

Starting an Alberta approved farmers' market



Superseded

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Superseded

Starting an Alberta approved farmers' market

As with starting any business venture, starting a farmers' market in your community requires careful planning. Typically, the process involves several individuals, such as producers, consumers, community groups or a combination of groups. No matter who initiates it, the planning process takes time and should be comprehensive to achieve a successful market.

The success of your market depends on gaining community support. Community support is more than just getting potential customers on side. It may also include convincing other community businesses that a farmers' market can have a positive economic influence on their businesses.

Surveys show that consumers who shop at a farmers' market also spend money in the community on gas, restaurants and groceries they couldn't get at the market. Vendors and employees of vendors also spend money in the community. All of these contribute to a positive impact on the local economy.

The Alberta Approved Farmers' Market Program

The Alberta Approved Farmers' Market Program (the Program) is a government-run program started in the early 1970's. The Program creates an operational framework that provides direction and guidance to approved farmers' markets in Alberta. The [Program Guidelines](#) describe the Program and policies governing all Alberta approved farmers' markets.

Becoming an Alberta approved farmers' market

Once the decision is made to start a market, the next step is deciding to be an approved market or a public market. Alberta Agriculture and Forestry (AF) grants approval status to farmers' markets interested in participating in the Program. Being an approved market is voluntary. An approved market is not better than a public market operating outside the Program; it is simply different.

There are benefits to being an approved farmers' market:

- All approved farmers' markets follow the same Guidelines, which strengthens the markets overall by setting minimum standards for consistency across the markets.
- Food vendors selling through Alberta approved farmers' markets are able to take advantage of Part 3 of the Alberta *Public Health Act* Food Regulation, which allows vendors to produce their food products in home kitchens. Approved farmers' markets are the only venues in Alberta that allow

for the sale of both low and high-risk home-prepared foods.

- Because of this legislative provision, approved farmers' markets are able to attract and "discover" new entrepreneurs and small-scale food processors who may want to test and incubate their business ideas before moving production into a commercial kitchen.
- Approved farmers' markets are connected to a province-wide communication and administration network.
- Alberta approved farmers' markets can use the Sunnygirl logo in their advertising and promotions. The Sunnygirl logo is an official mark held by the Government of Alberta and helps consumers identify the market as approved and a location where they can purchase Alberta-produced products.
- Sponsors, managers and vendors have access to the AF Farmers' Market Specialist and other staff who provide Guideline interpretation, marketing expertise and links to other government departments and agencies.
- AF promotes Alberta approved farmers' markets on the website – alberta.ca/find-an-approved-farmers-market.aspx - as well as on the mobile app that is available free of charge from the App Store or Google Play.
- Approved markets and their vendors are entitled to become members of the Alberta Farmers' Market Association (AFMA), a non-profit, membership-driven organization that operates at arm's length from government. While AFMA does not have a role in approving markets, they are a voice for Alberta approved farmers' markets and their vendors, providing advocacy, education and promotion of approved markets.



Public markets include all types of markets, including privately owned markets and flea markets. Public markets may have for-profit ownership with no requirement for an advisory body or board of directors. In other cases, a non-profit community group may operate the market but they are unable to meet some of the other requirements of the Program. At a public market, each food vendor must have an individual food permit and produce their food products in a health-approved facility/commercial kitchen. Many municipalities require each vendor at a public market to have a business license, whereas often only a single license is required for the approved farmers' market because of its non-profit status. A public market does not receive any of the above noted benefits enjoyed by an approved farmers' market.

Markets wishing to obtain approval under the Program must complete an AF [Alberta Approved Farmers' Market Program application form](#) and be able to demonstrate that the

proposed market will meet the minimum requirements outlined in the Guidelines.

Applications are evaluated on the following points:

