

Requested Spotsylvania County Farmers Market (SCFM) Rule Changes

15 November 2018

Remove the Spotsylvania Courthouse market location (Paragraphs 2.f and Appendix A.c)

This market location lacks the customers required to attract producers. Starting with the 2016 market season, no producer has submitted an application to participate in this market location. Removing this market location simply reflects the fact that no market has existed at the Courthouse for at least 3 seasons and that, without a significant increase in potential customers, it is unlikely for a market to be viable there in the future.

Remove the application requirement for a completed IRS Form W-9 (Paragraph 6.b.i)

SCFM does not remit payments to market producers. Payments to producers for redeemed market tokens are remitted by Virginia Community Food Connections (VCFC), the nonprofit that operates the Virginia Fresh Match program in partnership with SCFM. VCFC collects the necessary W-9s from producers, which means that SCFM no longer needs to do so.

Increase the full season market fee (Paragraphs Appendix A.a and A.c)

The full season market fee has not changed since the beginning of the 2014 season. In the intervening 5 years, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) has increased by a rate of 7.9% [Bureau of Labor Statistic's CPI Inflation Calculator; Jan. 2014 - Sept. 2018]. That is it costs progressively more to operate the market than it did in 2014.

Increasing the base full season market fee from \$150 to \$200 will not only help defray these growing costs, it also brings SCFM market fees more in line with other equivalent farmers markets in the area. [Fredericksburg charges \$200 for a space with less square footage. Long Farmers Market, the private farmers market in Stafford, charges \$650 for a comparable space.]

The increased revenues will also allow a number of market enhancements that are not financially feasible with the current full season market fee.

- Provide a portable restroom at the Gordon Road host location – Currently the only available restrooms are at the 7-Eleven across Gordon Road and the McDonalds near Harrison road. It is a significant inconvenience for our customers and our producers not to have ready access to a restroom. VDOT has agreed to allow SCFM to have a portable restroom at the farmers market on the condition that it is brought in each market day and removed promptly after the market closes. The best price per market day that SCFM has been quoted for this service is \$225. That is about \$8K for the entire season or \$4K for the peak period of the season.
- Expand promotion to other media channels – SCFM has predominately used radio as the media channel through which to promote the farmers market. Recently social media has been used to reach our customer base, almost exclusively through Facebook. To promote the SRMC market location, we have used advertisements in the Lee's Hill home owners' association (HOA) monthly

newsletter with some success. In spite of these efforts, customer attendance has been flat at the Gordon Road market location and in decline at the SRMC market location. The planned expansion of promotion to other media channels will allow potential new customers to find out about SCFM and lead to an increasing market attendance. By moving to Twitter and Instagram, we plan to target new customers who are millennials. By developing relationships with other HOAs around SRMC, we plan to tap the large residential population developing in that area for new customers.

- Bring family-oriented activities to the Gordon Road host location – For the past two seasons, we have offered the Power of Produce (PoP) Club activities at the SRMC host location with great success. The PoP Club provides educational games and demonstrations about fresh produce, and gives children exposure to new fruits and vegetables. The PoP Club also allows children to make their own shopping decisions at the market. This is one of the family-oriented activities that we would like to have at Gordon Road. However because there are significantly more children at Gordon Road than at SRMC, to bring this, and other, activities to this market location requires additional equipment, additional produce purchases, and additional staff (i.e., summer interns). The benefit of such family-oriented activities is that they motivate more families to come to the market. These activities also make the market stickier; that is families linger at the market longer and are more likely to additional purchases.