



Rockford City Market

2024 Vendor Rules and Regulations

Goals

- To provide a weekly ritual in downtown Rockford for residents and visitors to enjoy.
- To promote the sale of locally grown or produced products.
- To grow jobs and businesses by offering the opportunity for local entrepreneurs to test and refine their products, thereby encouraging business incubation or expansion of local businesses to downtown Rockford.
- To provide an educational experience for patrons to learn the uses and benefits of quality, locally grown or prepared food products.
- To make locally grown and produced food and other goods accessible to the community.

Sponsorship: Rock River Development Partnership, a 501(c)(3); PO Box 4244 Rockford, IL 61110

Location: 116 N Madison Street in downtown Rockford, IL

Time: Friday evenings, May 17-September 27, from 4:00pm – 8:30pm before Labor Day and 4:00pm – 7:30pm after Labor Day.

Vendor Fees:

All non-food truck spaces are per 10x10 space with 20% discount on a 2nd spot. Booth fees listed do not include the refundable attendance deposit requirement of \$150.

Prepared Food (prepared food such as sandwiches, pizza, tacos, burgers, etc.):

- Food Tent (Non-Food Truck) -\$1000 (\$950 if paid by early bird date - 3/22)
- Food Truck/Trailer Full Season Vendor - \$2,000 (\$1,950 if paid by early bird date - 3/22)
- Food Truck/Trailer “pick-your-own” 5-week session - \$750 - no early bird discount

Art, Jewelry, Processed food or other items

- Full Season: \$800 (\$750 if paid by early bird date - 3/22)
- First Session Only: \$600 (\$575 if paid by early bird date - 3/22)
- Second Session Only: \$475 (\$450 if paid by early bird date - 3/22)

Produce Farmers (fruits and vegetables)

- \$50 per 5 weeks; one 5 week session at no charge - no early bird discount
- *NEW* for 2024 - FIRST 5 weeks are free!

Outdoor Local Retail Spaces - Limited

- Full Season: \$1,000 (\$950 if paid by early bird date - 3/22)
- First Session Only: \$750 (\$725 if paid by early bird date - 3/22)
- Second Session Only: \$500 (\$475 if paid by early bird date - 3/22)

Vendor fees are due in full by April 19, 2024. The **only** exception is that full season food truck vendor may make two equal payments of \$1,000 each due April 19 and June 1, 2024, if requested. No early bird discount will be applied, even if the first payment is made by the early bird date.

****Please Note: If payments are not received, vendors will not be allowed to participate in the Market season.**

I. Product and Booth Requirements

Products sold at the City Market

The Rockford City Market is committed to creating a diverse marketplace with the highest quality, locally grown and produced products available. **Commercial products including alcoholic beverages, bottled water, and sodas are exclusively sold by the Rockford City Market and will not be approved.** Rockford City Market will not be bound to apply a particular set of selection criteria in every instance and reserves unconditional discretion to accept or refuse anyone as a vendor and will consider many factors when evaluating vendor applications. Vendors are selected through a committee approval process. Priority will be given to:

- Local farmers and producers who bring products to the market that are 100% grown and harvested on farmland they own, lease, and/or operate.
- Vendors who create high quality, unique or unusual items not already well represented at the Market.
- Businesses with potential for growth into storefronts in local commercial districts, or products with the potential for commercialization.
- Prepared food vendors with limited menus that meet one or more of these criteria: 1. Start-up with potential for incubation; 2. Existing Downtown Business; 3. Unique or ethnic food. Preference will be given to foods made from fresh healthful ingredients. Approved menus must be adhered to unless pre-approved by committee.
- Vendors from the previous season whose continued presence at the market successfully aligns with the market's mission and have shown commitment through their attendance and rule adherence.
- Vendor priority will be given to full season applicants first and then based on product for any additional spaces.
- **Note: Franchises and third-party sellers including direct/party sales or MLM consultants and distributors will not be considered. Vendors selling services will also not be considered.**

