

St Petersburg Saturday Morning Market

Vendor Operations Handbook

(April - 2014)

INTRODUCTION

The Saturday Morning Market is the result of the grassroots efforts of individuals committed to developing a creative community spirit in downtown St. Petersburg. The Market has achieved remarkable success in fulfilling its mission, becoming the largest fresh market in the southeast United States. But more importantly, it's brought a vibrant energy to our city that is transformational.

The Saturday Morning Market is held weekly on Saturday mornings in downtown St. Petersburg.

- It's located in the parking lot of Al Lang Stadium, at the corner of 1st Ave S and 1st Street.
- The market is open to customers from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

The Market is guided by a 3 member Steering Committee. The committee is composed of Mark Johnson (Market Director), Gail Eggeman (Market Manager), and Carol Ringold.

Gail Eggeman, the Market Manager, is responsible for the weekly market operations.

- Phone: (727)455-4921 (Please make sure Gail's cell phone is programmed into your cell phone.)
- Email: saturdaymkt@yahoo.com

OUR VENDOR PHILOSOPHY

Vendor Community – It's our hope that all vendors feel that they are vital members of our community.

- We encourage you to meet, learn about and support the vendors around you. Our vendors indicate that they greatly appreciate this characteristic of our market.
- This spirit of community among vendors is a foundation for the sense of community that customers experience and love about the Saturday Morning Market.

Continuous Improvement - We are committed to our vendors' growth and success.

- We encourage vendors to continuously explore how they can improve their products and their booth display. We know that each vendor's development of their products and display helps the market grow as a whole.
- We offer tools, coaching, and feedback (wherever desired) to help vendors develop. Many vendors report that this support has resulted in a substantial increase in their sales.

OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

1. Scheduling Process

- a) Quarterly Scheduling – Scheduling is done on a quarterly basis (typically a 10 – 12 week period)
 - An email is sent about 3-4 weeks in advance of each period asking each vendor to request specific dates during the period.
 - The number of eligible dates is indicated in the email.
- b) Schedule Changes - Any subsequent communications regarding changes in your schedule must be made by email (see above) to the Market Manager, and not verbally during the market.
- c) Late Arrival - Reserved vendors who have not arrived by 8:15 a.m. on Saturday, or indicated in advance (by phone, the day of) that they will be late, could forfeit their space.

- d) Last Minute Cancellations – Vendors who unexpectedly find that they will not be able to attend (even late Friday or early Saturday morning) should call the market cell phone to inform us about the situation. They will still be accountable for the market fee for that day. Please don't send text messages.
- e) No Shows - Repeated no-shows without prior communication (even when pre-payment has been made) may result in revoking future attendance privileges.
- f) Ad Hoc Requests – Due to last minute cancellations, we may have unanticipated open spaces.
 - Vendors who wish to attend an additional date may email the request within one week of the date to be put on the wait list for that date.
 - Notification of the opportunity to attend could happen as late as Friday evening.

2. Fee Payment

- a) Payment Amount - The fee for vending at the market is \$45/ day.
 - We have a discounted rate of \$165 for 4 weeks. It must be paid entirely in advance. The weeks do not need to be consecutive.
 - Payments for more than 4 weeks can receive a discounted rate of \$41.25 per week.
- b) Payment Method - We prefer that payment checks for upcoming weeks be mailed (or PayPal'ed) to us rather than delivered at the market.
- c) Mailing Address - Checks should be made to Saturday Morning Market. Send the payment to:
 - Saturday Morning Market
 - Box 1213, St Petersburg, FL 33731
- d) Paypal Option - Payments can be made online using PayPal. Visit our website [page](#) that describes how to make an electronic payment. It can be made from either a credit card or checking account.
- e) Payment Deadline - Payment must be received by Wednesday in advance of your scheduled date to hold one's space for Saturday. Late payment could result in the loss of your scheduled space.
- f) Cancellations/ No shows – Cancellations after Wednesday or no-shows are subject to the fee, and are not eligible for a refund or credit.
- g) Payment Planner – The market publishes a Payment Planner [tool on our website](#) that provides a simple and effective method of documenting the vendor's payment status. The Payment Planner is updated for each of the 3 'quarters' each season.
- h) Rainouts - No refunds are given due to rain cancellations.

SATURDAY OPERATIONS

3. Setup

- a) Arrival - Vendors can begin setting up their display after 6:00 a.m. and should be completed by 8:30 a.m.
 - The market is closed to incoming vendor traffic at 8:15 a.m., due to the volume of pedestrian traffic.
 - After 8:15, vendors will have to unload from the parking area on the east side of the market.
- b) Entering the Market - All vehicles should only enter from 1st Avenue South.
 - Vehicles should only go through the market rows in a southerly direction.
 - Unload your vehicle and then move it as soon as you are unloaded. Then, set up your area.
 - You can exit back out the south end of each row, and turn left to exit out the main entrance or park in the vendor parking area, if there is room.
- c) Driving - Be very conscious of your speed as you drive through the market at the beginning and end of the day. You should drive no faster than walking speed – about 4 mph.