- Proof of non-profit status: To meet this requirement, the proposed market must be one of the following:
 - Sponsored by a non-profit community group, church organization, Chamber of Commerce, municipality, or an agricultural society formed under the *Agricultural Societies Act* and set up as a committee of their organization
 - Incorporated specifically for the purpose of operating an approved market under the legislation of the *Societies Act* or *Cooperatives Act* as a new generation cooperative operating on a reduced profit basis.
 - See below for more information about non-profit options
- Insured against liability - This requirement can be a condition of approval so that market organizers are not purchasing insurance before they know they are able to operate. See below for more information about selecting insurance.
- Operate for a minimum of five market days per season
- Abide by the Minimum Vendor Rule where the market operates with a minimum of five vendors averaged over the market season
- Abide by the 80/20 Rule where markets must maintain a minimum annual average vendor ratio of 80/20 where 80 per cent of the vendors are Albertans selling Alberta products, which they, an immediate family member, staff member or member of a producer-owned cooperative or their staff knowledgeable of the production process have made, baked or grown. A maximum of 20 per cent of the vendors may be resellers of Alberta products, sell products from out-of-province or sell commercially available products.
 - Market organizers are encouraged to use a vendor application to collect all required information on a vendor. A sample vendor application is available on the sunnygirl.ca website. Customize this document to meet your market needs.
- Market rules must be included with the application form. The rules guide the daily operation of the market and the behavior of vendors and staff. A fact sheet containing potential topic areas is available at open.alberta.ca/publications/alberta-approved-farmers-market-rules-fact-sheet.
- A satisfactory business case must be included. See below for more information about the requirements of the business case.

- The sponsoring organization, if applicable, must indicate why they want to start a farmers' market, how it fits into the mandate and strategic plan of the organization and how they will support it so that it continues to grow and succeed.
- A minimum of three letters of support from the community must accompany the application. These letters can be from business owners, community leaders, elected officials, town chief administrative officers, etc.

You must meet both of the following criteria to operate as an Alberta approved farmers' market.

1. Approval by AF because the market has met the minimum requirements described in the Guidelines
2. Alberta Health Services (AHS) issues a food permit.

AHS only issues a food permit after AF has confirmed the market has met the minimum requirements under the Guidelines. If AHS revokes the food permit for any reason, AF will suspend/remove approval status. In most cases, status is reinstated once the AHS Order requirements have been satisfied.

A number of products are prohibited for sale at any time at Alberta approved farmers' markets:

- Used, antique or flea market items
- Uninspected meat or meat products for human AND/OR animal consumption
- Raw milk or raw milk products for human AND/OR animal consumption -- exception: raw milk cheeses that are made in a facility meeting federal legislative requirements
- Live animals, whether for sale or customer interaction (i.e. chicks, petting zoo)
- Hatching eggs

Not-for-profit business options

Market Sponsorship

Having your market sponsored by a local non-profit community group is one way to satisfy the non-profit status requirement. One of the following can act as a sponsor:

- Registered not-for-profit community organization or group such as a Lions or Elks Club
- Registered chamber of commerce
- Municipality
- Agricultural society formed under the *Agricultural Societies Act*.

In all cases, there should be a mutually beneficial relationship between the market and the sponsor. With the sponsor's assistance, the market has stability and ongoing support. In return, the sponsor is able to increase its visibility in the community.

While the farmers' market is not necessarily a moneymaker for the organization, the funds raised from operating the farmers' market belong to the sponsor to offer additional services in the community. The bank account for a sponsored farmers' market may be set up in two ways depending on the requirements placed on the sponsor by their governing legislation:

1. In some cases, the sponsor is required to have designated board members with full signing authority. This is true of agricultural societies under the *Agricultural Societies Act* and may also be true of other sponsors. In this situation, the sponsor may or may not set up a separate bank account for the market.
2. The market has its own bank account with signing authority given to the advisory committee executive. This situation is becoming less common as sponsors become more involved in the operation of the market.

The farmers' market is a committee of the sponsoring organization. Sponsors should be actively involved in providing direction to the overall operation of the market. Some suggestions for how this can be achieved:

- Overseeing the operation of the approved farmers' market
- Helping the market form an advisory committee to direct and advise on day-to-day operations
- Providing a board member to be the liaison between the advisory committee and the sponsor's board of directors
- Helping establish the rules and processes of the approved farmers' market, ensuring vendors have meaningful input into the formulation of the operating rules and processes
- The recruitment, selection, performance review and discipline of the market manager
- Determining and/or advising on the remuneration of the market manager
- Encouraging and/or financially supporting yearly educational opportunities for the market manager so as to further his/her professional development
- Encouraging vendor participation on the advisory committee
- Ensuring records required by the Program to keep the market in good standing are maintained and submitted to AF
- Ensuring the approved farmers' market and its vendors adhere to all legislation and regulations

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- Ensuring the approved farmers' market is either insured or indemnified against liability

The sponsor is responsible and accountable for all the activities of the approved farmers' market.

Non-Profit Society

Incorporating your own non-profit society under the *Societies Act* is another option. A copy of the Act is available online at open.alberta.ca/publications.

