

THE CUMMING HARVEST GUIDELINES FOR GROWERS

Welcome to The Cumming Harvest Locally Grown and thanks for producing healthy, sustainable food in our community. To make things easier we wanted to compile a simple list of guidelines to make sure the Market runs smoothly. Please take a minute to look these over before you sign up as a grower, and then use them as a guide once you're approved as a grower on the site.

GUIDELINES FOR PARTICIPATION

To ensure that our market truly is trying to build a Local Food System, at this time the Locally Grown Market only allows farms and farm products produced within an 80 mile radius of Cumming. As farms and farm products increase we may try and tighten that radius. All farms and processors selling through the market must be focused on "sustainable" production of local foods. For processed foods that means that significant efforts to obtain ingredients from local sources must be employed, and some ingredients that cannot be found locally may not be allowed. See below for more details on that.

FRUIT AND VEGETABLE PRODUCTION

Farms must be Chemical Free - by requesting to be listed as a grower on Locally Grown you are stating to our customers that you do not use chemicals on your farm such as synthetic fertilizers and pesticides. We also require that in keeping with organic standards any land that has been treated with chemical pesticides and fertilizers cease use for three years before producing products for this market.

Organic and other standards - though Locally Grown doesn't require growers to be certified organic or Certified Naturally Grown, we still highly encourage growers to be familiar and follow these requirements where appropriate. For instance many OMRI certified pesticides are intended as a last resort, not intended for routine application, and certification programs often restrict the use of many OMRI listed products. Other common sense practices such as precautions with manure handling close to crops, and safety of crop washing water for E.Coli bacteria should be taken into consideration.

On-Farm Produced Products - All products sold on Locally Grown must be produced on the farm which is listing the product. Through sales of products grown on another farm other than your own are not allowed. Some Wild harvested products that are found off the farm will be allowed provided they are harvested following all applicable laws. (*Please notify us first, if you're not sure about a certain wild harvested product)

PROCESSED FOODS

Because of stringent state laws, processed foods will require all applicable state licenses in order to sell through Locally Grown. If your products require a state license we do request that you send us a copy of your license number and even consider posting it on

your Grower Description on the website. *Georgia State law basically states that anything that's edible that isn't sold in the exact same form it was harvested in requires a license. We are slowly learning what all of these requirements are. Here's the best we can provide at this time.

Licensed certified kitchen - All processed food must be prepared in a properly licensed certified kitchen and products must be properly labeled. These rules are fairly stringent and can be difficult to meet such as having a 3-basin sink, an additional mop sink, and a handwashing sink. Certified kitchens are regulated through the GA Dept of Ag.

Ingredients (sourcing local) – We are slowly trying to work out some standards for what ingredients are allowed in processed foods. The Cumming Harvest is vigorously trying to encourage local production of all sustainable and organic food products, and as the market develops we may need to be more stringent in how we define this standard.

As a general rule, we require at least 60% of the ingredients in a processed food to come from your farm. The remaining ingredients can be purchased from other farms locally. If (and only if) these ingredients are not available locally, you should use the most sustainable ingredients you can find. In other words if you are making fig preserves, they should be figs that you've produced on your own farm. If you add sugar, pectin and lemon juice you'll likely be unable to locate any of these locally. You should then source organic sugar and organic lemons if they are readily available (which they should be).

This standard applies to all processed foods except for breads. At this time we are not requiring the use of local or organic grains in artisan made breads (though we highly encourage their use). However, for flavored breads such as a blueberry muffin or pumpkin bread, you must source local and sustainable ingredients rather than conventional products unless it's an ingredient that is not available locally (cranberries are an example). Again, we request that you source organic or sustainably produced ingredients whenever you can.

We may tweak these standards again in the future so please give us your feedback. We just want everyone to try and source the best ingredients that they can while living up to our local and sustainable marketing push.

Ground Grain – If you are milling products such as corn, wheat or rye for sale, the Georgia Department of Agriculture requires a milled products license to be obtained.

ANIMAL PRODUCTS

Eggs – if you plan to sell eggs through the market you are required to have a state candling license obtained from the Georgia Department of Agriculture. There are additional requirements for proper refrigeration during transportation. A state candling license requires attendance at a training program. Other

than that these rules are fairly easy to follow. Here's a link to a good description of the requirements: <http://www.naturesharmonyfarm.com/grass-fed-meat-farm-blog/2008/1/9/egg-candling.html>

In our efforts to differentiate Locally Grown products from conventional products we also require producers to have layers on pasture, meaning that they are moved onto fresh grass routinely. We do not require organic-only grains at this time.

