

# **Yellowstone Valley Farmers Market Cooperative Rules**

Thank you for your interest and welcome to the Yellowstone Valley Farmers Market (YVFM). The YVFM is a non-profit Cooperative dedicated to providing a safe and inexpensive place for local producers to sell their products to community residents and visitors. The market is more than just a business; it is a mutually beneficial and sustainable community activity. Important details about the Market *not* included in the rules to follow:

The Market maintains general liability insurance to cover the overall market.

## **General Market Rules**

The market is not a forum for religious or political activities. Permits will not be issued to persons or organizations wishing to campaign or solicit.

Performing artists add to the character of the market and are generally welcome at all times. The Market Masters will arrange and set up a schedule of performances for special music for each market. Interested parties should inquire with the Market Masters.

## **Product Guidelines**

The YVFM has always been a “Farmer’s Market” and therefore the sale of any craft items is not allowed. Please contact the Market Master if you have questions about the products you’re selling. The YVFM divides eligible products into four categories. The categories are as follow:

**Produce:** This category includes vegetables, fruits, herbs, flowers, plants grown within a 120 mile radius of Billings. Also included in this category is locally produced frozen meat. The market does not limit the number of vendors under this category.

**Local Food Products:** This category is for locally produced products such as preserves, pies, pickles, bread, and sauces. Interested vendors must apply to the YVFM board for acceptance to the market. Certain food licenses and certifications may apply.

**Non-local Produce:** This category is for fruits and vegetables grown outside the 120 mile radius of Billings. You must apply to the YVFM board for acceptance to the market. Please note that if you are selling the same product that is produced locally, you will not be allowed to sell your products.

**Prepared Food:** This category is for any prepared food product that’s meant to be consumed at the market. Prospective vendors must apply to the YVFM board for acceptance. The market maintains a strict ratio of produce-to-prepared food vendors, and therefore only a limited number of vendors will be allowed. New vendors will be selected based on the variety of food already available. Vendors must possess a food license and certification in order to sell at the Market.

Please note that the Market sells soft drinks and water to help support the market. For this reason, **Food vendors are not allowed to sell carbonated soft drinks and/or water.** Sale of coffee, juice, and lemonade is allowed with the appropriate licensing.

## Yellowstone Valley Farmers Market Cooperative Rules

The market maintains a ration of 50/50 produce to prepared foods.

1. The Farmers Market hours of operation are from 8:00 am – 12:00 noon, starting the third weekend in July and ending the first weekend in October. The Farmers Market is located in the heart of downtown Billings at the intersection of North 28<sup>th</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue North. The central information booth is located underneath Skypoint.
2. **NO SALES will occur before the ringing of the bell at 8:00 am for the general public** (with the exception of coffee). Customers may not choose their purchases and have them bagged before the bell. This rule will be strictly enforced and violations may result in suspension of selling rights. Only vendors with an early pass may make their purchases before the bell. Early passes will be buttons or lanyards with our emblem provided by the market. They will be worn for vendors to identify. Early passes will be given out at the Market Masters discretion to DBA members only. **EXCEPTION to selling early to the general public:** Adverse weather *and* approval by the market master or a board member at the market.
3. Vendors may arrive as early as 6:00 am. All sellers must be on the market grounds by 7:00 am, and all merchandise in place by 7:45 am. Vehicles that will not remain in the market must be removed by 7:00 am. Vehicles parked in alleys must leave room for emergency vehicles to travel down them. **DO NOT BLOCK ALLEYS with vehicles.** Vehicles may not be pulled into or out of the market until 12:10 pm.
4. Occasionally cars are left in the market area over night. The market has obtained the right to have any cars left in the market area towed at the owners' expense. Please discuss any problems with cars in the area with the Market Master. The Market Master will make the decision on whether the car will be towed. **Any actions regarding movement of vendor spaces because of vehicles in their space should be discussed with the Market Master and any vendor involved, before being carried out.**
5. Non-season pass holders: spots are assigned on a first come, first served basis. Vendors without a season pass *must* check in with the Market Master to receive a space for the day. Vendors may be asked to move from a location if they do not have previous approval from the market. **Each vendor must have proof of liability insurance on their vehicle before selling except in "no vehicle" spaces.**
6. A **season pass** is available to any produce vendor who intends to participate for the entire season. Not all food vendors are guaranteed a season pass due to market ratios and approval by the board. **Any questions regarding season passes should be**

**brought up with the Market Master and/or a board member.** The decision of the Market Master regarding assigned spaces will be final. *Season pass holders get the a \$5.00 discount each market of the season. No refunds on season pass holders.*

*If you quit the season early, or you are asked to leave, **NO REFUND will be given.***

7. Every vendor (not booth) is required to pay a \$15.00 registration fee. If more than one vendor is in a booth, each person will be required to pay the \$15.00 registration fee.

8. Electricity is not always available. There will be a \$30.00 charge per season for 110v. ***Please let the Market Master know if you will need electricity; he/she will let you know if it is available.***

9. Fees for ***non-season pass holders*** are as follows per space:

- \$25/market – Single Category/Single Space
- \$35/market – Single & Multiple Categories/Single Space
- \$45/market – Single & Multiple Categories/Two Spaces
- \$60/market – Single & Multiple Categories/Three Spaces

The Market Masters will collect fees and provide a receipt to the seller once the market is underway. Non-Season pass holders must show an insurance receipt on their vehicle with liability, to sell on the market day.