There are several steps to incorporating a society:

- Choose a name that is appropriate to your community and that does not conflict with another society's name in Alberta.
- Get an Alberta NUANS (Newly Upgraded Automated Name Search) report to confirm the name is not identical to another society.
- Fill out the required forms found at alberta.ca/incorporate-a-society.aspx:
 - Application to Form a Society
 - Society Bylaws - Bylaws are the legally binding rules adopted by a society describing governance of the society and regulation of its affairs. Market policies and vendor rules, on the other hand, describe the day-to-day operations of the market.
 - Notice of Address for Societies
 - Request for Services
- Submit the forms, NUANS report and \$50 incorporation fee.

Occasionally, society members disagree on how to handle internal matters. Non-profit societies must be prepared to resolve their own internal disputes. AF and Service Alberta (Corporate Registry) do not supervise the conduct of societies, nor do they provide a counseling service on matters other than the forms and documents filed with them. Consider including a bylaw for a mediation or arbitration procedure to address internal disputes.

Your society must file an annual return with Corporate Registry every year before the last day of the month following your anniversary month. You must also inform Corporate Registry of bylaw amendments and address changes. All forms can be found on the Service Alberta website: alberta.ca/corporations-cooperatives-organizations-annual-returns.aspx.

New Generation Cooperative

A cooperative (co-op) is a legally incorporated business arrangement that provides for the control of the business by its membership. A new generation co-op (NGC) is a type of cooperative that uses a system of delivery rights and obligations to encourage business loyalty and provide a form of vertical integration. NGC's are particularly suitable to ventures involved in value-added agricultural processing and marketing.

Legislation governing the NGC business model is found in Alberta's *Cooperatives Act* available online at: open.alberta.ca/publications. Sections specific to the NGC can be found in Part 18, Division 4, Sections 422 to 430. There are also accompanying regulations that must be adhered to.

Key attributes of NGCs consistent with all co-ops:

- NGCs are controlled by their membership using the principle of one member, one vote.
- Earnings are distributed to the members based on patronage.
- The board of directors is elected by the membership.

Characteristics of NGCs that differentiate them from traditional co-operatives:

- NGCs may issue designated shares, which carry delivery rights and obligations.
- Individuals (members and non-members) may hold higher levels of equity through the purchase of investment shares.
- Membership may be restricted to designated shareholders.
- In Alberta, NGCs are applicable only to agricultural ventures, and the word "co-op" or "cooperative" does not necessarily have to appear in the name of the venture.

In general, NGCs are restricted, project-oriented enterprises, require significant investments from their members, and increased profits to provide a return on capital through this investment.

The paper, *New Generation Co-ops: Alberta's Newest Option for Agriculture Business*, prepared by Corbett Smith Bresee LLP, an Edmonton legal firm, provides an excellent and comprehensive overview of setting up an NGC in Alberta. It can be found online at: open.alberta.ca/publications/new-generation-co-ops-alberta-s-newest-option-for-agriculture-business.

The new generation cooperative business model operating on a reduced profit basis is allowed under the Alberta Approved Farmers' Market Guidelines. This model allows for the accumulation of capital funds for the purpose of large

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capital expenditures and, as such, may be suited for those markets wanting to own their own permanent facilities for example.

New generation cooperatives are not for everyone. When compared to traditional business arrangements, NGCs may seem complicated and expensive to set up, manage and maintain. Each market would develop their structure differently depending on the needs of the market, so there is no standard format to follow. It is advisable to contact a lawyer who specializes in cooperatives to assist you in setting up this business model for your market. This person will help you determine if the NGC model meets the needs of your market and will ensure that all aspects of the legislation and corresponding regulations are adhered to during the set-up of the NGC. You will also be advised of any legislative requirements you need to meet on an ongoing basis.

Governance options

One of the reasons for the non-profit requirement is because non-profit organizations are governed by a board of directors and not just operated by one individual. In the event of conflicts within the market that cannot be resolved by the manager or that may involve the manager, those individuals affected always have the option to escalate their concerns to the board of directors for resolution.

In a sponsored market, the legal board of directors sits with the sponsoring organization; the market itself is not a legal entity. They oversee all the committees under their umbrella, one of which is the farmers' market.

In many cases, the sponsoring organization will set up a formal committee (also known as an advisory committee) to work specifically with the farmers' market on an ongoing basis. Other sponsoring organizations may choose to be very hands-on with the market decision making and not form a separate committee.

