



2023-2024 VENDOR HANDBOOK GROW OAK RIDGE

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- Website, www.GrowOakRidge.org.

This handbook serves to inform potential and current vendors of Grow Oak Ridge's procedures at its markets. Policies may be updated at any time without notice. Each vendor, by applying to and accepting a space at a market, agrees to abide by the policies outlined in this handbook.

Our Mission

Grow Oak Ridge is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to connect local farmers and locally grown foods with the public through farmers markets, community gardens and education.

We produce two farmers' markets:

- 1) **Winter Farmers' Market (December through March) at St. Mary's School, 301 Vermont Ave., Oak Ridge.**
- 2) **Market-To-Go**, an online farmers' market year-round, offering home deliveries and curbside pickup.

And we support three community gardens and several educational projects, listed on our website, www.GrowOakRidge.org.

Table of Contents

Contact	1
Our Mission	1
Market Schedules & Locations	3
Winter Farmers' Market	3
Vendor Selection Criteria:	4
Vendor Cooperatives	5
Product Criteria	5
Food & Agricultural Products	5
Prepared Foods	6
Artisan Crafts	8
Application Process, Winter Farmers' Market:	9
Market Fees	9
WINTER FARMERS' MARKET FEES	9
MARKET-TO-GO FEES	10
Market Rules	10
Vendor Behavior & Attendance	10
Insurance	10
Assigned Spaces, Winter Farmers' Market	10
Leaving Early, Winter Farmers' Market	11
Pricing of Products	11
Booth Inspections	11
Sales Taxes	11
Cancellations	11
Market Token System	12



Market Schedules & Locations

Winter Farmers' Market

- 16 Saturdays in 2022-2023: Dec. 2, 9, 16; Jan. 6, 13, 20, 27; Feb. 3, 10, 17, 24; and March 2, 9, 16, 23, 30. **The market is closed Dec. 23 & 30, 2023.**
- Location: In the gym at St. Mary's Catholic School, 323 Vermont Ave., Oak Ridge, TN 37830.
- Hours:
 - Set up: 7 to 9 AM.
 - Market: 9 to Noon.
 - Clean Up: 12 – 1 PM
- Booth spaces available:
 - (40) 10' x 10' spaces indoors, several with 110/20 AMP electricity
 - (1) commercial kitchen space, with electricity
 - (3) Outdoor spaces, 10x20

Market-To-Go

MTG offers an easy, affordable way for food producers to sell online to the greater Oak Ridge community through home deliveries and curbside pickup.



**market
TO-GO**

- 48 weeks, year-round
- 20 “virtual” booths at www.GrowOakRidge.org/market-to-go
- Vendors drop off their products Saturday mornings in Oak Ridge. Location varies with the season.

Here’s how MTG works:

- Customer shopping is open Monday 12 PM - Thursday 12 PM each week.
- When the shopping window closes, vendors receive an emailed list of sales and customers.
- Vendors bag up their products, label with the customers’ name, and bring them to the seasonal location.
- Vendors get reimbursed via direct deposit the following week, minus a 5% vendor fee.
- Vendors who need more help packaging or labeling products may be asked to pay a higher fee.
- Vendors set their own prices, and update inventory by Monday 12PM (takes 5 minutes).

Vendor Selection Criteria:

Both the Winter Farmers Market and Market-To-Go are producer-only markets. This means you must make, bake or grow your own products.

Reselling is not allowed.

A local product is defined as one that is grown or raised, foraged or caught, collected or harvest and/or produced by the vendor within a 150-mile radius of Oak Ridge, Tennessee.

We are looking for 3 types of vendors:

1. **Agricultural Vendors:** Those who harvest, catch, collect or forage their own plants, produce, hemp, eggs, honey, flowers or meat or other agricultural products, within 150 miles of the market. We do allow agricultural vendors to sell value-added jams and jellies made from your produce. Value-added products must not need refrigeration, and comprise less than 10% of your table. If more than that, you will be considered a prepared food vendor.
2. **Prepared food vendors:** Bakers, artisan food makers, and caterers. Priority is given to those who purchase ingredients from local sources.
3. **Artisan Crafters.** We accept a limited number of high-quality crafts and art at the Winter Farmers' Market. Please read below for acceptable and unacceptable products.

Vendor Cooperatives

You may “share a booth” with another vendor at the Winter Farmers' Market as long as both vendors apply to the market and are accepted. Products must be clearly labeled by the maker.

Some Market-To-Go vendors may be allowed to manage another local producer's products online, with permission from the market manager.

Product Criteria

Food & Agricultural Products

Agricultural Producers - If you process agricultural products beyond their natural state, you may need a certificate from the TN Department of Ag, depending on your products. Check the TN Farmers Market Compliance Guide from TDA.

