



# Farmers' Market Policy

Procedures for participation in  
SFC Farmers' Markets



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# Contents

About Sustainable Food Center .....	4
History and Mission .....	4
SFC Farmers' Markets .....	4
SFC Farmers' Market Operations.....	5
SFC Farmers' Market Downtown .....	5
SFC Farmers' Market Sunset Valley .....	5
Vendor Categories and Product Descriptions.....	6
Vendors.....	6
Agricultural Producers .....	6
Value Added Producers.....	6
Artisans .....	6
Services .....	6
Non-Vendors.....	6
Corporate Sponsors .....	6
Nonprofit and Governmental Entities .....	7
Activity Providers .....	7
Vendor Fees .....	8
Application Fee .....	8
Annual Vendor Fee .....	8
Weekly Stall Fees .....	8
Fee Waivers and Adjustments .....	8
Market Interruption.....	8
Market and Vendor Development.....	9
Family Crisis or Hardship.....	9
Rules and Regulations.....	10
All Vendors.....	10
Agricultural Producers .....	10
Animal Producers.....	10
Value-Added Producers .....	11
Non-Vendors.....	11
Onsite Market Rules.....	11
Violations .....	13
Producer-Only Policy Violation .....	13
Violation of Other Rules and Regulations.....	14
Disputes and Grievances.....	15
On-site Resolution.....	15

Deliberation .....	15
Grievance Process .....	15
Governance .....	16
SFC Farmers’ Market Vendor Council .....	16
Vendor Council Role .....	16
Facilitation and Decision Making .....	16
Nominations and Elections .....	16
All-Vendor Meeting .....	16
SFC Farmers’ Market Staff .....	17
Farmers’ Market Coordinators .....	17
SFC Board of Directors .....	17
SFC Advisory Council .....	17
Other SFC Opportunities for Market Vendors .....	18
Farm Direct Marketing Projects .....	18
Farm to Work .....	18
Farm to School .....	18
Grow Local Gardening Program .....	18
The Happy Kitchen/ <i>La Cocina Alegre</i> .....	18
Development and Communications .....	18

# About Sustainable Food Center

## History and Mission

Founded in 1993, with roots dating back to 1975 as Austin Community Gardens, Sustainable Food Center is involved in every step of our local food system. SFC's mission is to cultivate a healthy community by strengthening the local food system and improving access to nutritious, affordable food. SFC envisions a food-secure community where all children and adults grow, share, and prepare healthy, local food.

From seed to table, SFC creates opportunities for individuals to make healthy food choices and to participate in a vibrant local food system. Through organic food gardening, relationships with area farmers, interactive cooking classes and nutrition education, children and adults have increased access to locally grown food and are empowered to improve the long-term health of Central Texans and our environment.

SFC's Grow-Share-Prepare model of food systems is captured in our three main program areas: Grow Local community and school gardening, Farm Direct marketing and sales, and The Happy Kitchen / *La Cocina Alegre*® healthy cooking classes.

## SFC Farmers' Markets

As a project of Sustainable Food Center, the purpose of the SFC Farmers' Markets is to provide Austin and the surrounding Central Texas region with access to locally produced foods and farm products in a diverse farm-to-consumer marketing effort that will preserve and promote regional agriculture, serve diverse populations, and improve our quality of life.

SFC believes that small family farms are essential to the local, sustainable agricultural economy, and is committed to making economic and educational connections between urban residents and local farmers. The predominant product emphasis for SFC Farmers' Markets is on farm products from the region, but the Market will also host producers of ready-to-eat and value-added products, supporting food-based entrepreneurs to increase local economic vitality.

SFC maintains a commitment to farm advocacy by supporting farmers in pursuit of a range of marketing outlets, engaging and informing policy makers on behalf of local food systems, and connecting producers to educational, training, and funding opportunities, such as conferences, grants, and emergency relief funds.

Markets operated by SFC are also set apart from other area markets in several ways - SFC Farmers' Markets are producer-only, feature meaningful educational programming such as cooking demonstrations, promote equitable food access among different economic classes and ethnicities, offer sustainability services for customers such as composting, and serve as community gathering spaces with music and children's activities. SFC also provides educational programming and outreach around local food and food systems community-wide, in order to develop more informed, aware, and committed consumers.