How stall assignments are made

- Stall assignments are made by market management based on the following criteria: Available space, number of spaces needed, electrical needs, complementary products placed near each other, vendor absences and vendor performance. Performance includes good product quality, good display and signage, ability to adhere to the Rules and Regulations outlined in this document, and market fees being paid/current.
- Management will make every attempt to keep stall spaces consistent throughout the season. However, some crops are seasonal and not all vendors may participate for the full season. Market space assignments may be adjusted weekly as needed. **There is no guarantee of a specific location from week to week or season to season.**

Booths

- Each vendor is responsible for providing their own tent, tent weights, necessary equipment and supplies to conduct business at their booth. **Four (4) tent weights of at least 20 pounds each must be attached each week regardless of weather.**
- All booths are 10' x 10' spaces. Vendors may rent a second space if needed.
- Vendors will be charged for multiple spaces if vendor space needs exceed 10' x 10'
- RCM reserves the right to disallow the sale of any merchandise that RCM deems offensive
- Subletting any stall space is prohibited
- Vehicles, with the exception of food trucks, are not allowed in vendor booth spaces.

Respecting the Grounds of the Market

The grounds of the market include both private and public property that is permitted by RCM for the market event. Vendors are expected to respect the market grounds as well as the surrounding neighbors and their property. Damage to the grounds by vendor staff, visitors, or equipment - including the pavement, grass, pavilion structure and electric covers, or landscaping, etc. may result in a fine.

Signage

All vendors will post professional looking signage identifying their business or farm. **All goods for sale should be clearly marked with their prices either individually or on a larger sign that is easy to read.** If a vendor brings meat or produce that was not raised on their farm a sign should be in place that says the city and farm that the product came from.

Booth signage needs to be appropriate for the style of a market and stay within the booth's frame. Carnival-style "feather or swooper flags" will not be allowed on the ground or outside of your space.

Electricity

- Electricity comes at no cost to the vendors, but vendors are designated spots based on their electric needs. These electric needs must be clearly stated on the application form listing the device or appliance and the amount of electricity it requires.
- Electricity is limited at the market and not all requests for electric use will be approved. Some vendors may be required to bring their own generators (please see generator section below.)
- Vendors must provide their own **12 gauge heavy duty outdoor extension cords.**
- Any vendor who causes power outages or issues due to incorrectly stating electric needs or having faulty or improper cords will be given a verbal warning on their first offense and given a **minimum of a \$50 fine for each offense thereafter.**
- Vendors who are caught plugging equipment they did not receive permission for into an outlet will be subject to the disciplinary steps. (This includes cell phones, laptops, string lights, etc.)

Generator Volume

- Generators used at the market must be quiet (70 decibels or lower) for the safety and comfort of surrounding vendors as well as customers
- Placement for vendors with generators that do not meet sound requirements will be affected
- If generators are not attached to the trucks, **they will need to be placed 10' behind the food truck.** Secondary vehicles will not be allowed on the grounds as a power source or generator storage.

Courtesy/Conduct

Vendors and their representatives are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful, safe, and courteous manner with patrons, market staff and each other. Any language or behavior that is not conducive to this environment will be handled with the steps listed under Rule Enforcement and may result in the vendor being denied the next season.

Vendors and patrons are not allowed to play music or use microphones or other forms of amplification within market grounds during market hours.

Vendor Dress

Vendors should dress appropriately. Vendors are required to wear "shirts and shoes" at their booths during market hours. No swimsuits allowed.

Cleanup and Garbage

Vendors are required to clean up after themselves. Vendor space must be maintained in a clean, safe and sanitary manner. **Vendors are responsible for taking with them any trash or garbage that is generated in or around their booth and sweeping up any product debris left on the ground.** Vendors are not permitted to dispose of product waste, overripe or leftover produce, or boxes, or other packaging materials in any onsite garbage cans or dumpsters.

Food Vendors: Vendor Designated Dumpster

Dumpster Fee - \$2/week for all prepared food and food truck vendors. Prepared food and food truck vendors will now be able to throw out all trash **in a provided dumpster** at the end of the night.