- d) Set-Up - As you are unloading and setting up, be conscious of parking your car in a way that maximizes the ability of other cars to get around you. Move your car out at the very earliest opportunity.
- e) Booth Size - The standard booth space is up to 12 front feet across and 12 feet deep.
 - Spaces are marked with a number and indicate the front of the booth space.
 - Be careful to stay within the boundaries of your allocated space.
- f) Location - Vendors are not guaranteed a specific location on a week-to-week basis.
 - We will do our best to meet the specific needs and requests of each vendor, while balancing the overall needs of the market.
 - Check-in with the Market staff at the entrance on Saturday morning to confirm your location.
- g) Equipment – Vendors are responsible for supplying all of their booth materials e.g. tables, chairs, etc.
- h) Rentals – Tents (\$20) and tables (\$5) are available for rent from Connie Lehmer. The price includes setup.
 - To order items, email Connie at clehmer@tampabay.rr.com no later than 6 pm on Friday.
 - Connie can be reached at (727) 433-0849
 - The fee is collected at Market by Connie’s staff (and not the Market staff) at the end of the day.

4. Operations

- a) Parking - It’s critical that we leave the most convenient parking available for customers. Vendors parking on the street should park at least two blocks away, preferably to the south.
 - Vendors are not allowed to park inside the Market footprint.
 - Vehicles should be moved from the market no later than 8:30 am.
 - Double parking (even for a short time) on the street bordering the market should not occur.
- b) Parking Fees – Vendors have the option of parking in limited spaces next to the market for \$5. It is the responsibility of the vendor to assure they pay the parking fee. The fee is paid to the city.
- c) Electricity – Limited electricity is available. Preference is given to the needs of food vendors.
 - If you want electricity, indicate your exact requirements in an email. We need to know the exact amperage or wattage associated with every device.
 - Vendors must not hook up any electrical device without prior approval from the Market Manager.
 - There is a graduated fee schedule based on usage level. The fee schedule is posted on our website.
- d) Fire Protection – Any vendor with an open flame (typically used to heat food) needs to have 20 pound fire extinguisher on hand that has a current inspection sticker. Gas tanks also need to be stabilized (e.g. set in a milk crate or tied to a post).
- e) Obstacles – No obstacles(e.g. signs) should impede free flow of pedestrian traffic in the aisles.
- f) Selling - Vendors should limit their sales activities within their booth area. In addition, no ‘out crying’ (that would be disruptive to neighboring vendors) should be done.
- g) Flyers – Vendors may only distribute flyers within their booth space, and not in the pedestrian areas.
- h) Garbage - Vendors must take their garbage with them at the end of the day.
 - The Market garbage cans are for customer use only. Do not place your garbage in them.
 - Food vendors should provide an appropriate trash receptacle if they are providing samples.
 - Do not place garbage in the dumpster (without explicit management approval) as it gets filled completely by the Market’s garbage cans.

- i) Name Tags – We strongly request that you (and all your staff) wear a Saturday Market name tag.
 - Wearing a nametag encourages people to talk with you.
 - Many vendors will also offer discounts to other vendors (if they know you're a vendor)
 - If yours get lost or damaged, request a new one by emailing us your name and business name.
- j) Dogs – Dogs are allowed at the market.
 - Please inform a market representative if a dog is behaving in a disruptive or unsanitary manner.
 - A key complaint is that large dogs get their noses up to food tables, or that customers with small dogs in their hands are leaning over food.
 - If a customer's dog gets too close to your food, kindly request that they step back.
- k) Change – Plan to bring adequate change (bills and coins) with you.
 - The Market management does not provide change.
 - A few vendors tend to primarily get asked for change, which is an unfair imposition on them.
- l) Recycling – The market provides recycling containers for aluminum cans and plastic.
 - If you sell these types of items, please encourage customers to dispose of them in the designated containers.
- m) Gift Certificates – We sell gift certificates in \$10 and \$20 denominations. If a customer redeems one with you, you should:
 - check to insure that it's signed by a Market representative (its easy to tell)
 - redeem it for cash at the end of the day at the Market booth.
- n) Electronic Benefit Transfer (or EBT) – EBT, formerly known as food stamps, is a federal food assistance program for low income people.
 - Customer convert money from their EBT card into wooden tokens at the Market booth.
 - The tokens can only be redeemed by vendors with a signed agreement with the Market.
 - Eligible vendors include those that sell vegetables, fruits, edible plants and 'take home' food.
 - Tokens are reimbursed by submitting the tokens (and related documentation) at the Market tent.