Please submit all necessary licensing when you apply to our markets. This includes all TDA certificates, documentation of USDA Certified Organic, GAP, and Certified Naturally Grown labeling, if applicable. Do this under the “licensing” tab of ManageMyMarket.com.

It is the VENDOR'S responsibility to keep up with the latest local, state and federal regulations and make sure you are in compliance. Failure to do so many put your business at risk and could result in expulsion from any Grow Oak Ridge market.

- **RAW Dairy** - You may not sell raw milk at a Grow Oak Ridge market at this time.
- **Poultry/Livestock:** Meat poultry must be purchased by the age of two weeks or be held for at least one year before sale. Livestock must be purchased at weaning or held for at least one year. Vendors must keep on file both receipts of purchase, or birth log, and slaughter of livestock and poultry. Beef, pork and lamb must be processed in a USDA facility. Vendors may not open or repackage processed meats, but may add farm name and contact information separately without obscuring the original label from the processor.
- **Hemp & Hemp Products:** Must be grown, raised, and/or produced in compliance with the [Tennessee Hemp Plan](#).
 - Submit all required permits with your application.
 - Hemp intended for human consumption may fall under Prepared Foods and require production certificates.
 - CBD oil & tinctures, body lotion, soap and cosmetics may fall under the Craft Category, and your booth may be charged as such if accepted.
- **EGGS** - All eggs must follow [A Guide for Farm-to-Consumer Egg Sales in Tennessee](#).
- Agricultural vendors may be asked for a farm visit, including the land you may lease. This is so we can get to know you and learn about your products and practices.
- **NO RESELLING** of agricultural products is allowed.
- **NO** live animals may be sold.
- **Farmers as Crafters** – Some farmers are also crafters, and you are welcome to bring a few crafts for your table (up to 10%). However, if you bring more than that, we will consider you a crafter. Only crafts made by farm family members are allowed.
- **NO** products grown outside 150 miles from Oak Ridge. Exceptions are only made for specialty items not otherwise available within our region, and only with prior approval from the market manager.

Prepared Foods

- Prepared foods are those that are processed beyond their natural stage for consumption, including but not limited to bread and pastries, jams, jellies, vinegars, pickles, cheeses made from a 3rd party dairy, shelled beans, peas or nuts, any sliced vegetable or fruit, pet food/treats, and CBD oil products

intended for human consumption (derived by the applicant), etc.

- **Time/Temperature Control for Safety** - The only TCS Foods we accept are those made in a **licensed, inspected facility**. Producers must obtain a TN Department of Agriculture food producers license for TCS foods. Examples of TCS Foods - An animal food that is raw or heat-treated; A plant food that is heat-treated or consists of raw seed sprouts, cut melons, cut leafy greens, cut tomatoes or mixtures of cut tomatoes that are NOT modified in a way so that they are unable to support pathogenic microorganism growth or toxin formation. A garlic-in-oil mixture may be non-TCS if it is modified in a way that it cannot support pathogenic microorganism growth or toxin formation; however, we still require this product be made in a licensed, inspected facility, and that the maker have a food producers license. To begin the food producer certificate process, [visit the TDA website](#).
- If you are bringing hot foods to the market, they must be kept above 140 Degrees F. Cold foods must be kept below 41 degrees F. and must be made in a licensed and inspected facility.

Food Safety

Begin your food business by getting a food producers certificate from the TN Department of Agriculture. A certificate means "I know what I'm doing" to a market manager. With a certificate you'll be able to scale up and sell in more venues. [Click this box to visit their website.](#)

- All foods sold must be "artisanal" in nature, i.e., from scratch.
- No reselling of bulk foods repackaged into smaller amounts unless you are making an original blend of tea, bird seed, nuts or other raw ingredients together. Blend must be formulated to make your products unique.
- All packaged foods must be labeled with the vendor's contact information, a website, net weight of product, all ingredients and sub-ingredients in the food, and an allergen statement, "Contains milk and soy," etc.
- Egg cartons must be labeled with name and address. Keep only a few egg cartons on the table; all others must be stored in a cooler below 41°F.
- Meat must be processed at a USDA inspected facility, frozen, and kept in a cooler below 41°F, with a thermometer in the cooler.
- Poultry products may be processed on the farm as long as they are under sanitary conditions suitable for human food.
- If you sell by weight, you must use an NTEP approved scale.
- Upload photos of all your products with your application.
- **Caterers:** We are searching for the right caterers for our Grow Local Cafe (full service kitchen in the back of the Winter Farmers' Market). We are seeking experienced caterers, passionate about locally grown foods and willing to use

10 percent of their ingredients from our farmers for serving breakfast-type foods the market. Contact the manager for more information:

manager@growoakridge.org.