# SFC Farmers' Market Operations

*SFC operates two Markets. The schedules for each are listed below. SFC Farmers' Markets operate rain or shine. In the event of hazardous weather conditions, SFC Farmers' Market Team will determine whether the Markets will remain open.*

## **SFC Farmers' Market Downtown**

Location: 422 West Guadalupe, Austin, Texas 78701, at Republic Square Park

Schedule: Every Saturday 9:00-1:00

5:30 - Crew on site to begin setup

6:00 - Road Closure

6:30 - 8:45 Vendor Setup

**9:00 - 1:00 Market is open**

1:00 - 3:00 Breakdown

2:00 - Vendors must be out

## **SFC Farmers' Market Sunset Valley**

Location: 3200 Jones Street, Sunset Valley, Texas 78745 at Toney Burger Activity Center and Stadium

Schedule: Every Saturday 9:00-1:00

7:00 Crew on site to begin setup

7:00 - 8:45 Vendor Setup

**9:00 - 1:00 Market is open**

1:00 - 3:00 Breakdown

3:00 Vendors must be out

# Vendor Categories and Product Descriptions

*SFC Farmers' Markets have two distinct types of booths: Vendors and Non-Vendors. Vendors are divided into two main categories - Agricultural Producers and Value-Added Producers, plus Artisans and Service Providers. A vendor's primary product will determine their vendor category.*

## **Vendors**

*Any Market participant that submits a vendor application, pays an application fee, is approved as a vendor by SFC staff, submits an annual vendor fee, and pays required booth fees to attend the Market and sell their product is a vendor.*

### **Agricultural Producers**

Any vendor who grows, raises, and/or wild-harvests a food product.

- **Farmers** - Growers of vegetables, herbs, fruits, nuts, mushrooms, cactus, nursery products, grains, pulses, flowers, and other horticultural crop
- **Ranchers** - Producers of animal-based products, including meat, eggs, and dairy products
- **Other** - Producers of other raw, unprocessed products that are grown or raised on a farm or ranch or wild-harvested in accordance with relevant regulations, to include honey, seafood, and foraged foods.

### **Value Added Producers**

Any vendor who uses one or more ingredients to create a product by processing, blending, packaging, or altering using other preparation methods.

- **Ready-to-Eat Vendors** - Any vendor who prepares foods either on-site or in an approved production facility and sells these foods with the intention of their being consumed on-site.
- **Prepared Food Vendors** - Any vendor who prepares foods in an approved production facility to be consumed off-site or to be used as an ingredient.
- **Cottage Food Vendors** - Producer of foods prepared under the Texas Cottage Food Law (Texas Department of State Health Services, Health and Safety Code, Title 6, Chapter 437).

### **Artisans**

Artist or craftsman who produces originally designed hand-crafted products that are unique and of high-quality, to include crafts, artwork, inedible products such as herbal products, personal care and beauty products.

### **Services**

An individual or group who provides a specific service relevant to the mission and function of the Market for customers and/or vendors

## **Non-Vendors**

*Any participant that is not a vendor of the Market but enhances the Market in some meaningful and mission-aligned manner may be allowed to participate as a Non-vendor. Non-Vendors are not allowed to sell products or services at Market, fundraise or attend the Market on a regular basis. They must provide additional advertisement via social media and other media outlets.*

### **Corporate Sponsors**

SFC Farmers' Market may provide an informational or activity booth to a business or organization that contributes financially to support the Market.

### **Nonprofit and Governmental Entities**

Organizations registered as either a federal or state nonprofit, or local, state, federal, or foreign governmental agencies that support the Market's mission and purpose and are not in direct competition with Market vendors or function.