5. Breakdown

- a) Vending Duration - Vendors are expected to remain 'open' for business until the close of the Market.
 - If a vendor sells out of product, we expect that they remain setup (with tent, tables and signs) until the end of the market.
 - If a vendor needs to leave before the end of the market, they should always inform the Market Manager before market begins.
- b) Vehicle Access - A vehicle should not be driven into the market until the Market staff has officially opened the entry gate.
 - Opening is typically about 2:15 pm, depending on the volume of pedestrian traffic in the market.
 - Do not bring your vehicle into the market until you are completely packed and ready to load.
 - Then, load your vehicle as quickly as possible, and exit immediately.
- c) Clean-Up– The amount of trash left on the ground at the end of the day doesn't become visible until all the vendors have left. The only way to handle this is to get everyone to consistently pitch in.
 - Vendors are responsible for leaving their area free of garbage and debris
 - So after you've packed your goods, gotten your car, loaded it up, and are about to drive home to rest your weary bones, we need you to doone last thing.
 - Pick up all the manmade trash in the footprint of your booth.
- d) Completion – Packing and cleanup should typically be complete by 3:30 pm.

WEATHER-RELATED CHALLENGES

6. Rain Management

- a) Our Philosophy - Our intention is to be open, if at all possible. The market will not close simply due to a general rain possibility (e.g. a 60% percentage chance of rain sometime on Saturday).
- b) Our Rain Monitoring Process - We've managed some challenging situations using the following process:
 - Starting on Thursday morning, we monitor the [hour-by-hour](#) forecast at www.weather.com. It provides hourly information about temperature, rain probability, and wind speed/ direction.
 - Starting on Friday evening, we shift our focus to monitoring the [animated radar](#) on the web.
 - During the day Saturday, if necessary, we continue to monitor the radar at a very detailed level.
- c) Varying Vendor Needs - Our decision making process is informed by the needs of a variety of different types of vendors. For example:
 - Some food vendors start buying and preparing their food on Thursday. They therefore have a strong need to vend (even under trying circumstances). If they don't have another outlet to sell their prepared food, their investment can become a complete loss.
 - In contrast, some craft vendors have products that are highly sensitive to water damage. So they need to shut down at even the hint of rain.
- d) How We Notify Our Weather Status - For weekends with weather uncertainty, we post a notice about our weather-related plans on the top of our homepage (www.SaturdayMorningMarket.com)
 - Please don't expect us to respond to general inquiries about our weather plans. With over 100 vendors every week, we're simply unable to communicate on an individual basis.
 - You can watch the weather pages we use, and look for a notice on the website.
 - If you have a very specific individual need, we're always glad to help.

8. Weather-Related Vending Decisions

- a) Individual Decision - In rainy, windy or cold weather situations, we strongly encourage vendors to make their best judgment about what they personally need to do. Different types of vendors can have very divergent needs.
- b) Not Attending - If vendors choose not to attend at all, we honor the decision (without any ill will). Really and truly.
- c) Notification - It is critical that vendors contact us, so we can make appropriate adjustment to the Market layout. Contact us by (1) emailing the Market (through Friday night), (2) calling the Market phone (on Sat anytime before 8 am), or texting the Market phone.
- c) Early Breakdown - Vendors are welcome to break down before market closes (e.g. due to wind complications). Please notify the Market Manager of your decision.
 - Naturally, it isn't typically allowable to drive vehicles into market to load up.
 - Vendors can carry' their goods out. We can lend a large dolly.
- d) Bad-Weather-Related Fee Payment - Our policy is that vendors are liable for their vendor fees, even for days that are shortened or cancelled.
 - The majority of our expenses are incurred regardless of whether we are open.
 - Our Market fees are so low that we are unable to incur this loss of income.
 - As always, cancellations received by Wednesday before Market are not subject to a vendor fee.

7. Wind Management Guidelines

- a) Wind Challenges - Wind challenges can vary including:
 - general wind speed
 - unexpected gusts
 - the unusual wind patterns on the north and east sides of market (coming around the high-rises).
- b) Weights - It is critical that all vendors have at least 20 pounds on all 4 legs at all times. Options include:
 - sandbags - They can be bought online from tent vendors.
 - vinyl pipes filled with concrete.
 - cat litter containers - You can make them even heavier by emptying them, filling them half full of water, then pouring the cat litter back in.
 - If there is fixed object nearby, you can anchor your tent to it with a rope.
 - Weights should be on the ground, or secured to the leg so they don't swing freely.
- c) No Weights - If you don't have appropriate weights, you will be required to vend without the canopy on your tent (aka 'topless'), or go completely 'tentless'.
 - If you don't have a strong need for 'shade' you should avoid putting your canopy on at the start.
 - In addition, canopies should be taken down at the first sign of a problem.
 - You will probably need to have a wrench and a screwdriver to take the canopy off of an EZ-Up tent.
- d) Saturday Adjustments - If strong wind conditions arise unexpectedly during market, it may be necessary to remove the tent canopy or take the tent down completely.
 - During short strong gusts, it's often necessary to physically hang onto the tent frame. If you are too short to grab the frame, you can hang a bungee cord from the frame, and hang on to it.
 - On somewhat windy days, you may want to loosen up any screws that hold your canopy on, in case you need to remove it during the day.
 - If you need assistance in removing your canopy or taking your tent down, feel free to call to get assistance from a Market staff member.
 - Vendors need to be responsible for taking appropriate precautions to protect their goods, and insuring their tent or goods won't cause damage to a neighboring vendor.
 - Any vendor that rents a tent provided by Connie should have her cell phone (727-433-0849), so they can call for assistance, if needed.