If a committee is formed, the board of directors may delegate certain responsibilities to the committee, but ultimate accountability lies with the board of directors. The committee ensures the market rules are consistent with both the bylaws for the sponsoring organization as well as the Program Guidelines. The committee typically, but not always, will consist of at least one liaison from the board of directors as well as several vendors. Often market members elect vendors to the committee and appoint a committee chair and secretary/treasurer. Do not confuse these positions with the executive positions from the board of directors as they only have the authority granted to them by the legal board of directors.

In a market that forms its own non-profit society, the interim board of directors is identified on the forms submitted to Corporate Registry. This interim board is in place until elections are held at the first annual general meeting. Using the bylaws developed to form the Society, the board of directors will develop board policies and procedures and hire

the manager. The manager should not be a member of the board of directors because he/she is an employee of the market. Having a manager who is also a member of the board of directors is a conflict of interest.

Among other things, the bylaws will state how many board members are required, quorum for board meetings, when and how elections for board members are held and their terms of office. The bylaws will also indicate if there are any requirements for becoming a board member, i.e., must be a vendor or if community leaders can be included, etc.

Market Manager

The farmers' market manager is one of the most critical roles in the market, requiring some very specific skills and knowledge. This person is the liaison with the board of directors, the vendors, AF, the public health inspector and other regulatory agencies.

Develop a job description for your market manager so that everyone is clear about duties and responsibilities. A sample market manager job description is available at [alberta.ca/assets/documents/af-farmers-market-manager-job-description.pdf](https://open.alberta.ca/assets/documents/af-farmers-market-manager-job-description.pdf).

One of the primary roles of the market manager is enforcement. The manager enforces market rules, ensures the Program Guidelines are adhered to and ensures vendors are compliant with legislation. AF has developed an online market manager training manual that clearly describes the roles and responsibilities of the manager as well as basic information about legislation that applies to the market and its vendors. This home study course is mandatory for all approved farmers' market managers within one year of becoming a manager of an approved farmers' market. It is available at [alberta.ca/resources-for-farmers-market-managers.aspx](https://open.alberta.ca/resources-for-farmers-market-managers.aspx).

It is still a common practice in Alberta for the manager to also be a vendor, especially in smaller markets. Managing a farmers' market is a complex job that involves much more than turning on the lights and setting up tables.

Managing a market involves building relationships with vendors, the board of directors, regulatory agencies and customers. It requires a solid understanding of legislation affecting all vendors, and it requires that the individual be present and actively engaged in doing what is best for the market at all times.

Being a successful vendor requires the vendor to be present and actively engaging with their customers to make maximum sales.

Wearing both hats on market day results in a conflict of interest that can be challenging to manage effectively and impartially.

Some conflicts to keep in mind:

- The manager's primary role is one of enforcement, ensuring vendors are in compliance with all legislation, enforcing the AF guidelines, enforcing the market rules, etc. Who then polices the manager?
- Vendor selection should be impartial, and yet, vendor-managers are often faulted for rejecting applications from vendors with products that compete with their own. Develop clear and transparent vendor selection criteria to help alleviate this concern.
- Managers should always be "visible" in the market, to customers, vendors, regulators, etc. but are criticized for securing the "best table location" for themselves in order to accomplish this objective. Think of other methods to identify your vendor-manager on market day.

Some markets choose to operate without an official market manager, instead dividing the responsibilities among board members. Since board members are often vendors, this situation is full of the same challenges and potential conflicts noted above. If this is the intention for your market, keep in mind that at least one of the individuals needs to complete the required training.

Food safety training

The safety of the food sold at approved farmers' markets is critical to the success of farmers' markets in Alberta. AF is committed to ensuring market managers and vendors have a minimum level of food safety training. Working in partnership with Alberta Health Services (AHS), a farmers' market food safety home study course is available for Alberta approved farmers' market managers and vendors. Alberta Food Safety Basics for Farmers' Markets is available at [albertahealthservices.ca/eph/page3151.aspx](https://open.alberta.ca/healthservices/eph/page3151.aspx).

AF requires that all market managers and vendors selling an agricultural or processed food product at Alberta approved farmers' markets complete this course within one year of becoming a market manager or food vendor unless they have already completed a food safety course recognized by AHS. The recognized food safety courses in Alberta is available at [alberta.ca/assets/documents/health-recognized-food-safety-courses-alberta.pdf](https://open.alberta.ca/assets/documents/health-recognized-food-safety-courses-alberta.pdf).