### **Activity Providers**

Groups or individuals interested in attending Market who will enhance the quality of the Market, support the Market ideals, are not in direct competition with the Markets' mission and purpose, and who fall under one or more of the following categories:

- **Kids Activities** - An activity focusing on engaging children
- **Educational** - An activity focusing on increasing knowledge or skills pertaining to a particular topic
- **Health and Fitness** - an activity focusing on nutrition, physical activity or healthy lifestyles
- **Entertainment** - an activity focusing on providing entertainment at the Market

# Vendor Fees

SFC Farmers' Markets are supported in part by grants, donations, earned revenue (sponsorships, merchandise sales, events) and vendor fees. Fees paid by vendors contribute to a portion of Market operations expenses, such as staff time, insurance, permits, marketing and advertising, equipment maintenance and replacement, musicians, and general supplies. Additional funding from grants, donations, earned revenue and in-kind contributions from partners and volunteers helps to support our staffing needs and our vital educational programming and food access initiatives. SFC publishes an organizational financial report in the annual report, available on the SFC website, and will provide vendors with a Market operations budget showing expenses and revenue at the Annual Vendor Meeting.

## Application Fee

A nonrefundable processing fee of \$25 must accompany new vendor applications. Payment of the fee offsets the staff time and resources expended in reviewing and processing applications. Applications not accompanied by the processing fee cannot be reviewed. The \$25 processing fee can be paid by check to Sustainable Food Center or by credit card at <http://sustainablefoodcenter.org/programs/farmers-market-faq>.

## Annual Vendor Fee

All vendors must pay a \$125 vendor fee, due at the time of renewal for returning vendors or prior to starting a Market for newly approved applications. Vendor fees will be valid for a 12-month period from the time that a renewal is received or on the starting date of a new vendor. Returning vendors will receive a renewal notice at least one month prior to their renewal date, and payment must be received by SFC on or before the renewal date in order to continue selling at SFC Markets. Annual vendor fees cannot be refunded if a vendor decides to leave the Market before the end of their 12-month period.

## Weekly Stall Fees

Stall fees for all markets must be paid by check or cash on the day of the market.

Vendor category	Downtown	Sunset Valley
	Agricultural Producers	\$45
Value-added Producers	\$50	\$45
Artisans/Services	\$50	\$35

## Fee Waivers and Adjustments

### Market Interruption

In the event of inclement weather, displacement from regular Market site, or other major interference which considerably reduces average per-vendor sales at a specific Market, the Market Coordinator will determine the impact of inclement weather, displacement, or other interference on vendor sales. The Coordinator will then submit a recommendation to a Manager or Director (SFC staff with fiscal oversight authority) for an adjustment of stall fees based on their assessment. The Manager or Director will provide a verbal response to the Coordinator,

either approving or denying the adjustment. The amount by which fees can be reduced is up to \$20 for Saturday markets and up to \$10 for weekday markets, and will be assessed on fees collected that day, unless a response is deferred, in which case the adjustment will be made the following week. Only five (5) adjustments can be made per Market fiscal year (July - June).

### **Market and Vendor Development**

The Market Director may offer a full or partial waiver of the application or annual vendor fees if the payment of the fees is a barrier to participation by that vendor AND the participation of that vendor will serve to develop a particular Market. Priority for waivers will be given to vendors who meet this standard, and are traditionally under-represented farmers/ranchers or vendors, or offer high-demand / high-priority products. The Market Director may also offer new vendors who meet the same standards an adjustment of weekly fees for up to 6 weeks at the start of their vendor fee period.

### **Family Crisis or Hardship**

In the event of severe family crisis or business hardship, the Market Director may offer a vendor currently in good standing a deferment of the annual vendor fee if the immediate payment of the fees is a barrier to participation. The deferment will allow a payment plan of the annual vendor fee to be paid incrementally over no more than 8 weeks from the renewal date. The Market Director may also offer a vendor in good standing who meets the same standards an adjustment of weekly fees for up to 6 weeks.