COVID-19

Market management will be staying in close contact with city and health department officials to stay up to date on current COVID-19 rules and regulations and will communicate any rule changes to vendors. Vendors will be expected to comply with their guidance. Past guidelines included rules such as wearing masks at all times, having hand sanitizer at your booth, and encouraging customer no-touch transactions as much as possible.

In the event that the market is forced to start late or close down the season early due to government rules and restrictions, vendors will be refunded for those weeks. This policy does not include if the market closes temporarily due to weather or other outside forces.

II. Taxes, Insurance, Permits, and SNAP requirements

It is the responsibility of the vendor to obtain and have on-person all licenses, insurance certificates, and permits required for the sale of the vendor's products at all markets.

Taxes

All Applicable State, City, & County sales taxes are the responsibility of the individual vendor and must be paid directly to the required city, county, or state.

City of Rockford taxes – “For purposes of downtown redevelopment, the City of Rockford assesses and collects a 1% tax on sales of all qualifying food and beverage, including alcoholic liquor, made within the City. The tax is to be collected from the customer at the time of sale. The reporting and payment of this tax is made directly to the City of Rockford - Local Tax Collection Section. In order to properly determine if your business activity is subject to this tax, you must contact the City for a final determination to be made based on the information you provide them. Applicability of this tax to your business activity is at the sole discretion of the City and all decisions made by the City will be considered binding and final. You are strongly encouraged to contact the City prior to initiating any sales activity so that they can make a proper determination. If you fail to do so and it is later determined that this tax did apply, you will be responsible for payment of all unremitted back taxes from the date the relevant sales activity began. Penalties and interest may also be assessed.” Please direct all inquiries and questions to: (779) 348-7165 or Metrotax@rockfordil.gov

The City of Rockford requires market vendors to pay the 1% City Redevelopment (metro) tax. This affects vendors selling beverages or prepared foods for consumption on site. It does not affect sales of produce or other goods.

Insurance

Vendors shall obtain and maintain general liability insurance covering bodily injury, personal injury, or property damage with limits of not less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence and a \$2,000,000 general

aggregate. Certificates must list Rock River Development Partnership as certificate holder and additional insured with the address PO BOX 4244, Rockford, IL 61110. Vendor shall provide RRDP certificate of insurance evidencing that vendor maintains the required insurance from a carrier reasonably satisfied by RRDP.

Certificates can be mailed to PO Box 4244 Rockford, IL 61110 or emailed to rockfordcitymarket@rrdp.org. We do not have a fax machine.

Health Department

All Winnebago County health permits must be acquired at least two weeks prior to the event; permits applied for within 2 weeks of the event may incur additional fees or may not be done in time for the vendor to start on their application date. Vendors selling food or beverage items, some value added items, or giving samples must meet current Winnebago County Health Department Food guidelines and have applicable operating permits. Vendors must keep a copy of these permits at their market stall at all times as well as display their certificate at their booth. The website for the Winnebago County Health Department is www.wchd.org.

Health Department permits will be randomly checked throughout the season by WCHD and Rockford City Market management. Vendors without their permits on hand or displayed properly may be subject to a fine.

To apply for a food permit the office is at 555 N Court St, Rockford, IL 61103 or they can be reached via email at environmental@wchd.org or phone at 815-720-4100. Permit applications can be found on their website at: www.wchd.org/environmental-health/environmental-health-forms. **Questions/concerns regarding food product regulations and/or licensing should be directed to the Winnebago County Health Department**

Eligible Vendors Must Accept SNAP/LINK benefits

In 2015, the Rockford City Market began the acceptance of SNAP benefits (via the LINK card in Illinois.) The market staffs a booth where customers purchase tokens and then spend them at eligible vendors. Vendors are responsible for turning in their tokens to the booth and getting a receipt. Market management will reimburse on a bi-weekly basis.

ALL vendors who have products that are SNAP eligible **will be required** to participate. It fits the market's mission to make our locally grown and produce products available and accessible to our entire community.