- **NO** carnival-like foods such as cotton candy, potentially dangerous foods, alcohol and tobacco products or energy drinks.

Artisan Crafts

Artisan Craft Products are defined as those items you create by hand, and any supplies you use will be changed significantly in form or function. We prefer natural products.

Crafters - Be sure to give a DETAILED description of how you make your products in your application, and include photos of all items.

- **YES** - woodwork, pottery, natural fiber arts, original paintings and drawings, soaps and oils made from natural materials.
- **YES** -Clothing made by hand. Machine embroidery is OK if the item is handmade itself.
- **YES** -Tie-dye t-shirts are allowed if they are significantly artistic and unique.
- **YES** - Jewelry in which the main portion of the piece is handmade (stamped / engraved metal or stone, for example). Although to be honest, jewelry is very common and we don't accept much.
- **NO gemstone jewelry unless it has been significantly ornamented with wrapped wire, engraving, etc. A simple bead on a string? No.**
- **NO** kits, molds, or plastic. No jewelry parts manufactured in a factory but assembled by you.
- **NO** upcycled or vintage items unless they are significantly worked to change form or function. For example, an antique window is not permitted. But if you paint a picture on the window, that would be artwork, and is permitted.
- **NO materials** from endangered animals or illegal products.
- **NO** alcohol, smoking, vaping products, or devices to smoke tobacco, hemp, narcotics, etc. (pre-roll, rolling supplies, vapor, bud, flower, etc.)
- **NO living plants**, unless you have a **nursery license and grow them yourself**.
- **NO soy candles**. Beeswax candles you make from your own beehives would be agricultural.
- **NO dried flower** arrangements, unless you grew the flowers yourself, which makes you an agricultural producer.
- **NO items** contained a trademarked logo (i.e., embroidered logos).

Not sure about your products? Please email us before applying at manager@growoakridge.org.

Application Process, Winter Farmers' Market:

1. Apply every year to the market via our website, www.growoakridge.org.
2. We use ManageMyMarket.com.
3. You will create a free profile, or if you already have one, update your profile with ALL the products you wish to sell.
4. Upload any business licenses or health certificates pertaining to the products you sell under the "license" section.
5. When your profile is complete, Click "apply to markets," and you will see Winter Farmers Market by Grow Oak Ridge listed. You will need to check the box saying that you have read this vendor handbook.
 - a. You will receive an automatic reply saying we received your application.
 - b. You will be automatically charged for your application fee of \$30 to the card you place on file.
 - c. Your application will be accepted, rejected or waitlisted. **If you are rejected your fee will be returned.**
6. Please allow 2 weeks for us to review and process your complete applications. If you haven't heard from us, please contact Rebecca Williams, manager@growoakridge.org.

Market Fees

WINTER FARMERS' MARKET FEES

Application Fee:

- o \$20 if paid by Oct. 31.
- o \$30 Nov. 1 and later.
- o If you are rejected, this fee will be refunded.

Weekly Booth Fees (16-week season)

Whole Season Discount - SAVE 20% when you choose at least 15 weeks and pay by Nov. 1.

Half Season Discount - SAVE 10% when you choose at least 10 weeks and pay by Nov. 1.

- o Agriculture - \$13 per booth
- o Prepared Foods - \$20 per booth

- o Artisan Crafts -
 - \$25 per week during the month of December 2023.
 - \$15 per week during January - March 2024.

Weekly fees will be charged to your card on file on Thursday morning, before each Saturday market. Not coming? That's fine, but please adjust your dates in ManageMyMarket.com by Wednesday night or your card will be charged!

MARKET-TO-GO FEES

1. No set up fee. We offer 1 hour of online training and set up your store for you.
2. Vendors set the prices listed for their products on Market-To-Go.
3. Vendors get paid weekly, minus 5% of sales to cover credit card and check processing fees.
4. Customers will pay a mark-up to cover the cost of the services they request (home delivery or curbside pickup).

Market Rules

Vendor Behavior & Attendance

All vendors must be respectful to one another, customers and market staff at all times. Verbal threats, abuse, foul language or verbal disparaging other vendors' products, staff or family members will not be tolerated.

Vendors MUST be prompt and arrive at the market by 8:30 a.m., and park in the designated vendor areas in plenty of time to open the market at 9 a.m. Vendors who violate these expectations will be given one warning and then will be dismissed from the market.

Insurance

Vendors are responsible for carrying their own liability insurance in the amount they deem appropriate. Grow Oak Ridge carries event liability insurance for each of our Markets but does not cover individual vendors, their products, or their vehicles.