# Rules and Regulations

## All Vendors

1. SFC Farmers' Markets are **producer only Markets**. Therefore vendors may only sell products that they grow, raise, make, or harvest themselves. **No reselling will be tolerated.**
2. All production must take place within **150 miles of downtown Austin**, and must be performed using land and facilities that the Vendor controls through ownership, lease, rental, or other legal agreement.
3. Products must be produced and sold in compliance with all applicable **federal, state, and local laws and regulations**.
4. Vendors are responsible for maintaining **required permits, licenses, and certifications** for all products they produce. A copy must be submitted to Sustainable Food Center.
5. New products intended for sale by current vendors but not included on the most recently approved application must be **approved by SFC prior to their sale at Market**. Vendors may use the Renewal Application to submit changes.
6. All products sold by weight shall be weighed using an **approved, tested and sealed scale**. The weighing device must be positioned so that the weight is visible to the customer.
7. Vendors, including farmers and ranchers, must support **fair labor practices**, pay a living wage, and provide for safe and sanitary working conditions for their workers.
8. **Discrimination in any form is prohibited**. Discrimination is the treatment or consideration of, or making a distinction in favor or against, a person based on the group, class, or category to which that person belongs, including but not limited to race, color, national origin, age, disability, economic class, sex, gender expression or sexual orientation.

## Agricultural Producers

1. Agricultural Producers in Texas whose products are **not produced at all or are not currently produced in sufficient quantity** within the 150 mile radius may petition the Market Manager for inclusion as a vendor, provided the product meets all other requirements.
2. Agricultural Producers who operate **pre-pay CSA or subscription programs** may use SFC Farmers' Markets as a distribution point. Items included in CSA or subscription shares, including agricultural products or value-added items, must be produced by the vendor or obtained from another Market vendor.
3. Inclusion in pre-paid CSA or subscription shares of **products from non-vendors or which are not available within the 150 radius** may be petitioned for allowance through the Market Manager, provided that agricultural products are produced in Texas, that products are not visible to the general public at Market, and that the primary producer of the product submit an SFC Farm Direct application and application fee.
4. Fresh, raw, or unprocessed horticultural products may not be grown on or harvested from plants that have been **genetically engineered or are based on genetically modified organisms**.
5. All items sold as organic must meet the **requirements of the National Organic Program**. Sellers of organic items must have a copy of their certification on file with SFC. Only certified organic growers may display signs using the word organic.
6. Vendors may sell **plants and trees, fresh and dried flowers, herbs and decorative vegetation** grown or legally gathered themselves. Purchased nursery stock must be repotted and grown for a minimum of two weeks before being sold.

## Animal Producers

1. Animals used in production of products for sale at Market must be raised and managed using humane husbandry practices and environmentally sound methods.
2. Animals must be raised on the vendor's property for a substantial period in the animal's life, according to the following guidelines:  
Fowl and Rabbits - 75% of the life of the animal shall be raised on the vendor's land  
Pigs, goats, sheep - 75%

Bison, cattle, large animals - 50%

3. Live animals are not allowed to be sold.

## Value-Added Producers

1. Value-Added and ready-to-eat products must be processed and packaged by the vendor in their own facility, or created and developed by the vendor and produced in a processing facility under the direction of the vendor.
2. If an ingredient in the product can be grown or produced in Texas and is generally available, then that Texas ingredient shall be used in a value-added product.
3. In reviewing new vendor applications, preference will be given to those producers who can verify the use of local ingredients. (SFC will assist vendors with sourcing if necessary).
4. The use of compostable and recyclable packaging for all products is strongly encouraged and preferred, unless the use of such packaging interferes with or undermines the safety or quality of the product, violates health department or other regulation, or otherwise inhibits the sale of the product.
5. Vendors cooking food on site must have their own 2A10BC fire extinguisher and a Class K extinguisher if using a deep fryer.

## Non-Vendors

Corporate Sponsors, Nonprofit and Governmental Entities, and Activity Providers must comply with the following:

1. Non-vendors are allowed up to a 10 foot by 20 foot space with the exception of special requests including Activities. Additional space may be available upon request and with the Market Manager's approval.
2. Up to (2) Tents, 25 pounds of weights for each corner, (2) 8 foot tables and (3) chairs will be provided to all Corporate Sponsors and may be available upon request to other Non-Vendors. The Market Manager will determine the availability. Water and power may be provided if available.
3. The selling of any products on site is prohibited, but free giveaways are allowed.
4. Non-vendors may not offer food samples at Market, with the exception of educational activities reviewed and approved by the Market Manager.
5. Fundraising is prohibited.
6. Non-vendors may collect contact information and use this list to solicit individuals after Market.
7. Non-vendors may pass out information about their organization, and about a future event(s).
8. Non-vendors must arrive no later than 45 minutes before the start of SFC Farmers' Market and be set up 15 minutes before Market opens.
9. Non-vendors may not break down or leave before the close of Market.
10. Non-vendors are required to promote their appearance at Market via their media outlets including but not limited to social media and on their website where events are listed.
11. Non-vendors will use the full name of SFC Farmers' Markets listed in this document.
12. Non-vendors must sign a contract and indemnity waiver prior to coming to Market.
13. Non-vendors must follow all other applicable Market rules.