Packaged meats – have a slew of requirements. Contact the Georgia Department of Agriculture for information or take a look at this website as a starting place: <http://www.naturesharmonyfarm.com/grass-fed-meat-farm-blog/2008/2/21/local-meat-processor.html>.

LIVE PLANT SALES

Live plant sales also require a license through the Department of Agriculture.

There are likely many other requirements that we aren't currently aware of, so we encourage you to look into the requirements for products that you are selling. We'll just do the best we can to be in compliance with everything that we know about. We're trying to head this off at the pass so we don't have to pull an item that has already been posted.

GROWER RESPONSIBILITY

All vendors are independent entities and as such are responsible for paying all applicable taxes and/or Federal, State, or Local fees. Check the local, State, and other applicable regulations and see how they apply to you.

FARM VISITS

On occasion the market manager and/or small group will schedule a time to visit your farm for a farm tour. Visiting your farm not only helps me to understand your practices, but also helps customers feel confident about you and your products.

VENDOR / CUSTOMER CONFLICTS

Any conflict, or potential conflict, which may arise between a vendor and a customer, must be brought to the attention of the Market Manager. Please email or call me as soon as possible so that I can help resolve the issue.

SPECIAL EVENTS

From time to time the Market may sponsor a special event (i.e. Open Market, Live Music, Holiday Celebrations, Festivals, etc.). Vendors are asked to accommodate and support these events, as they benefit the entire Market.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR DESCRIBING YOUR FARM & POSTING PRODUCTS ON LOCALLY GROWN

Since growers don't get to talk to customers directly through the Locally Grown market, the details of how you describe your farm and farm products is super critical. Please follow these guidelines to insure good communication and a loyal following.

DESCRIBING YOUR FARM

Location of your Farm – please describe where your farm is located, and something about the type of farm (the size, the products grown, length of time growing). We highly encourage you to mention something about your growing practices, such as how you focus on sustainability and the absence of chemicals on the farm. Make sure to include a Farm Name, website (if available), contact info, any Official Certificates such as Certified Organic, Certified Naturally Grown, and Plant license (if applicable). This builds confidence with your consumers.

POSTING PRODUCTS

Use photos if you have them – we highly encourage the use of photographs to convey to your customers exactly what your product is.

Photos must be of the ACTUAL product – only photos of the actual product you are selling are allowed. If you are selling lettuce plants, you must show a picture of the plants, not a photo of the harvested lettuce. This eliminates confusion as many customers will assume they are purchasing what is in the photo and will not read all the small details. All photos must be of your products, not an image found on the web.

Adding products – adding products to the market can be just a bit non-intuitive to the new grower. Instructions for posting new items are described in detail on **Your Account** page once you are approved as a grower. Read those instructions carefully. Basically you'll go to the market page and pick the category your item fits in from the choices on the left side of the page. For example, once you pick VEGETABLES a subcategory list will pop up (on the left column). Then you will pick the subcategory, such as SQUASH. If there is no subcategory that includes your item, **DO NOT ADD A SUB—CATEGORY** without first asking Suzanne via e-mail for approval (my e-mail is below). Once you choose your subcategory under FRUITS, such as PEARS, look at the top right of the column and you'll see three tiny icons that look like folders. They are very tiny so look hard. The third icon when you roll over it will say "Add a new product in SQUASH". Click that and start describing your item.

How to list your products – our market lists items alphabetically. In order to keep the scrolling market list organized, we highly encourage you to use the following NAMING protocol. **First**, put the category name, such as TOMATOES or SQUASH, followed by the particular variety. For instance, if you have Dragon's Tongue beans, you would name your product "**Beans – Dragon's Tongue.**" That way all the beans will be in the same place in the scrolling market list. If you just put "Dragon's Tongue," people may think we are actually selling the tongues of dragons.

This is a penniless market... and prefer quarters – To make checkout at the market easier we don't allow the use of pennies in your item totals. We also prefer that dollar amounts end in quarter increments, such as \$4.25 rather than \$4.10. Round up if you have to!

Taking your products off market – when you are going out of town or taking off for the winter you have to make all your items unavailable. Doing this automatically marks the quantity available to 0. When you return and mark the items available you will also need to update the quantities. You can find this feature on the Your Account page in the Grower section.

Thanks so much for growing for Locally Grown. We hope you sell a lot of delicious, nutritious and sustainable food. If you have further questions, please contact me.

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