



# ANN ARBOR LOCAL FOOD FESTIVAL

Vendor & Exhibitor Guidelines | 2025 Edition



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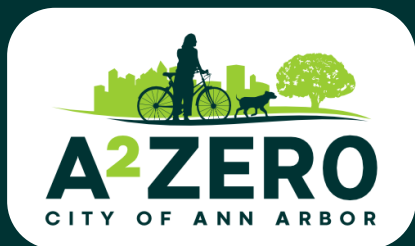


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# WELCOME TO THE ANN ARBOR LOCAL FOOD FESTIVAL Vendor Guidelines

It's time to get ready for the **Ann Arbor Local Food Festival** – Ann Arbor's annual celebration of local food & farming! In sharing these guidelines ahead of time, we hope to ensure all exhibitors have a fantastic experience at Local Food Festival. Please be sure to discuss this information with those who will be tabling at the event.

## **What is the Ann Arbor Local Food Festival & why should you join the celebration?**

The Local Food Festival brings together farmers, food artisans, chefs, community groups, and eaters in a community celebration of the beauty and bounty of Michigan's culinary and agricultural landscapes. Attendees will have the opportunity to experience the diverse flavors of locally produced foods, hear the stories of food producers, connect to resources, and learn about opportunities to participate in our local food system.

## **When and where is the event?**

The 2025 Local Food Festival is happening Thursday, August 28<sup>th</sup>, from 5:00 – 8:00 pm at the Ann Arbor Farmers Market (315 Detroit Street, Ann Arbor, MI).

## **How can I get involved?**

Farmers, food makers, bakers, non-alcoholic beverage producers, food trucks, and ready-to-eat producers are invited to submit a [vendor application](#). For non-agricultural applicants, the use of locally sourced agricultural goods in your product is highly encouraged.

Local governmental, educational, and non-profit organizations who want to get involved by hosting an interactive activity or table at the festival are invited to submit an [exhibitor application](#).

The vendor / exhibitor application deadline is July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025 at 11:59 pm.

# VENDOR EXPECTATIONS & NORMS

## BEFORE THE EVENT:

- **Apply to be a vendor / exhibitor:** Due to space limitations, vendors and exhibitors will be included in this event by invitation only. Please submit a vendor / exhibitor application no later than July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 11:59 pm, and our planning team will be in touch shortly to let you know if your application has been accepted.
- **Prioritize locally sourced ingredients when planning your menu:** The focus of this event is to highlight and celebrate our region's agricultural bounty. For non-agricultural vendors, the use of locally sourced agricultural goods in your product is strongly encouraged. For assistance sourcing local food for this event, please reach out to Azella Markgraf, [amarkgraf@a2gov.org](mailto:amarkgraf@a2gov.org).
- **Comply with all food safety laws & requirements:** Vendors & exhibitors are responsible for obtaining all required licenses and permits and must comply with all federal, state, and local laws regarding the production and sale of their products, including the [Public Market Operating Rules](#). A list of required licenses / permits is included in this packet.
- **Submit all licenses / permits before the event:** In order to participate, vendors are required to submit all applicable licenses / permits from the appropriate regulatory agency to the planning team by emailing copies (scans or photographs) to Azella Markgraf, [amarkgraf@a2gov.org](mailto:amarkgraf@a2gov.org). If your paperwork has not been received before the event, you will not be allowed to set up at the festival.
- **Comply with Zero Waste Guidelines:** The Local Food Festival is a zero waste event. Vendors & exhibitors should plan to use reusable, compostable, or recyclable materials.

Please note that only **CMA-W Certified, fiber-only products** are compostable in the City of Ann Arbor. Bioplastic materials are **not compostable** in the City's composting facility.

For additional guidance for how to participate in our Zero Waste event, please see the Zero Waste Guidelines included in this packet.

- **Plan for limited access to power:** Electricity access at the Ann Arbor Farmers Market is limited. Only those who request access to electricity and need it to operate will have access to it. Vendors and exhibitors will be notified upon acceptance whether or not electricity is available.

