the sustainable agricultural economy, and is committed to making economic and educational connections between urban dwellers and sustainable farmers.

***The Sweetwater Local Foods Market will operate according to four core values.***

**1. Healthy.** All foods and products sold in the market will be produced as naturally as possible, avoiding the use of inorganic chemicals, growth hormones, antibiotics and genetically modified organisms. For vegetables and fruit products this means grown with a commitment to organic standards and requires the farmer or producer to have one or more of the following certifications (see Defining Terms):

**USDA Certified Organic  
Certified Naturally Grown  
Sweetwater Verified  
GAAMPS (not required, see below)**

**2. Humane.** Animals are raised in ways that respect their natures, allowing them to express their natural behaviors. Processing is done through humane methods. No antibiotics or hormones to promote growth or production will be used.

**3. Homegrown.** All fresh food products sold in the market will be locally produced and sold by the farmer who produces them, or by an assigned representative, with market permission.

**4. Transparency.** Transparency will govern all transactions in the market. Farmers and producers selling at the Sweetwater Local Foods Market will demonstrate their commitment to these core values by signing the Pledge to Customers and documenting their practices.

## **Market Rules**

### **Defining Terms**

**Organic.** The term implies a product was grown without use of synthetic herbicides or pesticides or genetically modified organisms, and that the farmer is actively engaged in building good soil biology to promote healthy natural growth in plants and animals that result in products that are nutritionally superior. As a philosophical statement organic is a system of production which mirrors the natural laws of living organisms with emphasis on the interdependence of all life.

### **Certification Requirements necessary to sell at Sweetwater Market:**

**USDA Certified Organic.** Products grown in accordance with the USDA National Organic Program (NOP) and certified by a third party inspector and allowed to carry the USDA organic seal.

**Important Note:** If you are not Certified Organic and wish to use the term "organic" in advertising and/or describing your products you may do so **ONLY** if **1**. The gross income from products you

produce and wish to label as organic is under **\$5000** gross per year *and*, **2.** You as a producer are in compliance with all of the National Organic Program (NOP) standards as defined in CFR part 205, *and* **3.** You are keeping records verifying your claims (tax records, seed, feed & soil amendment purchases, etc) at your place of business, available for inspection during normal business hours. **You may not label your products as “certified” organic.** Please be sure to read the NOP CFR part 205 rules closely. Violation of the NOP program standards could result in fines in excess of \$10,000 per violation.

**Certified Naturally Grown.** For direct-market farmers who can't afford the more expensive NOP, CNG enables farmers to get credit for their practices while offering accountability to their customers. CNG's certification approach relies on peer reviews in which inspections are typically carried out by other farmers. The PGS model promotes farmer-to-farmer knowledge sharing about best practices and fosters local networks that strengthen the farming community. Once accepted, each farm application is posted at the CNG website. <https://www.cngfarming.org/faqs>

**Sweetwater Verified. Requires full market application including Grower Questionnaire & Farm Visit.** For farmers & vendors who wish to sell at Sweetwater but who don't wish to be certified through the national NOP or CNG, this is their least expensive option, although not as rigorous or lengthy as the national certs. <http://www.sweetwaterlocalfoodsmarket.org/about-us/apply-to-be-a-market-vendor/>

**GAAMPS** The Michigan Right to Farm Act, P.A. 93, was enacted in 1981 to provide farmers with nuisance protection. This state law authorizes the Michigan Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development to develop and adopt Generally Accepted Agricultural and Management Practices (GAAMPs) for farms and farm operations in Michigan. While adherence to the GAAMPs does not act as a complete barrier to complaints or lawsuits, it does provide an umbrella of protection from nuisance litigation. [https://www.michigan.gov/mdard/0,4610,7-125-1599\\_1605---,00.html](https://www.michigan.gov/mdard/0,4610,7-125-1599_1605---,00.html)

**Sweetwater Note:** GAAMPS does not promote organic methods of farming; therefore we list it here not as a requirement but because it may give even organic farmers some protection against nuisance lawsuits should they arise.

**Humane treatment.** The humane raising, transport and processing of animals are based on respect for the natural behavior of the animal and its needs. This is accomplished through seven values: (1) freedom from thirst, (2) freedom from hunger, malnutrition, and access to pasture, (3) freedom of comfort and shelter, (4) disease prevention without the use of antibiotics and/or hormones to promote growth, (5) freedom from fear especially in transport and slaughter, (6) freedom to display most normal patterns of behavior, and (7) freedom from physical alternation, except where necessary to protect the health of the animal.

**Farmer.** A person or an entity that raises agricultural products including vegetables, fruit, meat and dairy products.

**Food Vendor/Value Added Producer.** A person or entity that produces or controls the production of prepared foods and other value added products approved for sale at the Sweetwater Local Foods Market.

**Market Manager.** The Market Manager will coordinate all of the activities of the weekly functioning of the Market and implement market policies. This includes oversight of the Market set-up and clean-up, daily assignments, collection of dues, fees and information, assuring vendor compliance with market rules and answering questions. The Market Manager has authority to interpret and implement policy.

**Reselling.** No reselling of products grown outside of Michigan is allowed. Farmers wishing to sell another farmers locally grown products **must first request permission from the SLFM.** We require the same information about these products as any other allowed product. It is up to you, the vendor, to request the information and forward it on to us for our records.