The foods offered for sale through farmers' markets are becoming increasingly complex, with more high-risk foods introduced every year. Managers are encouraged to complete the food safety training required under Section 31 of the Food Regulation. Section 31 training will help managers to know the dangers of improper handling of these high risk foods, so they can guide and coach vendors and customers alike on proper handling of these foods.

Location of your farmers' market

A critical driver behind a successful farmers' market is a good location. In Alberta, approved farmers' markets are in

many different types of locations: indoors, outdoors, community halls, malls, arenas, parking lots, agriplexes, retrofitted buildings, rec centres, on the street, etc. Some are in permanent facilities that allow the market to operate year-round while others only allow for seasonal usage since they are located outside or in a building that has another use in the colder months. It is important when choosing a site to look at all possible locations and then outline the positive and negative features of each site.

Things to consider when selecting a site:

- **Size:** How many tables/stalls will the site accommodate? Is there room to increase the existing number of vendors? If your size is limited, is there a way to reconfigure the layout of the stalls to be able to increase the number of vendors? If your site is available year round, could you have some vendors set up outside during the summer months to allow for an increase in vendors during the busy season?
- **Centrality:** Is the site central to where your potential customers live, work and shop? If it isn't central, is there public transportation available so that customers who don't drive can still attend the market?
- **Transportation:** As noted above, some of your customers won't be able to drive so alternatives should be considered. For example, if seniors are an important component of your target audience but the market is not central to them, is it possible to rent a van each week to transport them to the market?
- **Parking:** Is there ample parking? The rule of thumb is two to three stalls per vendor. Is the parking lot paved, on grass or gravel and what impact will there be when it rains?
- **Surface cover/flooring:** If indoors, is the market on a cement surface, tile or hardwood? If the market is outside, is the surface paved, gravel, on grass, etc.? What is the impact when it rains? Consult with Alberta Health Services for outdoor surfaces that are not recommended/viable for a farmers' market.
- **Water:** Potable water must be available for your vendors.
- **Restrooms:** Restrooms for vendors and customers must be available within the area.
- **Cost:** Does your sponsor provide the facility or are you renting/leasing space? If the facility is available exclusively to your market year round, what else can you do with the building on off-market days in order to recoup some of your expenses?

Day and time

Choosing the most appropriate day and time can be two of the most critical decisions you will make about the market. It is important to consider when the markets in the area are

operating. Vendors often attend multiple markets so you want to set your day and time so you will be able to attract the optimal vendor mix.

Identify your target audience. When they can attend the market? You should not define your target audience as everyone in your community. Are they:

- Male or female?
- Do they work?
- Do they have children? Ages?
- Can they attend during the day, after school/work, in the evening, only on weekends?

It is important to remember that a convenient day or time for your vendors may not be the same for your customers. Consider consulting with both before making a final decision.

Permission can be granted for approved farmers' markets to move to a new location for a special market. For example, an outdoor seasonal market that holds a Christmas market in the community hall. Since the market's food permit is location-specific, a new food permit may be required. AHS will only proceed with an inspection and paperwork if AF approves the move.

Insurance

All approved farmers' markets, regardless of size, must obtain liability insurance. A valid certificate of insurance for the market must be sent to AF each year. Failure to do so will lead to suspension of the market approval.

A common misconception is that the market insurance policy covers the vendors. This is NOT true and vendors should be encouraged to carry their own liability insurance policies. More and more markets are requiring their vendors to provide proof of liability insurance before being accepted as a vendor. Talk with your insurance carrier about the risks to the market of not requiring vendors to have insurance.

The Alberta Farmers' Market Association (AFMA) offers a group policy for farmers' markets and vendors who are members of AFMA. For more information, visit their website: albertafarmersmarket.com/ and click on the Members tab.

It is always advisable to seek out multiple quotes before purchasing insurance coverage to ensure all your needs are being met at the best price.

The Business Case

A farmers' market should always be viewed as a business, no different than your local hardware or grocery store. Starting any business requires careful consideration. A business case captures the reasoning for initiating a project or task. Typically, it is presented in a written document. A business case is needed when planning and developing a farmers' market because you want to ensure your plans are

in support of a specific business need that will require resources such as money and time.

The following list describes some of the considerations when developing your business case for your farmers' market application.