## Onsite Market Rules

1. **Smoking**  
Smoking is prohibited at the Market.
2. **Alcohol and drugs**  
The consumption of alcoholic beverages or drugs is prohibited at the Market.
3. **Firearms**

Vendors are required to comply with state laws concerning firearms, and may not openly display firearms while selling at the Market.

#### **4. Pets**

Vendors are not allowed to keep pets in proximity to any food products, although pets on a leash are allowed. Service animals are allowed at the Market.

#### **5. Accessibility**

A pre-determined fire lane and ADA pathway must be maintained.

#### **6. Soliciting**

Soliciting is prohibited at market.

#### **7. Stall Assignments**

7.1. Stall assignments will be made based on attendance, product mix and logistical constraints as determined by the Market Manager and Coordinators.

7.2. Stall size shall be 10 foot by 10 foot.

7.3. Transactions between customers and vendors may only occur within the stall.

7.4. Vendors may request a maximum of two stalls. The request may be made on a seasonal or year-round basis to the Market Manager in writing.

7.5. Vendors shall provide all of their own equipment and must not exceed the 10 foot by 10 foot Stall. Tents must be weighted with 25 pounds for each corner.

#### **8. Signs**

8.1. Vendors shall post a sign with the name of their business and business location.

8.2. Vendors shall post an itemized list of products which includes pricing.

8.3. Signage must be accurate and truthful in claims of production practices, sourcing, or other claims.

8.4. All vendors accepting Food Access Program scrip or vouchers shall post signage with their identification number on it.

8.5. Signs outside of the Stall will be reviewed and approved by Market Staff prior to displaying if they do not restrict movement or physically interfere with the sale of another vendor.

#### **9. Attendance**

9.1. Start date for new vendors will be mutually agreed upon by the vendor and Market Manager.

9.2. All vendors are expected to attend Markets on a regular, year-round basis, unless the application was otherwise approved as a seasonal vendor. Vendors must attend at least one Market for a minimum of 35 weeks in their 12-month period, with no more than 8 consecutive weeks of absence.

9.3. Vendors must give at least a 14-day notice to the Market Manager of their intent to return to Market from an absence of more than 4 weeks.

9.4. Vendors must notify the Market Manager and the respective Market Coordinator no less than 48 hours prior to the Market if they are not attending.

9.5. In the case of an emergency which prohibits attendance, notify the Market Coordinator as soon as possible and then follow up with the Market Manager.

9.6. Vendors must have their booths completely set up at least 15 minutes prior to the start of Market and may not sell any products prior to the scheduled start-time.

9.7. Vendors shall not breakdown their booth or depart a Market prior to the close of the Market without approval of the Market Coordinator.

#### **10. Parking**

10.1. Vendor vehicles must be kept within assigned parking spaces.

10.2. Vendor vehicles may not be parked in customer parking zones or areas.

#### **11. Pricing**

11.1. Vendors will determine the prices of their own products.

11.2. The sale or likely sale of goods at less than fair value (dumping) is prohibited.

11.3. Vendors shall give refunds to customers that are dissatisfied with products they have purchased.

## 12. Professional manner

- 12.1. Vendors asked by Market Staff to remove products of poor quality or products that present a threat to health must do so immediately.
- 12.2. Products that are cosmetically inferior or bruised may be sold as 'seconds' and must be labeled appropriately.
- 12.3. Vendors must represent their products in an honest manner, whether written or verbal.
- 12.4. Vendors must conduct themselves in a courteous and professional manner at the Market. Vendors must treat customers, staff, volunteers of SFC, and fellow vendors with respect.
- 12.5. Inaccurate, inappropriate, threatening, or harassing words or statements construed as disparaging or harmful to other vendors, vendor-to-customer relationships, the Market, Sustainable Food Center, or other Market stakeholders are prohibited.
- 12.6. All vendors should be attentive at Market to reflect a professional presence.
- 12.7. No music other than that provided by the Market is allowed.
- 12.8. No disruptive or aggressive promotion is allowed.
- 12.9. Vendors are responsible for keeping their area clean during Market, and are responsible for cleaning their stall location after Market is over.