**Contract Vending.** In general, items not made locally (within 50 miles) must still be made within the State of Michigan, they must be certified organic, and there must be a demonstrated need for them at the market. An example would be Fraser teas, and Food for Thought jams and preserves. You must get permission from the market before vending these products.

**Pledge/Insured/Hold Harmless requirement.**

All vendors must obtain general liability insurance for their operations. Further, as a condition of selling, all SLFM sellers are required to sign the Farmer/Producer/Vendor Pledge /Hold Harmless Agreement. By applying to sell at SLFM, the seller is agreeing to this condition. The signed forms & proofs must be returned to SLFM with your application or at the first market you attend.

### **MARKET DAY SATURDAY 9-12 Noon**

**Location:** Mercy Partners Lakes Campus, 6401 Harvey St. Muskegon, 49444. Exit US31 at Pontaluna Rd., east to Harvey. North on Harvey to 1st bldg on left.

**Saturday Summer Market:** Market operates outdoors every Saturday from 9 to 12 Noon. In the Lobby if weather is inclement.

**Saturday Winter Market:** Indoors every Saturday from 9 to 12 Noon in the Lobby of the Lakes Campus. We generally choose to close on the Saturday after Thanksgiving and Christmas; otherwise we are OPEN EVERY SATURDAY YEAR-ROUND.

- Market Manager will be on-site at 8:00 am to begin set-up.
- Vendors **must** be set up by 9:00am.

### **FEES & SPACE ALLOCATION**

- **Outdoor market.** \$15.00 per market. The market will provide each vendor with a 10 x 10 White pop up, plus one 3 x 6 folding table during outdoor markets. If you need additional stall space outdoors you must provide your own tent & tables and we request that you use the white tents similar to market tents.
- **Indoor market: \$15.00 per vendor per market. Includes one 3 x 6 table.** Space will be allocated by market manager according to number of vendors at each market.

### **SET-UP**

- The market is a collective effort that requires that all vendors arrive in time to help set-up the market, and stay until closing to help take it down. If your type of business makes it impossible for you to arrive on time, please consider others ways to contribute to the effort. Also, please be aware that if arriving late, you should not expect help with your setup. We encourage everyone to remain at the market from 9-12 noon; however if you do have to leave early you must take your tent/tables down and store them.
- If emergencies occur and you will be late or absent that week, please call market manager at **(231)286-9730 or email at [sweetwaterlocalfoods@gmail.com](mailto:sweetwaterlocalfoods@gmail.com).**
- Vendors must clean up their own stall space – trash can will be provided.
- Market Fee is to be paid to Market Manager no later than 12:00 noon of each market day.
- Returning vendors will be given first opportunity to select their usual selling space provided they plan to attend at least 75% of the season.

### **FOOD & MARKET SAFETY POLICIES**

#### **Cottage Food Law**

[http://www.michigan.gov/mdard/0,4610,7-125-50772\\_45851-240577--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/mdard/0,4610,7-125-50772_45851-240577--,00.html)

#### **FAQ for Farmers Mkts in Michigan**

[http://www.michigan.gov/mdard/0,4610,7-125-1568\\_2387\\_46671\\_46672-169336--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/mdard/0,4610,7-125-1568_2387_46671_46672-169336--,00.html)

#### **Guidelines for Selling Meat and/or Poultry at a Farmers Mkt**

##### **Beef, lamb, goat, pork:**

Must be processed at a USDA facility in order to sell at a farmers market.

##### **Poultry**

Licensing requirements differ depending on whether you intend to raise and slaughter your own poultry, raise and slaughter your own plus others, or raise your own and bring them to another processor. Contact Cathy Martin at [martinc9@michigan.gov](mailto:martinc9@michigan.gov) for help in understanding licensing & labeling requirements.

Also contact Michigan Dept of Ag Food and Dairy Division at 517-373-1060

### **In addition:**

- Vendors are responsible for their own liability insurance, sales taxes, licenses, permits and fees required for operation and will abide by all local, state and federal laws.
- Vendors should keep appropriate food licenses with them at the market.
- All meat vendors must keep meat in an appropriate portable freezer with adequate extension cords to plug it in at the market. Meats must be kept frozen at 0 or below.
- For guideline selling eggs at market:  
[http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mda/MDA\\_EggProcLicGuid8-17-10\\_331083\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mda/MDA_EggProcLicGuid8-17-10_331083_7.pdf)
- No smoking within confines of market.
- Vendors **MUST** be responsible for keeping their children brought to market under direct supervision, especially while indoors. No running, playing on the stairs, elevators and/or areas outside of the market perimeter can be allowed.
- Dogs must be kept on a leash. No dogs allowed inside lobby of building, unless leader dogs.

### **SOCIAL MEDIA & MARKETING**

- Our primary means of advertising to the public is through publication of a weekly email newsletter **What's New at the Market**. It lists each vendor attending that week and what they are bringing.
- Customers are asked to sign up at <https://tinyletter.com/SweetwaterLocalFoodsMkt>
- Vendors who wish to be included in the newsletter must email a list of that week's products no later than Wednesday, 6pm. The Newsletter is emailed each Friday morning.
- We encourage you to make use of the SOCIAL MEDIA by sharing these sites with your own lists:
- Sweetwater Website: <http://www.sweetwaterlocalfoodsmarket.org/>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Sweetwater-Local-Foods-Market/111077177535>
- Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/sweetwaterlocal/>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/SweetLocalFoods>
- Local Harvest: <http://www.localharvest.org/sweetwater-local-foods-market-M11309>