For Food Product Liability Insurance, consider www.flipprogram.com/vendor-insurance. Use coupon code to save 10%: picktn10

Assigned Spaces, Winter Farmers' Market

Each vendor will be assigned a space, which will be consistent if possible week to

week. Manager will send an email each Friday linking to the market map. Please check with market staff again on Saturday morning in case of last minute changes.

Leaving Early, Winter Farmers' Market

Vendors may NOT leave before the end of the market, without express permission of the manager.

If you have sold out of product, put a "sold out" sign up and wait until the end of the market to leave. If you are concerned you will not have enough product for 3 hours, consider sharing a booth in a **Vendor Cooperative** (see [Accepted products](#)). We especially encourage small growers to do this, but artisans may do it as well with permission from the manager.

Pricing of Products

1. Vendors must clearly post the prices of their products at the Winter Farmers' Market.
2. Pricing of goods sold is the responsibility of the vendor. Price fixing between vendors or dishonest merchandising is grounds for dismissal from the market.
3. Market-To-Go prices are set by the producer. A markup of generally 20% is added to the customers' price to pay for the cost of Market-To-Go.

Booth Inspections

Vendors should expect market management to verify that they are producers during the season, either through a desk audit, reference check, on-site visit, and/or a booth inspection.

Booths will be checked that they contain only products approved by the manager; everything is labeled appropriately; all coolers have thermometers; all crafts are handmade and approved in the application, etc.. Vendors in violation will be given one week to correct, and if not corrected, dismissed from the market.

All containers of produce must be placed at least 6 inches off the ground for the entire market. This includes baskets and coolers.

Sales Taxes

Vendors are responsible for paying their own sales tax if applicable. Please consult the TN Center for Profitable Agriculture and Tennessee Tax website. Craft and food vendors will usually need to pay sales tax, except in certain circumstances. Please consult the Tennessee Tax Code. Grow Oak Ridge is not responsible for vendor sales tax.

Cancellations

**Need to cancel?
Notify the manager by Wednesday 5 p.m. before
the Saturday market. Otherwise, your booth fee
will be charged on Thursday morning to your
card on file. Fees are non-refundable. Please
have an illness backup plan.**

If you need to cancel your scheduled date, please do so by 5 p.m. Wednesday prior to the market. All weekly booth fees will be charged on Thursday mornings to your [your card on file](#) in ManageMyMarket.com.

In case of a weather cancellation (snow or ice), market staff will notify vendors via text and email. Vendors who pay weekly would be issued a fee credit. Vendors who paid upfront with the Whole- or Half-Season Discount will not receive any credit.

Vendors who cancel because it is snowing or icy at their home (but the market is open) are not eligible for credit or refund. Fees are non-refundable (see [Market Fees](#)).

In case of illness: Any vendor testing positive for Covid or ill with other contagious diseases may not attend the Winter Farmers' Market. Please have a backup / substitute plan. There are no refunds for paid booth spaces.

Market-To-Go:

If you are unable to bring your products to drop off for any reason, notify market staff immediately (orders@growoakridge.org). We will adjust the customer invoices so that it does not charge them. Vendors who cancel repeatedly will be dismissed from the market.

Put yourself "on vacation" easily from your MTG vendor profile settings / logistics / Vacation. Please let the manager know you are on vacation, orders@growoakridge.org.

Market Token System

The market manager's desk sells tokens to customers who forget to bring cash, or who receive SNAP benefits. These tokens are 100% redeemable for vendors.

You may accept cash, debit & credit cards.

*****All vendors*** must ALSO accept our "Market Money." There is no cost to you for accepting them.**

Tokens & Coupons are color-coded:

Green Tokens – \$5 Tokens. These are good on ANYTHING in the market. You may swap them with other vendors for cash if you wish. At the end of the sale day, bring them to the manager for cash reimbursement.



SNAP (Red) Tokens – \$1 - These are **EBT card/SNAP** tokens (i.e., food stamp tokens). SNAP tokens can ONLY be used on grocery items: fruits, vegetables, meats, poultry, packaged baked goods,



packaged dairy products, other packaged foods and food producing plants (herbs, tomato plants, etc.)

- o Redeem SNAP tokens by filling out the form found in your bank bag. You will be reimbursed weekly via direct deposit (preferred) or via check that you may pick up at the market the next week. Direct Deposit is faster and easier for us and you.

Double Up Bucks - \$1. These are **BROWN** tokens and are for fresh fruits and vegetables only. Reimbursement is the same as SNAP tokens.



Produce Bucks for kids - \$1 These are **TEAL** paper coupons, for fresh fruits and vegetables only, and are reimbursed the same way as SNAP tokens, above.

