



A Community Market
1221 Cleveland Avenue, Ashland Ohio 44805 • 419-207-0300 •

Producer Guidelines

Anyone interested in selling through the Ashland Roots Cooperative Market. (hereafter ARCM) must read and understand these Producer Guidelines prior to applying as a producer member.

Mission

We strive to maintain a year round cooperative market place for the purpose of providing our community with quality products. Giving preference to local economic development, our goal is to encourage healthy eating and sustainable living.

These guidelines were put in place by the Board of Directors to clarify our goals of creating a market that promotes sustainable living and healthy eating. If your product does not meet our guidelines, but you feel it still supports the ARCM mission, you may petition the Board for a waiver (please note that waiver must be completed for each item). These requests will be reviewed and decided on a case by case basis.

Guideline Review

ARCM reserves the right to review the producer guidelines on a regular basis and to make changes as needed. Revised guidelines will be announced and made available to co-op membership. When revised, producers will have 30 days to review and make changes as needed. Producers must remain current with the revised guidelines.

General Producer Guidelines

Members Only: Sellers are required to be members of the ARCM. Membership dues must be current in order for producers to continue to sell.

Responsible Sourcing: All products sold at Ashland Roots must be grown, made, or value-added in Ohio, **or** sourced from organic, fair-trade, non-GMO producers or cooperatives **whenever possible**. The use of locally sourced sub-ingredients is encouraged.

Compliance with Health, Safety and Related Laws: All products must comply with federal, state, and local health regulations, licensing, and labeling requirements. Producers are expected to inform themselves on issues governing the production, display, distribution, sampling and sale of their products. Anyone wishing to sell through ARCM should research the rules and regulations regarding the products they are wishing to sell prior to applying as a producer member.

Disclosure of growing practices: All producers are required to fill out a disclosure form and a producer application before joining ARCM, and may be required to fill out a new disclosure at the

behest of the market manager or a representative of the Board. If a producer changes growing practices, they will have a 10 day period to fill out a new disclosure.

Producers are encouraged to promote themselves and their operation in the market, either in print, by word of mouth or through use of online or social media posts.

Practices that promote ecological balance, conserve biodiversity, and do not use synthetic fertilizers or pesticides except for those approved by the OMRI (Organic Materials Review Institute) are encouraged.

Organic certification is welcome, but we will not exclude products without this certification.

Product Related Guidelines

Meat, poultry, dairy (milk, butter, cheese), and eggs: Products from concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFO) as defined by the Ohio Department of Agriculture (defined here: www.epa.ohio.gov/dsw/cafo/index.aspx) and products from animals treated with growth hormones, such as rBGH, may not be sold. Pasture production when seasonally available is encouraged. Routine use of antibiotics is discouraged. Products from animals that are fed GMO feed are not allowed.

Produce: Produce grown from genetically modified (GMO) seed may not be sold through ARCM.

Value-added foods: Value-added foods are processed or prepared products that have been cooked, canned, dried, baked, or preserved. Value added foods may be prepared off site (with proper licensing) or in a licensed commercial kitchen.

Categories of Value-Added Foods include:

- Bakery (breads, cookies, cakes, biscotti, scones, etc.)
- Shelf Stable (nut butters, jams/jellies, syrups, sauces, granolas, etc.)
- Refrigerated (sauerkraut, yoghurt, cheese, hummus/spreads, etc.)
 - Ready to Eat (typically prepared in the commercial kitchen)

All products should either be “made from scratch” using basic raw materials (items with only one ingredient, e.g. flour, sugar, raspberries, mint, etc.), or sourced for resale using the responsible sourcing guidelines above. Preference will be given to products made by a local member/producer over resale items.

Majority (by weight) of ingredients in value-added products sold through ARCM must be responsibly sourced (i.e. sourced from a Local Roots producer or directly from another responsible source, as outlined above).

Exceptions include:

Grains (including flour, oats), sugar, coffee/tea, spices, real chocolate, oils, and nuts.

Items such as commercial baking mixes, prepackaged cookies, crackers, and pretzels, and canned fillings may not be used (except canned or jarred items sold by other Local Roots producers).

Meat products used as ingredients must be sourced locally and the origin farm identified on the producer's application and label. Meats from unidentified origins may not be sold through the ARCM.

The use of highly processed ingredients such as high fructose corn syrup (HFCS)/agave, hydrogenated oils, artificial flavors/colors/preservatives and MSG is not allowed.

The use of processed ingredients such as bleached flour and refined white sugar is highly discouraged.

The use of genetically modified (GMO) ingredients is strongly discouraged and every effort will be made to help producers find sources for non-GMO ingredients, but if no resource is available, exceptions may be made by the board on a case by case basis. If GMO ingredients are in your product, signage will advise our shoppers of such.

Mixing store bought ingredients (example: cookie mixes) is not considered adding value and may not be sold through the ARCM.

Wild/Foraged items: Wild/Forged products such as wild berries, ramps, fiddlehead ferns, and flowers may be sold through the ARCM. This also includes fish caught by the producer in Ohio waters. (Please note: Wild foraged mushrooms may not be sold in the state of Ohio.) These products should be obtained in a way that does not deplete or endanger the species collected and that insures a sustainable harvest for future generations.

Plants: Nursery products including fresh cut or potted flowers, bedding plants, seeds, perennials, annuals, trees, or shrubs that are propagated from seed, cuttings, bulbs, plugs or plant divisions may be sold through the ARCM. A copy of the license allowing producer to sell perennials must be given to the market manager.

Personal care/bath and body: Including hand-made soaps, lotions, perfumes, and candles may be sold through the ARCM.

Artisan items: Include original, unique, hand-made works of art or craft. The use of materials and subjects found in nature (stone, wood, glass, natural fibers, clay, beads from natural minerals, dried or live plants), reclaimed/re-cycled products, and products that support the mission of Local Roots is encouraged. Products that appear as if they are made from kits or arrangements of mass-produced dried or silk flowers may not be sold through ARCM.

Market Display, Prioritization, & Exclusivity

The amount of space given to each producer is at the discretion of the market staff and will be based on product mix and divided up to make the best overall experience for the shopper. If at any time the market becomes too crowded (overall or with any one type of product) the market staff may assign in market priority to certain vendors based on the following criteria:

- 1) Geographical proximity
- 2) Additional sustainable practices, including but not limited to:
 - Small-scale family operations • Limited use of chemical inputs (pesticides, fertilizers)
 - Use of pasture production when seasonally available
- 3) Years as a producer member
- 4) Local content of processed products (homegrown or otherwise sourced locally)
- 5) Products sold directly rather than through a representative
- 6) Quality and sales history
- 7) Consistency in maintaining products in the market

These criteria will be applied objectively and priority will be assigned without compromising quality or safety of products. Food products will have priority over non-food products. While the ARCM does not offer exclusive rights to any one member to sell any one product, if the management believes that the number of members offering the same or similar products within the physical market is excessive, duplicate products may be denied entry.