# VENDOR EXPECTATIONS & NORMS

## ON THE DAY OF THE FESTIVAL:

- **Arrive on time:** Be set up and ready to engage by the start of the festival. Keep your stalls open and exhibits up and tabled through the duration of the event!
- **Stay within your assigned space:** Vendors will be assigned one 10' x 10' stall unless notified otherwise by the planning team upon acceptance of your application. Please stay within the footprint of your tabling area during the event.
- **Respect all event participants:** Be respectful of other vendors, including agreeing to not speak poorly about other vendors during the event and not having materials antagonizing other vendors. Recognize that the Local Food Festival represents a variety of opinions, but we are all working toward a stronger local food system together!
- **Report any issues to event staff:** If you see something suspicious, concerning, or someone violating a norm, please notify an event employee immediately. If you have any concerns during the festival, our staff will do our best to assist. You can identify us by our A<sup>2</sup>ZERO blue t-shirts or Ann Arbor Farmers Market shirts.
- **Clean up after the event:** Upon close of the festival, please check your tabling area for any discarded items. Vendors & exhibitors are expected to maintain their space by removing trash and debris and remaining clean and tidy throughout the event.  
  
Please note that the Local Food Festival is a Zero Waste event. Please pack out any trash or recycling and minimize the impacts of what you bring to the fair. See included Zero Waste Guidelines for more information.

## VENDOR FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### How big is my space for tabling?

Each stall is 10' x 10' wide unless prior approval has been granted for a larger space.

### May I bring a tent?

Yes, a max of 10 x 10 feet. Please bring adequate weight (15 lbs per tent leg is recommended) and consider forgoing a tent in the event of wind.



### **Do you provide tables?**

Yes. One 6-ft table and two chairs will be provided to you unless otherwise specified.

### **What time can I set up?**

Vendors and exhibitors can begin setting up as early as 3:30pm. Please ensure that you have adequate time to fully set up before the festival begins (promptly at 5:00 pm). If you need additional time or have logistics questions, please be sure to reach out to us in advance.

### **Where can I park?**

We will have the Ann Arbor Farmers Market lot (off of 4th Street) closed on the day of the event and reserved for vendor/exhibitor parking. Please note that due to construction in the market lot, parking is limited. We kindly ask that you plan to carpool and bring only one vehicle to park in the lot. Volunteers will be on site to help you transport supplies to your assigned stall.

### **Where do I set up?**

Stalls will be assigned prior to the event, and a full event layout map will be sent to the email that you provided within your application. Please only set up in the space that has been assigned to you. Volunteers and staff will be on site day of to help direct you to your spot, however it is your responsibility to review the map before the event.

### **I signed up for electricity - how does that work?**

Electricity is available by request only through the Market pavilion structure. If you have requested electricity, please come prepared with power strips and an extra long extension cord.

### **What happens if it rains?**

The Local Food Festival is a rain or shine event. The Ann Arbor Farmers Market is an outdoor venue but does have a roof structure. Please keep an eye on the weather leading up to the event and plan accordingly. If the weather is extreme/dangerous, exhibitors and attendees will be asked to evacuate. Please have positive thoughts for a beautiful summer evening on 8/28!

For food vendors: As this is an outdoor event and weather is a variable that we cannot control, it is possible that poor weather conditions will affect attendance numbers. Please note that we do not provide compensation in the event of poor weather conditions, low attendance, or a cancellation. Please keep the weather in mind as you plan your menus for this event to minimize any potential losses.

### **What time does the festival end?**

The Festival closes at 8:00pm. At that time, you may remove your materials and begin clearing the market lot. The event rental company will arrive at 8:30pm to tear down and collect all tables and chairs. You are not required to tear down your table & chairs upon the festival's conclusion.

# Required Food Licenses & Permits

Product	Requirement	Issuing Agency
Apple Cider	Limited Wholesale Food Processor	Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD)
Cheese / Dairy	Manufacturing Dairy License	MDARD
Eggs	No license needed	N/A
Food Cart / Food Truck	Licensed Food Cart OR Temporary Food Establishment License	Washtenaw County Health Department
Hemp / CBD	A hemp growers license is required for farms growing the raw materials to make topical CBD products. A processor-handler license is also needed to create CBD products.	MDARD/FDA- depends on product type
Honey	Processed and packaged at licensed facility. Exemptions for gross sales <\$15,000	MDARD
Maple Syrup	Processed and packaged at licensed facility. Exemptions for gross sales <\$15,000	MDARD
Mead / Hard Cider / Wine	Michigan Small Wine Makers License. City of Ann Arbor approval needed also.	Michigan Liquor Control Commission/City of Ann Arbor
Meat	USDA/MDARD Inspected Processor (if MDARD facility, copy of MDARD license is necessary)	USDA/MDARD
Non-Food Vendors	Michigan sales tax license	Michigan Department of Treasury
Nursery Stock	Varies- as recommended by your inspector	MDARD
Perennials	Perennial stock inspection. Perennial license needed for plants that can overwinter outdoors without cover in Michigan.	MDARD
Prepared Foods	Prepared in licensed kitchen	MDARD
Produce	License Only Needed for Certified Organic	N/A
Organic Produce	Copy of USDA Organic Certification	Organic Certifying Body