## 13. Gross Sales Reports

All Vendors must give the Market Coordinator their best estimates of gross sales for each Market. The data will be kept anonymous, but is required for accurate market analysis and reporting.

## Violations

### Producer-Only Policy Violation

Vendors, customers, SFC staff or others who have reasonable evidence of reselling by a vendor must submit a written complaint to the SFC Farmers Market Coordinator, Manager, or Director. The complaint should include as much detail as is available. The name of the person submitting the complaint will be kept confidential; however, anonymous complaints cannot be accepted.

Upon receipt by SFC staff of an official complaint asserting violation of the Producer Only rule by a vendor, SFC staff will conduct an inspection of the farm, ranch, or other production facilities, if the Market Director determines that the inspection will provide evidence to prove or disprove the violation.

The Market Director will designate an SFC staff person to conduct the inspection, which will take place within seven (7) calendar days of receiving the complaint. The SFC staff person who is conducting the inspection will notify the vendor to be inspected 24 hours in advance. An inspection may require observation and documentation of production or processing sites, historical evidence including invoices or receipts of relevant purchases, dated photographs or video, reliable third-party testimony, and certification documents.

Upon completion of the inspection, the SFC staff person will compile the documentation and notes from observations and submit a written recommendation, along with justification, for proving or disproving the violation to the Market Director. The investigation must reveal irrefutable proof that reselling has taken place in order for SFC to take further action. The Market Director will issue a decision on the violation of Proven, Disproven, or Insufficient Evidence in writing to the vendor, and provide the vendor with a copy of the documentation, the decision and justification, and the next steps relevant to the decision. Results of the inspection, including documentation, recommendation, and decision will remain confidential, with the exception of "Proven" reselling complaints, which will be provided to the Vendor Council.

Vendors under investigation may continue to sell at the Market. If the Market Director determines that any vendor has violated the restriction against reselling at the Market, the

Program Director may suspend the vendor from the Market for one year, or expel the vendor from the Market permanently. No vendor will be expelled from the Market without definitive proof that the farmer is reselling.

### Violation of Other Rules and Regulations

Violation of Rules and Regulations outside the *producer-only policy* will result in corrective and/or punitive action, to be determined by the SFC staff according to the following standard for the year of their vendor term:

Violations	1	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
Does not endanger the public or wellbeing of the Market	Verbal Warning by Coordinator	Written Warning by Coordinator or Manager	\$50 Fine	Suspension from the Market	Expulsion from the Market
Endangers the wellbeing of the Market	Written Warning by Coordinator or Manager	\$50 Fine	Suspension from the Market	Expulsion from the Market	
Endangers the public	\$50 Fine	Suspension from the Market	Expulsion from the Market		
Endangers the public and wellbeing of the Market	\$50 Fine and Suspension from the Market	Expulsion from the Market			

# Disputes and Grievances

*The following procedures are in place to provide any vendor with a clear process for settling a dispute or addressing a complaint or grievance.*

## **On-site Resolution**

SFC Farmers' Market Coordinators and Managers are the first step in addressing any matter, and will make every effort to resolve an issue. Vendors are asked to provide the senior on-site SFC staff person with a clear explanation of an issue, and to work with staff to reach a resolution. After gathering all available information, the SFC staff will make a determination regarding the issue based on their interpretation of the best interest of the Market as a whole and the specific circumstances. Vendors must abide by the determination on that Market day so as to maintain order in the Market. If a vendor disagrees with the determination, the formal Grievance Process is in place.

## **Deliberation**

A vendor may request deliberation for an issue with another vendor, with SFC staff, or other partner/stakeholder. SFC will contact the other party to suggest deliberation. Upon agreement, SFC will facilitate the deliberation between or among directly involved parties to reach a commonly acceptable resolution based on the written policies of the Market, or failing a written policy, based on the best interest of the Market as a whole. Any resolution reached as a result of deliberation will be binding for all parties. If there is any remaining disagreement, the formal Grievance Process is in place.