III. Absence and Inclement Weather Policies

Absence Policy

Every vendor is allowed to miss one market if they are registered for a half session (10 weeks) or two markets if they are registered for the whole season in order to get their deposit back. For produce vendors participating in a single 5 week session there will be no attendance deposit refunded if a date is missed. We understand the need for an occasional miss. We highly discourage, however, purposely missing the last 2 weeks of the season merely because it is allowed. Excessive absences may result in vendor not being approved the following season.

Vendors are required to let the manager know by 10:00 pm on Wednesday prior to the Friday market via email or phone call if they will be absent that week. This allows the manager time to fill any gaps as well

as ensures that if the Inclement Weather Policy is put into place for that week, that vendor is not included in the “absent due to weather” group and will not be expected to pay the other vendors.

Vendors who “no call, no show” for any market will forfeit their attendance deposit for the season. Vendors may also receive an absence if they leave early from the market without giving notice prior to that day’s market. Absences will be given on a case-by-case basis and will be decided by management’s discretion. In addition, vendors leaving early may be subject to warnings and fines listed in the Rule Enforcement Policy.

Inclement Weather Policy

The Rockford City Market is a “Rain or Shine” market. This policy is in effect for predicted rainy or stormy weather, extreme heat, extreme cold, and all weather issues in between.

- All vendors are expected to show up, set up, and sell their product regardless of predicted weather.
- Any vendor absent due to weather will pay \$2 for every vendor who did attend on that day. Total payment will be paid to RRDP and will be collected by the vendor manager. Rockford City Market will then submit payments to appropriate vendors. This payment must be made the following week before the vendor’s booth is erected.
- The policy will not be enforced for any vendor who gave notice of absence by **10:00pm Wednesday night** before the market that week.
- In the case of severe or extreme weather, the rainy day fee may be negated by management.
- Vendors who call “out” by the 10pm Wednesday deadline forfeit the right to their space for that week.

IV. General Market Rules

Weather and Other Emergency Plan

The Rockford City Market is a “Rain or Shine” market but in the case of severe or threatening weather or other emergency the market management may choose to cancel or close the market. If the market is canceled before or during setup there will be an email sent out to all vendors alerting them of closure. If the market is closed after the start of the market then a vendor “phone tree” will be used to announce the closure of the market or notice of severe weather, crime, or other emergency.

On days that the market is canceled before set up (1:30pm) there is no penalty of absence if the vendor was not going to be there. In the case that the market is canceled after 4pm any vendor not in attendance will be given an absence for the day. In the case that the market is canceled for weather reasons, the inclement weather policy will be negated.

- The Market will be canceled if the heat index is above 103 degrees. We will look at the forecast and notify you by 10am on the day of at the latest for extreme heat conditions.

Rockford City Market Patron (and vendor) rules

No Pets. Due to our attendance levels and for safety and sanitary reasons, the Rockford City Market does not permit dogs or other pets. Registered service animals are allowed and encouraged to wear their service vests. *If a vendor requires a service dog to be at their booth they will need to let us know before the layout is started so we can accommodate.

No Solicitation. No soliciting, hand-billing, circulating petitions, protesting, or demonstrating by political, religious, commercial, or other groups or individuals is permitted on the Market grounds or within 100 feet of any entrance on Fridays from 1:00pm until 10:00pm.

No Smoking or Vaping. There is no smoking or vaping allowed within the Market area. Vendors caught smoking at their booths will be given a warning and/or fine.

No Biking, Scooters or Skateboarding. For safety reasons, there will be no bike riding, scooter riding or skateboarding in the Market. Bikes may be parked on the perimeter or walked through the Market. There is a bike rack on the South side of the Waterside Building at 124 N. Water Street as well as at the south end of the Pavilion parking lot near State Street.

No Firearms or Other Weapons. For the safety of our patrons, absolutely no firearms or other weapons are allowed on the Market grounds 1pm-10pm Fridays.

