



GETTING ORGANISED 4

MANAGING STALLHOLDERS

The way that farmers' markets in Kent recruit stallholders is quite varied: it may be via local knowledge, talking to other market managers or simply by spending time visiting other markets to talk to stallholders.

Occasionally you may find that you have disagreements with stallholders. To help avoid this situation before it arises we would recommend that you initiate a 'contract' with your stallholders. This ensures they understand the rules of your market and both you and the stallholders sign it and keep copies. The following draft is based on the Agreements used by Wye and Shipbourne FM, which you may find useful when drawing up your own stallholder agreement.

In all cases, the market is responsible for maintaining a file of information for each stallholder comprising a signed agreement of the market rules, copies of relevant Insurance policies and food hygiene certificates for those preparing and selling food. This file should be updated annually. The file will be checked by your local Environmental Health Inspector as part of your compliance to retailing of food.

The following is a draft version of issues which you may find useful when drawing up an agreement. (Please feel free to use and amend it to suit your own requirements).

DRAFT STALLHOLDER AGREEMENT

This document is the statement of general policy and arrangements for the Farmers Market. It also acts as an agreement between stallholders and the market.

Policy Amendments

This policy will be updated periodically and published for agreement at the AGM. Proposals for changes will be notified to all stallholders with four weeks allowed for comments. This policy shall be provided to customers on request.

1. Locally produced

Only produce from within the defined local area may be sold at the farmer's market. Preference will be given to the most local producer when a space for the product becomes available, as long as the required quality standards are met.



Local is defined as within 30 miles from the market. The priority would be to support Kent based producers where practicably possible. Exceptions would need to be considered on an individual basis, such that when a more local producer of the product cannot be found, a distance of 50 miles may be substituted. Favour may be shown to stallholders who have shown long term commitment to the market but might not fully comply with these arrangements.

2. Stallholders

Stallholders should be involved in and/or knowledgeable in the production of everything they sell. Accordingly, the stallholder present must be able to answer detailed questions about the origins of the produce/ingredients and their production/processing. They should be the producer/processor or a direct employee or relative.

People attending the stall must be clean and tidy. Smoking at the stall is strictly prohibited. Stallholders are responsible for removing their own rubbish at the end of the day. Any spillage must be notified to the market manager and cleaned up by the stallholder.

Adequate hand washing facilities must be provided by the stallholder in case of raw food handling.

3. The Market

Water, adequate toilet facilities and electricity will be provided by the market.

4. Produce

No bought in produce purchased for re-sale may be sold. Genetically modified produce should not knowingly be used in the production of goods offered at the market. Only top quality produce should be offered for sale at the market. The market manager reserves the right to remove sub-standard items.

The stallholder must ensure that vehicles and containers meet the appropriate hygiene condition for the task of transporting produce to market (cross contamination of food for consumption with materials transported around the farm or from wholesalers must be avoided).



5. Primary produce

All primary produce sold must be grown, reared, shot or caught within Kent, East or West Sussex or Surrey (excluding exceptional circumstances covered under 1 above). Only high quality, fresh produce should be sold, based on an assessment by the market managers. It should be produced in ways that conserves the environment and respects animal welfare. All meat and products derived from animals, eg eggs, must be free-range.

6. Secondary produce

All secondary produce must be brewed, pickled, baked, smoked or processed in Kent, East or West Sussex or Surrey (excluding exceptional circumstances covered under 1 above). All processed food and drink should contain as much local ingredients as practical, which should be bought from sources which maximise returns to local farmers, e.g. from farmers' markets or farm shops. All eggs used in processed products should be free-range or similar.

7. Maintaining competition and choice

The selection and balance of produce available at the market will be agreed by the market committee and market manager. The business plan for the market will need to identify a product mix that may need occasional adjustment in terms of demand and supply.

Stallholder must state what he or she will be selling on their registration form before being accepted to the market. They must not offer additional products without agreement of the market management, obtained in advance, not on the day of the market and the market manager reserves the right to remove such goods. An additional application form should be completed to add new products.