Business Case – Market Committee

The areas to cover in the market's business case submitted with your application include:

- Vision and goals for the market
 - A vision statement for the market describes what you would like to achieve in the mid-term (3 - 5 years) or long-term (5 - 10 years). The vision statement serves as a clear guide for choosing courses of action, describing what you hope the market will offer to the community, consumers and the vendors so that all benefit from the market.
 - Start with answering the questions: Why do you want to start a farmers' market? What is the objective of this venture?
 - Your goals can be either short-term or long-term and should support the vision. Short-term goals detail what you hope to accomplish in the next few months or year while long-term goals span several years but generally identify interim milestones.
- SWOT analysis
 - The SWOT analysis is an in-depth look at the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of starting the farmers' market. Look at your vision and identify internal and external factors that will affect achieving that vision.
 - The strengths and weaknesses analyze the market as an organization and describes things you have control over. These internal factors can help or hinder the success of the market, i.e., capacity and skills of the organizing committee, manager's skills, location, date, time, etc.
 - The opportunities and threats are external forces affecting the success of the market. You take advantage of opportunities and protect against threats but you can't change them. Consider things such as the role the market will play in the community, the benefits of a farmers' market to the community, an assessment of the pros and cons of having the market as well as any potential risks that you foresee. Consider the seasonality of your proposed market in your analysis, i.e. seasonal market only or year-round market.
- Successful markets affect many stakeholders and businesses in the community. Planning discussions for a market should include these stakeholders so that all points of view are considered. Describe the results of any

consultations you have done with community and business leaders, customers and potential vendors.

- Target audience/customers
 - Who is the target audience? Describe their demographics.
 - How do you know there is sufficient customer demand for the proposed market? Engage with your potential customers by holding a meeting, asking them to fill out a written survey or by using social media such as Facebook.
 - Will the target audience find the market day, hours and location convenient?
- Population
 - What is the population of your community and the surrounding area? Is it sufficient to support a market(s)?
 - If the proposed market is operating on the same day as another market in the area, either approved or public, describe how the population in the trading area is sufficient to support multiple viable markets. The ultimate goal is to see all markets succeed.
- Vendors
 - Did you consult with potential vendors during the planning stage? Have you secured vendors for the proposed market? When seeking vendors, determine their level of commitment. Finding only five vendors to start your market may not be sufficient because it is unlikely all of them will be able to attend every market. Describe how you will be able to meet the minimum requirement of five vendors each market day and maintain the required 80/20 vendor ratio. These two requirements must be demonstrated in the application before it will be approved and are not areas the market organizers can strive to achieve over time.
 - Describe how new vendors will be recruited. Also describe your plans for ensuring an appropriate product mix for the market. Keep in mind that 80 per cent of the money spent at a farmers' market is on food products, so you want to have diverse vendors offering everything from farm-grown products like produce, eggs, honey and meat to prepared food vendors selling items like preserves, baking, sauces and ready-to-eat foods. Consider the ethnic mix of your customers and seek out vendors who can make foods with which your target audience will be familiar.
- Promotions
 - How will you promote the proposed market to your target audience? Will you use flyers, posters, radio or print advertising, website, social media, etc.?

- Will you develop a customer newsletter to keep customers informed about upcoming events at the market?
- How will you differentiate your market from others in the area in your promotions? Is there a way to develop cross-promotions with other markets so that you share advertising dollars and build market share for all markets?

Business Case – Sponsoring Organization

Only complete this section of the application if a community group will sponsor the market. It does not apply to markets that form their own non-profit societies.

This section is critical to ensure that the goals of the approved farmers' market identified in the market's business case align with the mandate and goals of the sponsoring organization. A representative from the board of directors completes it.

- Describe how sponsoring the farmers' market fits the mandate of the organization.
- Describe the role of the sponsor in the proposed market. Will a committee be formed with a board liaison or will the board of directors remain hands-on?
- Indicate where the farmers' market fits into the current strategic plan for the organization.
- Describe how the organization will support the farmers' market. The list of some of the ways sponsors can support a market is listed above under the section called "Market sponsorship."

Budget

Developing a budget is crucial to ensuring you have sufficient finances to start and continue the market. Most sponsors will pay the start-up costs for their new markets until they become sustainable. If you are forming a non-profit society, consider how the early stage costs will be covered. Some budget categories to include:

- Accounting fees
- Advertising/promotion
- AFMA membership fee
- Bank charges
- Business license
- Insurance
- Manager's professional development
- Manager's salary/honorarium
- Signage rental or purchase

- Table rental or purchase
- Venue rent or street closure fees

For More Information

For more information about the Alberta Approved Farmers' Market Program or how to apply to become an approved farmers' market, contact:

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