## **Grievance Process**

### **1. Director of the SFC Farm Direct Program**

A vendor should send written statement of the grievance to the Program Director within thirty (30) days of the incident. The Program Director shall use best efforts to resolve the grievance within five (5) working days of receiving the written statement. At the end of this time period, the Program Director shall issue a written response to the grievant with either the resolution or next steps if additional time is needed to address the issue. The Program Director shall issue a final written response to the grievant within thirty (30) days of the initial complaint.

### **2. Executive Director of Sustainable Food Center.**

If unsatisfied by the Program Director's response, the grievant can appeal to the SFC Executive Director. A written statement of the grievance should be submitted to the Executive Director within three (3) working days of the Program Director's response. The Executive Director will use best efforts to resolve the grievance within five (5) working days of receiving the written statement. At the end of this time period, the Executive Director will send a written response to the grievant with either the resolution or next steps if additional time is needed to address the issue. The Executive Director will issue a final written response to the grievant within thirty (30) days of the appeal.

### **3. President of the Sustainable Food Center Board of Directors**

If unsatisfied by the Executive Director's written response, the grievant can appeal the decision to the SFC Board President. The grievant should submit a written request for an appeal to the Board President and the Executive Director within three (3) working days of receipt of the Executive Director's written response. A hearing with the Executive Committee of the SFC Board of Directors will be scheduled within thirty (30) working days of receipt of the request for an appeal. The grievant can be accompanied at the hearing by another individual for representation or support. The Executive Committee will render a decision on the appeal in writing within sixty (60) days of the hearing. The decision of the Executive Committee of the SFC Board of Directors will be final.

# Governance

*SFC Farmers' Markets are managed by a team of staff housed within SFC's Farm Direct program with support from Administrative / Finance staff and members of the Development / Communications team. The SFC Board of Directors provides oversight of the organization's finances and governance. Vendors are directly represented in Market policy by the Market Vendor Council. This SFC Farm Direct Policy manual provides the guidance for staff to operate the Market and its related programs. Below is a description of key staff and their roles.*

## **SFC Farmers' Market Vendor Council**

### **Vendor Council Role**

The Vendor Council will support the Market by reviewing and making recommendations regarding Market policy, providing input and consultation on Market operations, and serving as a liaison between Market staff and other vendors. The Vendor Council will be notified about newly approved vendor applications but may be asked to provide input prior to acceptance. The Vendor Council will also be informed in the event that a reselling complaint has been confirmed. Members of the Vendor Council may also be asked to assist with the investigation of a reselling complaint by providing specialized, professional perspective. Members will also be asked to offer guidance on the agenda and assist with planning for the Annual All-Vendor Meeting. Vendor Council input will be sought primarily via email, phone, or in-person conversation. The Vendor Council will have at least one full meeting each year, to be held in August.

### **Facilitation and Decision Making**

The SFC Farmers' Market Vendor Council will be elected by vendors from the roster of vendors who have participated in SFC Markets consistently for at least one year. The Vendor Council will be made up of four (4) Agricultural Producers and three (3) Value-Added Producers. At least three agricultural producers and two value-added producers must be present at a meeting in order to take action. SFC Deputy Director / Farmers' Market Director will facilitate the meetings and serve as staff liaison for the Vendor Council. Decisions will be made first by consensus and then by vote, with at least two-thirds majority needed to determine an outcome.

### **Nominations and Elections**

SFC Deputy Director / Farmers' Market Director along with the Market Manager and Coordinators will seek nominations in February of each year. Nominations can be made in writing using email or pen and paper. Vendors in good standing may nominate themselves or suggest another vendor, who must then confirm their interest. Ballots listing all nominees will be distributed electronically in June and voting will close on July 31 each year. The four agricultural producer nominees and three value-added producer nominees who receive the most votes will serve on the Vendor Council, with an expected commitment of at least one year. In the event of no clear winner is indicated from an initial vote, a run-off may be held.