8. Guest stalls

'Guest stalls' may be accepted on a regular basis to create diversification and choice for shoppers or in cases where it becomes impossible to find a local producer for a key product. No more than 10% of a markets annual stall population may be 'guest stalls'.

The produce they sell should comply with all legal requirements, but could be craft, Fair-Trade etc and subject to standard stall-fee rates. Ideally, 'regular' guests ought



not to be allowed as they potentially do not comply with the 'spirit' of our general policy on stalls, but local circumstances need to be acknowledged and taken into account and agreed by the management committee after consultation with the market manager.

9. Stall fees

These will be confirmed by the Management Committee annually, and reviewed and published periodically after full consultation with Stallholders. For community, new, and particularly smaller enterprises, fees can be waived, especially for their first visit. This is subject to the Market Manager's discretion.

10. Regulatory compliance:

All food products must comply with all relevant regulatory standards, eg Food Standard Agency HACCP regulations and traceability. Produce preparation, packaging, display and handling must comply with local Environmental Health Organisation regulations. All stallholders/producers must have been approved by their local EHO and TS.

Produce weighing and labelling and signage must comply with Trading Standards legislation. Prices must be clearly displayed on the items themselves, on relevant boxes or containers, or on a list in close proximity to the goods.

Stallholders selling organic food must display details of accreditation (issuer, certificate number and date of issue) on their stalls.

Stalls should be clearly identified by business name. It is also recommended that they should be able to give details to customers (and inspectors) of who they are and, preferably, what they do, where they are located and their contact information (telephone number, website, email address etc).

11. Insurance

All stallholders must hold Public and Product Liability Insurance of a minimum of £5 million. The market management may occasionally require up to date details of stallholders' insurer and policy number. If a stallholder 'employs' (even on a voluntary basis) someone to mind their stall they must have Employers Liability Insurance). A copy of annual insurance policies must be held on the market files.



12. Collaborative groups

Groups of small-scale 'non-commercial' producers may take a single stall as a collaborative or cooperative group. However such groups will be treated on the same basis as other stallholders and they need to be mindful of the legal requirements and public liability insurance aspects. The normal pitch rate will be at the discretion of the market manager.

13. Non-food stalls

Non-food stalls (including plant stalls) will not exceed 20% of the total stalls at any one market. Priority for all non-food stalls will be given to applicants within 20 miles of the market. Examples include: crafts related to agriculture/forestry such as coppicing/wood products – particularly if using local wood, woollen goods – especially if using local wool, and plants and flowers that are raised locally.

14. Setting up and taking down

Setting stalls up and taking them down can be dangerous for both the public and other stallholders; consequently it is essential that care be taken at all times. Stalls must be ready for trading at least 20 minutes before opening. Vehicles must be removed to designated parking places 30 minutes before opening. Packing up should not begin before the market closes and vehicles may only be brought into the market area after the closing time. Stallholders selling out before the end of the market should remain at the market until it closes as gaps have a detrimental affect on the overall look of the market. (treat this time as an opportunity to promote your produce and your business).

15. Non-attendance

Excluding exceptional circumstances, a stallholder must give days notice of non-attendance. This must be provided directly to the market manager, preferably, not via answering machine or email, so that positive communication is achieved.

16. Monitoring compliance

In the interest of protecting the integrity of the market and all the stallholders who use it, the market managers will request information to support compliance with these policies annually.



17. Excluding an existing stallholder

Anti-social behaviour by a stallholder or a member of their staff will mean instant dismissal from the market.

An existing stallholder will only be excluded on a majority vote of the management committee. Reasons for exclusion could include:

- Concerns about quality of produce, which will be discussed first with stallholder.
- Complaints from customers, which must be investigated with stallholder before a decision is taken.
- Persistent late arrival at markets and/or not turning up without days notice. A stallholder will receive one verbal and one written warning before being excluded and a new stallholder selling similar products may then be invited to join the market.
- Failure to provide evidence of compliance with these policies.



Disclaimer

The information and advice and guidance on this site is provided in good faith, and is for general purposes only, and any reliance you place on such information is therefore at your own risk. Weather conditions and seasonality may impact availability of produce and stall holder attendance at markets, and so we cannot guarantee the accuracy of all information.

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