For further information, please visit the links below. Any questions on licensing should be directed to the appropriate licensing agencies.

**[All MDARD Licenses](#)** – an alphabetical list of all licenses issued by MDARD and their online applications.

**[Cottage Food FAQs](#)** – frequently asked questions about the Michigan Cottage Food Law.

**[List of Organic Certifying Agencies](#)** – these agencies can help to obtain organic certification.

**[Dairy Licenses and Permits](#)** – find out what MDARD requires of your dairy business.

**[Temporary Food Establishment Licenses](#)** - find out if your business requires one here or email the Environmental Health Division of the Washtenaw County Health Department at [zeebcss@ewashtenaw.org](mailto:zeebcss@ewashtenaw.org).

# ZERO WASTE GUIDELINES

Thank you for agreeing to participate in our Zero Waste event! The Local Food Festival organizers are working to reduce the event's environmental footprint. As a vendor passing out materials and sharing information, you play a critical role in helping the event reach its goal.

## What does it mean to host a Zero Waste event?

The goal of a Zero Waste event is to reduce waste generated at the event by minimizing the number of single-use items and materials distributed, while effectively managing what (hopefully little) waste is generated. We hope to encourage a culture shift towards a more circular economy where resources are valued and the useful life of items is extended as long as possible.

We appreciate whatever efforts you can take to assist us in encouraging an experience that is less about consumption, and more about connection & community.

### AIM TO USE:

- Paper-only products including plates, napkins, paper towels, and bags.
- CMA-W certified, fiber-only compostable cups, containers, lids, clamshells, utensils, and straws.



Must be CMA-W certified compostable AND fiber-only!

- Wooden stir-sticks, chopsticks, toothpicks, and skewers. No plastic decorated tops.
- Paper bags and reusable bags.
- Bulk self-serve condiments and bulk foods that you package yourself in compostable containers or bags.

### AVOID USING

- Plastic-coated paper products (most paper cups are lined with plastic). Many paper products are coated with plastic liners.
- Styrofoam cups, containers, and clamshells
- Plastic containers, lids, utensils, and straws.
- Any "compostable" plastic products, including BPI-certified plastics that are marketed as compostable.

These materials are not accepted at the local compost facility, as they do not properly breakdown in the compost operation and create contamination in the waste stream.



- Unpackaged promotional materials that are reusable (pens, key chains, etc...)
- Office paper, including flyers, brochures, etc... Post consumer or recycled content is preferred.

Or even better: Minimize paper distribution by considering a QR code and having minimal copies that patrons may take a photo of.

- Plastic or bamboo stir sticks, chopsticks, toothpicks, and skewers.
- Plastic bags or plastic wrap.
- Plastic containers, lids, utensils, and straws.
- Prepackaged single-serve condiments and foods (ex. Chips) in non-recyclable packages.
- One-time use decorations, such as plastic tablecloths, stickers, balloons, confetti, etc...
- Metallic, laminated, or non-paper materials.

**Note:** We understand that food safety and product quality are of the utmost importance for food vendors at and beyond this event. We also understand that the science of food packaging is often slow in responding to our need to reduce waste, and that Zero Waste options for the food you serve may not currently be available. That being said, if you are struggling to identify serveware or packaging that meets your business needs, please reach out so that our expert staff can assist you in your search!

For additional guidance in sourcing compostable packaging items, or for more information about which items are accepted in the compost stream, please visit this [web page](#). A full list of accepted items and a purchasing guide are provided there.

**Questions?** Email Azella - [amarkgraf@a2gov.org](mailto:amarkgraf@a2gov.org)