

# THE FARMERS MARKET

AT LIBBY

## 2026 RULES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND GUIDELINES

### **Mission Statement:**

The Farmers Market at Libby provides a place for local farmers, artists, and craftspeople to connect directly with their customers on a weekly basis and enhances the quality of life in the Libby area by providing a community activity that fosters social gathering and interaction.

### **Goals:**

The Farmers Market at Libby strives to:

- Expand the availability of foods that are fresh, flavorful, unique, nutritious, and affordable to the Libby community.
- Encourage the sale of locally-grown, -crafted, or -made products, and provide a venue where the community and visitors can come together to support local small businesses.
- Support local growers and producers by providing alternative marketing and sales opportunities, while creating a space for interaction between the producer and consumer.
- Promote social growth through educational programs related to food, nutrition, agriculture, the environment, arts, and charitable activities.

**Market Location:** 700 Idaho Ave, Libby, MT 59923 (between Hwy 2 and the old Asa Wood building)

**Hours and days of operation:** Thursdays 3:00 pm-6:30 pm; May - September

### **Who can sell at the market:**

- ❑ Vendors must be residents of Lincoln County, Montana, the contiguous counties bordering Lincoln County, or live within a 100-mile radius of Libby, Montana.

### **What can be sold:**

- ❑ Products personally grown, harvested, created, or produced within a 100-mile radius of Libby, MT, may be sold at the market.
  - ❑ Exceptions to the 100-mile radius may be made by the Market Team on a case-by-case basis and for a limited number of markets (ie: fresh seafood or a traveling Montana vendor). Exceptions are made to expand the diversity of items available to the community and are not intended to compete with existing vendors on a regular basis.
  - ❑ Franchise direct sales are prohibited. Vendors are allowed to sell handcrafted items made using franchise products, but vendor tents must display only their personal small business name (not a franchise product name).
- ❑ Vendors must comply with all federal, state, and local laws and regulations regarding farmers' markets. The market team will assist vendors with appropriate contacts for questions.

- ❑ Food vendors are responsible for being compliant with the Montana DPHHS Food and Consumer Safety Guidelines and applicable Montana code. A copy of the *Rules, Responsibilities & Guidelines*, and the *Montana DPHHS Food and Consumer Safety Farmers' Market Guidelines* are available on the market website ([www.thefarmersmarketatlibby.com](http://www.thefarmersmarketatlibby.com)).
- ❑ Food vendors should be aware of the Montana Food Choice Act. Additional licenses may be required for certain products. Vendors shall be compliant in proper licensing and product labeling.
- ❑ Vendors of plants not intended for human or animal consumption, such as houseplants, bedding, and landscape plants, must be in compliance with Montana Code Annotated 80-7-106.
- ❑ No cannabis sales are allowed in the market per the Montana State Farmers Market Network.

### **Vendor Selection**

- ❑ All vendors must complete and sign a vendor application each year.
- ❑ Market vendors are approved annually by the Farmers Market at Libby Board of Directors.
- ❑ Vendor space is limited. Therefore, new vendors must speak with a market team member AND provide a completed application, a minimum of 10 days, before planning to sell at the market.
- ❑ Vendor selection is based on quality, originality, and compatibility with existing market vendor makeup.
  - ❑ Diversity, creativity, and variety are the goals of the market. Potential mid-season vendors should consider visiting the market to understand what is currently being sold.
  - ❑ The market does not offer exclusive rights to vendors to sell any one product. If the market team and/or market board determines that the number of vendors offering the same or similar products is excessive, applications with duplicate products may be denied.
  - ❑ Priority will be given to underrepresented products in our market.
- ❑ The market is not a forum for religious or partisan-political activities. Booths and activities of this nature are not allowed.
- ❑ The market retains the right to deny any vendor for any reason.

### **Booth fees and assignment procedure:**

- ❑ Day vendors may elect to change to half-season vendors. Day vendors switching to half-season vendors may use any day vendor fees paid during the season, towards their half-season vendor fee.
- ❑ Vendor space will be assigned by the Market Team on or before the start of the market day. Logistically, regular vendors who require multiple spaces may require early placement into the market layout.
- ❑ There will be a limited number (one per market) of Fundraising/Promotional Booths allowed during the market season. Potential booths of this type will follow the standard vendor application process and will be subject to normal vendor fees. Fundraising/Promotional Booth examples include but are not limited to raffles, tickets, promoting events, and/or accepting donations or tips; they should fit with the mission of the farmers market or promote community. Approval and scheduling of Fundraising/Promotional booths will occur at monthly Board meetings, so we encourage applicants to apply early.
- ❑ There will be a limited number (one per market) of Information Booths during the market season. Potential Information Booths will follow the standard vendor application process and will be subject to a reduced fee. Approval and scheduling of information booths will occur at monthly

Board meetings, so we encourage applicants to apply early. No exchange of money and no partisan-political or religious information.