10. The sale of items at the market is restricted to the sale of locally grown produce, plants, flowers, and locally prepared food items that have the market approval. “Locally” is defined as grown within a 120 mile radius of Billings, MT. Non-local produce can be sold with approval from the market under a different fee structure. Non-local produce can only be sold if it is not available from a local producer. No animal food or live animals may be sold. **(Reminder: non-local signs must be posted)**

11. A vendor may have one single axle vehicle parked next to the curb, except in the spaces designed on the map as “no vehicle” spaces.

12. No vendor with or without a vehicle will be allowed to breakdown his or her stall before the closing bell at 12:00 pm. One canopy (if a canopy was set up), and one table, must remain up, and your garbage container must be out until the market hours are over. *Reminder:* vehicles may be moved in and out of market only after 12:10 pm. If you have sold out of your products and wish to leave your space, you may leave signage at your booth stating that you are sold out. If the Market Masters have not collected your fee yet, be sure to pay it at the info booth before leaving your space.

13. It is the vendor’s responsibility to offer clean and attractive produce for sale. A vendor is responsible for all representations made regarding the product offered. Any eggs must be

clearly labeled 'unprocessed farm eggs'. It is the vendor's responsibility to provide the market with all necessary licenses and certification from the Department of Health and Human Services when processed foods are being offered for sale. Frozen meat vendors must have a retail license and approval from the Yellowstone County Department of Health and Human Services. A copy of the certificate and/or license issued to the vendor must be posted at the vendor's booth.

14. If a line forms at any vendor's booth, it is that vendor's responsibility to ensure that the line of customers does not affect access to another vendor's booth and does not affect the flow of traffic through the market. There should be ample room between vendor spaces to redirect lines to the sidewalk rather than letting them interfere with the sales of another vendor.

15. Any oil used in cooking food must be hauled away. Any oil put down any drain will result in the vendor *losing their rights to sell again* and owe a \$50.00 fine. Any environmental fines will be charged to the vendor upon inspection of cleaning up.  
**There is zero tolerance for this rule.**

16. Each vendor must:

- A. Post a sign stating the name, address, and phone number of the producer. No vendor will be allowed to sell without a sign.
- B. Any non-local vendor will need a sign stating it is non-local. Some signs will be available at the center Market Master Booth.
- C. Provide their tables, tents, change, scales, bags, and price signs.
- D. All vendors must provide a 20 gallon trash can at their space. Vendors without a trash can/container will not be allowed to sell that day. All trash containers **must** be accessible in the open for patrons.
- E. Every vendor that participates in market is required to make a donation of product each week. This will begin the 1<sup>st</sup> week of the market (if you are sharing a booth each vendor must donate an item). The donation goes towards 3 baskets of produce that are given away each week to customers who sign up for this giveaway.
- F. Each vendor is responsible for cleaning up the area occupied during market before leaving for the day. All vendors are responsible for removing all of their garbage from the market area. **DO NOT USE GARBAGE BINS IN ALLEYS OR ON SIDEWALKS.**
- G. **All** vendors who drive in the market area must provide vehicle liability insurance for the market to keep on file.
- H. Any food vendors cooking on the street area **must** cook over a tarp so any mess to the street is minimal. As stated under the DBA guidelines for events.

17. The sale of homemade, homegrown crafts will be allowed at the final market of the season (Oct 1st). Only vendors that have attended 4 or more markets will be allowed to sell crafts. These items must be 85% home grown and produced by the established vendor.

18. The Market Masters have final authority for conducting the Market and are authorized to deviate from these rules when it is in the best interest of the market. If a seller refuses to comply with these rules, they will:
- A. Receive a verbal/written warning for the first offense.
  - B. Be suspended from selling for the day and a \$50.00 fine for the second offense.
  - C. Be permanently and immediately suspended from Market, with no refund, for violating the Market rules that affect the direct well-being of the market and its insurability.
19. The Market Masters and vendors are to be treated respectfully at all times by any member of the Yellowstone Valley Farmers Market. If, in the estimation of the Board of Directors, a vendor has acted in a disrespectful manner, that vendor will face repercussions that may include suspension of the right to sell at the market.
20. Vendors who are season pass holders will be in the same space as last year. If you would like to change please contact the Market Master. Vendor space opening: If a vendor does not return to the market, that space will become available for the current market season. The newly opened space will be put in the weekly newsletter given out at the market. If no timely response is given, the Market Master will fill the space. Weekly vendors will be assigned a space by the Market Master, for details please call the market master at 406-855-1299.

**Guidelines for open spaces:**

Any newly opened space that was occupied by the same vendor over two years will be made available to the most senior vendor at the market to move into that space. The vendor must be in good standing with Yellowstone Valley Farmers Market.

If the space is not wanted by the most senior vendor, it will be opened up to the next most senior member on the list.

If no current vendor wishes to move to the new space, the space will be filled at the discretion of the presiding Market Master for that same season (if it is the start of the new season, the presiding Market Master must abide by the guidelines listed above).

This rule should eliminate any discrimination or favoritism and is fair to all vendors.

**Market bucks** can be purchased as gift certificates to be spent at the market, they will not be given away.

**IT IS IN THE BEST INTEREST OF ALL VENDORS TO COMPLY WITH  
AND MAKE SURE THAT THESE RULES ARE ENFORCED.  
PLEASE HELP US MAINTAIN A QUALITY MARKET.**

We appreciate your cooperation and participation in the Yellowstone Valley Farmers Market.

Any questions, please call Bob Wicks at **406-855-1299**  
or Email: **YVFM@msn.com**