9. Licenses & Health Codes

- a) Licensing Responsibility - Obtaining the proper licenses or permits, and obeying all codes is the sole responsibility of the vendor, including any regulations of the Florida Dept of Agriculture or other regulatory agencies.
- b) Occupational License - The market provides a blanket city occupational license for all participating vendors (that applies only while they are vending at the market).
- c) Sales Tax - The seller is responsible for paying sales tax, where required by the State.

10. OTHER GUIDELINES

- a) Product Types – Vendors are only allowed to vend product types for which they have been formally approved by the Market management.
 - The approval is conveyed annually in conjunction with updating of the Vendor Agreement form.
 - Additional products can only be added if they are clearly within the product type for which they have already been approved.
 - If there is any question about the acceptability of new products, vendors should seek approval from the Market Manager.

- b) Requests – Vendors should feel free to make requests about unique operational needs they may have. We may not always be able to accommodate them, but we’re happy to explore them with you.
- c) Substitute Representatives – If a vendor is going to be absent for a day and have a representative stand in for them, they should inform the Market Manager of this in advance.
 - It’s also very important that the substitute read our Vendor Operations Handbook so that they are well informed about our policies and practices.
- d) Community Behavior - Vendors are expected to be courteous to customers, vendors, and market staff.
 - Any disagreements need to be handled in a constructive and civil manner.
 - Inappropriate behavior (such as loud angry conversation or obscenities) is cause for immediate and/or permanent removal from the market.
- e) Smoking – Smoking by vendors in the market area is strongly discouraged, particularly around food.
- f) Alcohol - No vendor shall consume any alcoholic beverage.
- g) Solicitation – Solicitation of any type (distribution of flyers, requests for money, petitions, etc) is not allowed at the market . Please inform a market representative if you see solicitation occurring.

11. ENFORCEMENT OF RULES

- a) Vendor Agreement - Every vendor must sign the Vendor Agreement (at the end of this Handbook).
 - At the beginning of each season, we initiate a process to get an updated Vendor Agreement from every vendor.
 - Vendors should use the process as an opportunity to review the Handbook, as it is regularly updated.
- b) Problems with Other Vendors - Any grievance regarding the actions of other vendors should be brought to the attention of the Market Manager, and not directed to the vendor in question.
- c) Non-Adherence - Vendors who don’t observe key guidelines may be subject to loss of vendor privileges. Examples are:
 - safety related issues such as driving too fast in the market area
 - consistently missing a pre-payment deadline.
- d) Eviction - Any vendor not in compliance with the above regulations may be asked by the manager to leave the premises immediately.
 - No refund will be given.
 - Approval for further participation is subject to the discretion of the Market Steering Committee.
- e) Rules Modifications - These rules have been developed by the Steering Committee of the Saturday Morning Market, and are subject to change upon review.

ST PETERSBURG SATURDAY MORNING MARKET VENDOR AGREEMENT

(This is a legal agreement for approved Market vendors. It is not an application form for prospective vendors.)

Please clearly print the information below

Name: _____

Business Name (if applicable): _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Email (important) _____

Products: _____

Please list the specific product types you are approved to bring to Market.

-
1. I, the undersigned, have read the entire Vendor Operations Handbook governing the St Petersburg Saturday Morning Market, and agree to adhere to the rules that are outlined within it.
 2. I agree that everyone working in my booth will also read the Operations Handbook.
 3. I agree that I will limit my product sales to those products that I have been explicitly approved to sell.
 4. I understand that the market reserves the right to limit or discontinue the participation of a vendor at any time.
 5. I agree to indemnify and hold harmless the St. Petersburg Saturday Morning Market and its agents, employees and volunteers from any liability, cost, damages, and other expenses suffered or incurred during the Market.
 6. I understand that I am responsible for adhering to all relevant government regulations e.g. health codes, licenses, etc (with the exception of the city occupational license).

Vendor Signature

Date

Market Representative Signature

Date