- ❑ Vendors who cannot afford the fees are encouraged to inquire about available scholarships or a payment plan.

### **Parking:**

- ❑ Ensuring there are adequate parking spaces for customers reasonably near the vending area is critical to market and individual vendor success. Depending on the market's location and layout, there may be a designated vendor parking area. By applying, vendors agree to utilize specified vendor parking as designated by the market team.
- ❑ The market team will do their best to balance easy access to vending locations and parked vehicles for vendors along with the need for customer parking. Exceptions to specified vendor parking may be granted for reasons such as disability or demonstrated need for a vehicle, but those exceptions will be at the discretion of the market team.
- ❑ Depending on market layout, there may be some vendor parking spaces to be utilized for convenience. These spaces are likely to be limited and may incur a parking fee.

### **Set up and take down:**

- ❑ General Vendor setup begins at 1 pm.
- ❑ The market ground consists of grass, pavement, and gravel. Vendors must be prepared to set up in any of these areas and be prepared for all weather conditions.
- ❑ All supplies are to be provided by the vendor, such as: displays, tables, tents, money, customer bags, booth signs, etc...
  - ❑ Booth signs and/or banners are required.
- ❑ Vendors will take booths down within one hour after market close (7:30 pm).
- ❑ It is the responsibility of each vendor to clean their selling area prior to leaving the market. Pack it in/pack it out is the rule.
- ❑ Vendors will demonstrate commitment to the long-term success of the market and respect for fellow vendors and customers by remaining at the market until the market closes at 6:30 pm. Leaving the market early is disruptive and unsafe. Exceptions due to extenuating circumstances, such as sustained high winds, will be at the discretion of the market team.

### **Vendor responsibilities and guidelines:**

- ❑ Vendors under 18 must have written permission from a parent/guardian. Vendors under 16 must have adult supervision while selling at the market.
- ❑ Each vendor is responsible for their own belongings, products, and space. The vendor, in consideration of participation in The Farmers Market at Libby, agrees to hold the market, property owners, and any other employee or vendor associated with the market harmless from any claims, damages, expenses or other losses connected with market activities.
- ❑ Vendors must inform the Market Team if they plan to add a new category of product that was not approved as part of their original application.
- ❑ All items must be clean and fresh. Prices should be clearly marked.
  - ❑ Each vendor determines their own prices. The market suggests selling by the "bunch" or the "bag" rather than by weight. Only scales that are state-certified by the division of weights and measures can be used.
  - ❑ Vendors are encouraged to price their products at fair market value. Vendors are not allowed to sell at unreasonably low prices, thus undercutting potential sales of other vendors.

- ❑ Farmers and vendors who use the word “organic” to describe their products or practices at the market must comply with the USDA organic regulations. Vendors will provide proof of organic certification or exemption as requested by the Market Team.
- ❑ Food vendors preparing food on-site must have all appropriate licenses and inspections and comply with all health department regulations.
- ❑ Vendors who sell food or drink for consumption on site are required to provide a 30-gallon minimum trash receptacle at their site available for use by the public.
- ❑ Vendors are encouraged to advertise their products independently.
- ❑ Each vendor is responsible for anyone working in their space and must provide someone to work their space the entire time the market is open. In addition, vendors are responsible for ensuring everyone working in their space is familiar with market rules and compliance with food assistance program requirements.
- ❑ All vendors are required to use designated vendor parking areas. A vehicle parked in an area intended for market visitors works against customer access and convenience.
  - ❑ Vehicles are not allowed in the market area during market hours unless the vendor has secured a market space that allows them to sell out of their vehicle
- ❑ **Absolutely no stakes are to be used.** Vendors should be prepared to secure their own tents in case of wind and are responsible for any damage caused to their tent or property (or that their tent causes to another’s property) in windy conditions. Please use weights to secure tents.
- ❑ Only low-noise generators are allowed with prior permission of the market team. Generators must be set up in such a way as not to cause a safety or trip hazard.