### **All-Vendor Meeting**

An all-vendor meeting will be held in September of each year, to present the current Vendor Council members, briefly review the status of the Markets, and gather vendor input and recommendations for future programming or policy. The meeting will last no more than two hours, will be interactive and engaging, and will include a meal.

## SFC Farmers' Market Staff

### Farmers' Market Coordinators

- Administrative –Collect and record vendor fees, scrip, and sales estimates; maintain vehicle and equipment upkeep logs, ensure inventory of necessary supplies
- Program Operations – Prepare and transport equipment to and from Market sites; Set up street closures and signage; Oversee set-up and break-down crews; Provide support for special events and activities.

*\*The SFC Farmers' Market Coordinator assigned to each Market has decision-making authority regarding all aspects of operations, not including financial or policy matters. The Coordinator will make necessary decisions according to this Market policy and for the good of the Market as a whole.*

### SFC Board of Directors

SFC Board members are responsible for organizational governance and finance, and fulfill a fundraising and resource development function for the entire organization.

### SFC Advisory Council

SFC Advisory Council members help raise the profile of SFC and the awareness of sustainable and local food systems. These activities may include, as available, being a spokesperson for SFC's mission, offering expertise to SFC, broadening our constituency base, and assisting SFC board and staff in leveraging resources.

## **Other SFC Opportunities for Market Vendors**

*In addition to the sales opportunities created through the Markets, SFC offers other sales and promotional opportunities for its vendors. To learn more or get involved with any of these programs, please contact <http://sustainablefoodcenter.org/about/who-we-are>, or 512.236.0074.*

### **Farm Direct Marketing Projects**

In furthering SFC's mission of increasing food access and strengthening the local food system in Central Texas, SFC's Farm Direct Projects are designed to assist farmers in connecting their products to worksites, schools, institutions, and universities. By doing so, SFC hopes to increase farmers' sales and diversify market channels. Farm to Work and Farm to School are open to fruit and vegetable producers.

#### **Farm to Work**

Farm to Work connects farmers with worksites and businesses in Austin, San Antonio, and Houston. Farmers deliver \$20 - \$25 pre-ordered boxes of diversified fruits and vegetables directly to employees at worksites on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. SFC pairs farmers with worksites, assists with promotion of the program at worksites, provides online payment system for customers, procures payments to farmer, and trains farmers on the Farm to Work website. A sample Farm to Work agreement can be found in the appendix of this policy manual.

#### **Farm to School**

Farm to School provides schools and students the opportunity to incorporate local foods into the cafeteria and food systems education in the classroom. We've partnered with AISD schools to provide them with marketing materials encouraging the procurement of locally sourced foods, as well as and Meet the Farmer and Veggie Sampling opportunities in the cafeteria and classroom. Farmers are encouraged to apply for this opportunity if interested in teaching and connecting with students at schools. Farmers are paid \$200 for each Meet the Farmer Visit.

### **Grow Local Gardening Program**

SFC's Grow Local program provides opportunities for gardening experts to serve as instructors for a variety of gardening classes. Instructors are paid a stipend and/or have the opportunity to promote their products or services through SFC's marketing outlets.

### **The Happy Kitchen/*La Cocina Alegre***

SFC's The Happy Kitchen offers Farmer's Market vendors two ways to market their businesses to our class participants: as ingredient suppliers and as guest presenters/instructors in classes. By doing so, SFC hopes to help vendors increase their brand awareness and gain new customers. Vendors who supply to or present/instruct in our for-fee classes will be mentioned by name on SFC's web page, social media and other marketing for upcoming THK classes. Vendors who present/instruct are encouraged to bring marketing materials, business cards and merchandise for direct distribution or sale to class participants.

### **Development and Communications**

The Development & Communications (DevComm) Department at SFC provides Farmers' Market vendors with a number of promotional opportunities that help increase awareness and generate new customers. Our weekly newsletter (14,000+ subscribers), website (15,000+ visits per month) and social media channels Facebook (13,000+ Likes), Twitter (3,000 Followers) and Instagram (2,750 Followers) are our primary communications tools. SFC also works to create partnerships with local media, restaurants local businesses, through which we may have opportunity to promote vendors. Additional media and press opportunities to promote vendors and products are discovered regularly.