V. Vehicle and Parking Rules

Set Up/Tear Down

Set up starts at 1:00pm and must be completed by 3:45pm. **In consideration of local businesses, no vendors are allowed on the grounds before 1:00 pm.** Tear down starts at 8:30pm before Labor Day and 7:30pm after Labor Day. Absolutely no early tear downs allowed. Vendors are required to stay until closing. Vendors who sell out early must keep their stall set up and post a sign letting customers know they have sold-out. Selling out may be used as a time for you to meet your fellow vendors, take special orders, or hand out business cards and tell your personal story.

There are absolutely no vehicles allowed on the grounds from 3:45pm until 15 minutes after closing. **On busy nights, management may choose to delay vehicle entrance for the safety of our patrons. Vendors may not enter the grounds in their vehicles until the market staff gives permission to have the gates moved.**

Vehicles and Parking

Vendors need to quickly unload cars and move to the designated vendor parking location. All vehicles must be removed by 3:45 pm. After closing, vendors should break down their booth first and then move their vehicle back to the market grounds. After 3:45pm all vehicles must be off the grounds and any items must be walked in.

Vendors with trailers will not be allowed to keep their vehicles parked on the grounds with their trailers. Vehicles will need to be unhooked and parked in the designated vendor parking lot.

While vendor vehicles are within market grounds they must be parked within the vendor's booth space, hugging the curb. Vendors should unload their products and set up onto the curb, park their vehicles in one of the designated parking lots, and then walk back to set up their space. Vendors are expected to be courteous to each other and may NOT park in the middle of the street while unloading at any time.

All Vendors must provide the make and license plate numbers of all vehicles expected to be used. Please be sure to complete this information on your application. Market management will use this information to monitor correct parking and for contact purposes if a vehicle needs to be moved for any reason.

Vendors caught parking in restricted lots, including the RAMP private parking lot, will be subject to the rule enforcement policies.

VI. Rule Enforcement Policy and Quick Summary of Fineable Offense Rules

Rule Enforcement Policy

These steps will be enforced when rules are broken in certain categories including, but not limited to, setup/teardown, vehicles and parking, clean up, and garbage. Rules for each are clearly defined above.

1. A Written Warning via email.
2. A \$50 Fine payable before set up the next week. Any missed dates due to fines are considered absences.
3. Termination from the Market. In case of termination, the vendor will not receive a refund of deposit or fees.

Please note that each step is reached for breaking ANY rule. For example, if a vendor drives their car on the grounds during market hours that would be strike one (written warning and reminder to re-read all rules), if they then leave garbage in their spot when they leave that would be strike two (fine), and then if they overload an outlet from plugging in something that was not approved then that would be strike three (termination.) We encourage all vendors to read through the rules carefully and understand them and ask questions if you're unsure of something.

Examples of some of the fineable offenses at the market

This is not a complete list of fineable offenses and does not cover all the rules. Please make sure to read through all the rules listed above.

1. Not showing up on Friday without giving a courtesy call letting management know you won't be able to make it.
2. Causing power outages due to improper cords, faulty equipment, or inaccurate electrical listing on vendor's application.
3. Plugging anything into an outlet without requesting it on the vendor application.
4. Setting up in your booth in the market grounds before 1pm without permission.
5. Having your vehicle within the market grounds between 3:45pm and 15 minutes past closing - unless given permission by management.
6. Parking in restricted neighbor-owned lots - including the RAMP lot and gravel lots along the alleyway- or illegally along the railroad tracks.
7. Blocking the roadway with your vehicle during busy times during setup or teardown; having your car at your spot after you've already unloaded during setup or when you haven't completely torn down yet at tear down
8. Using patron garbage receptacles for vendor-generated trash such as food containers, boxes, packaging materials, and overripe produce. (If you're a food vendor, you must use the designated Vendor Dumpster, NOT the patron garbage cans.)
9. Leaving garbage or a mess behind when you leave for the night.
10. Breaking general market rules including: Smoking within the market grounds, having non-service animals at your booth, biking, etc.