**General market guidelines:**

- ❑ The Farmers’ Market at Libby is a non-profit volunteer organization, and many hands are needed to ensure the market operates smoothly. Vendors are encouraged to be active in the organization, for example serving on the market team, assisting market volunteers, helping with market setup and take down, and helping other vendors as needed.
  - ❑ Vendors are expected to communicate respectfully with market staff, volunteers, customers, and other vendors. Disrespectful communication may result in dismissal from the market.
- ❑ Vendors that are eligible to participate in food assistance programs, such as SNAP and Senior Nutrition must sign contracts and complete all required training prior to beginning to sell.
  - ❑ Please see the accompanying SNAP guidelines. Vendors accepting SNAP or Double SNAP tokens MUST participate in mandatory annual training provided by The Farmers Market at Libby prior to their first market of the season. Vendors will turn in tokens weekly and will be reimbursed monthly on the first Thursday following each full month.
  - ❑ Eligible vendors may participate in the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) providing they are up to date on the required training, have a current contract with the state and have been issued a vendor number. SFMNP coupons may be turned in to the market manager and will be reimbursed by the State Office on Aging via a mailed check. SFMNP reimbursement may take up to 1-2 months.
  - ❑ The market is not able to reimburse vendors who accept SNAP tokens or SFMNP coupons in error. It is the vendor’s responsibility to know whether they are eligible and approved to accept such forms of payment.
- ❑ Sales are to be made during market hours. The market officially opens at 3:00 pm and closes at 6:30 pm.
- ❑ Vendors wishing to sell live animals must submit a ‘Welfare Plan’ that describes the animal(s) to be sold, how they will be cared for during the market, and how the animal will be transported to

their new home. All live animal displays or sales must be pre-approved by the market team before arriving at the market.

- ❑ Vendors may take advantage of the highway frontage to set up a sandwich board sign advertising their unique item(s), for example, 'Cherries' or 'Tomatoes'. Signs must be stable (even in high winds), self-supporting, and may not block the sidewalk. Approval from the market team is required for highway frontage signs and vendors are responsible for set up and take down of their signs.
- ❑ Hawking (carrying around and offering goods for sale or advertising them by shouting) or selling outside of your space (i.e. walking the market in a manner similar to door-to-door selling) is not allowed at the market.
- ❑ Dogs or other pets are not allowed within the market during regular market hours. Trained service animals are allowed. The ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) defines a service animal as a dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. Service animals must always be under the control of their handler, and should be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless these devices interfere with the service animal's work or the individual's disability prevents using these devices.
- ❑ Bicycles or scooters must be parked outside or walked through the market.
- ❑ Smoking or vaping is not allowed in the market area.
- ❑ Vendors shall not participate in the market while impaired by alcohol or a controlled substance, nor will vendors engage in illegal activity while at the market.
- ❑ In the event of unforeseen circumstances beyond the market's control affecting the health and safety of market patrons and vendors, the market reserves the right to implement additional guidelines or restrictions, including temporary market closure.

#### **Enforcement Procedures:**

- ❑ Vendors are encouraged to be vigilant regarding merchandise, personal belongings and cash boxes to prevent shoplifting or theft. Further, vendors should perform a standard examination of currency to reject anything that appears to be counterfeit. Should shoplifting or theft occur, the vendor should report the incident to law enforcement as well as to the Market Team. The Market Team will retain a record of the incident and will share pertinent information with other vendors in an effort to prevent future incidents.

#### **Complaint procedure**

- ❑ The market encourages vendors to first attempt informal resolution of minor issues with the offending party: vendor, customer, or employee. For example, an infraction of the Market Rules can often be rectified by calling attention to the rule or reminding the offending party of the rule.
- ❑ Problems or conflicts that arise in the market and cannot be resolved informally will be brought to the attention of the Market Team for resolution.
- ❑ A vendor, volunteer, customer, or Market Team member may submit a complaint against a vendor where there is reason to believe a violation of the Market Rules exists.
- ❑ The Market Team and/or Board will conduct an investigation of the complaint and will consult with the relevant parties. Their determination on the complaint will be final.

#### **Disciplinary actions**

- ❑ A first offense for failure to follow Market Rules will be a verbal warning from the Market Team with a solution for correcting the violation.
- ❑ A second offense will result in a written warning with corrective measures outlined.
- ❑ The third offense will include a written notification of continued violation and may result in a temporary or permanent suspension from the market. There will be no refund of vendor fees during/following suspension.

- ❑ Vendor conduct resulting in injury or danger to any person damage to property or verbal abuse will result in immediate suspension.

Questions may be directed to: [info@thefarmersmarketatlibby.com](mailto:info@thefarmersmarketatlibby.com) or by calling: (406) 250-6550.