

Our current two categories are no longer enough.

This proposal adds clear sub-categories, vendor caps, and a fair approval process, so the market stays strong for vendors and customers alike.

The Problem We're Solving	What This Proposal Does
Our current two categories, Agriculture & Value Added are too broad to: • Prevent vendor overcrowding • Protect product variety • Make fair approval decisions • Support new vendor growth	- Add clear sub-categories inside each division - Set vendor caps per sub-category - Create a simple approval checklist - Build waitlists for popular categories - Protect existing vendors from over-competition - Open doors for new vendors where gaps exist - Give customers more variety every market day

OUR GUIDING PHILOSOPHY

This isn't just a paperwork change. It reflects what we believe a great local market should be.

What a Better Structure Will Do For Us	What We Stand For As a Market
✓ Improve vendor quality ✓ Increase customer excitement ✓ Create healthier vendor sales ✓ Encourage innovation ✓ Protect the market brand ✓ Support long-term growth	✓ Farmers first, always ✓ Diversity over duplication ✓ No 'craft fair overload' ✓ A true farmers market identity ✓ Reward quality and originality ✓ Protect vendors from unfair competition

RECOMMENDED CATEGORY STRUCTURE

The market keeps the same two primary divisions, Agriculture and Value Added. Each now has clearly defined sub-categories with a recommended vendor cap to prevent overcrowding.

I. AGRICULTURE DIVISION — Vendor Sub-Categories			
Sub-Category	Examples	Vendor Cap	Notes
 Produce Growers	Tomatoes, greens, melons, berries, mushrooms, herbs	4 – 6	Encourage heirloom, hydroponic, organic & specialty growers
 Meat & Protein Producers	Beef, pork, chicken, lamb, eggs	2 – 4	Preference for locally raised livestock
 Dairy & Cheese Producers	Artisan cheese, yogurt, butter, goat milk products	1 – 2	Specialty products encouraged
 Apiary & Honey Products	Raw honey, infused honey, beeswax, pollen	2	Differentiate raw honey vs specialty bee products
 Plants, Flowers & Nursery Stock	Bedding plants, bouquets, succulents, trees	3 – 4	Encourage diversity between edible & ornamental
 Orchard, Vineyard & Specialty Crops	Pecans, muscadines, orchard fruits, olives	1 – 3	Seasonal flexibility recommended
 Farm Commodity Producers	Cornmeal, rice, dried beans, grains	1 – 2	Strong agriculture-first category

Value Added Division — Food & Beverage

Vendors who create food or drink products — whether baked, cooked, preserved, or brewed.

II. VALUE ADDED DIVISION — Food & Beverage			
Sub-Category	Examples	Vendor Cap	Notes
 Artisan Bakers	Sourdough, pastries, cookies, cakes	3 – 4	Differentiate by specialty and menu style
 Prepared Foods & Ready-to-Eat	BBQ, tamales, tacos, sandwiches	3 – 5	Maintain cuisine diversity
 Preserves, Sauces & Shelf-Stable	Salsa, jams, pickles, spice blends	3	Avoid duplicate canned product lines
 Beverage Producers	Coffee, tea, lemonade, kombucha, wine	2 – 4	Encourage category diversity

Value Added Division — Handcrafted Artisan Goods

Vendors who make non-food products by hand. These fill remaining market spots after Agriculture and Food/Beverage categories are satisfied.

II. VALUE ADDED DIVISION — Handcrafted Artisan Goods			
Sub-Category	Examples	Vendor Cap	Notes
 Body Care & Wellness	Soap, lotion, candles, salves	3	Handmade production required
 Fiber Arts, Sewing & Textiles	Crochet, quilts, embroidery, clothing	2	Encourage artisan quality
 Woodworking & Functional Crafts	Cutting boards, furniture, utensils	2	Functional artisan focus
 Pottery, Ceramics & Artisan Goods	Pottery, jewelry, glass art, metal art	2 – 3	Products must be handcrafted
 Specialty Handmade Products	Pet treats, seasonal decor, specialty goods	Juried	Rotating/juried — great entry point for new incubator vendors

A Quick Reminder on How These Divisions Work Together

Agriculture vendors always get first priority for available spots.

Food & Beverage Value Added vendors fill next, especially those using local ingredients.

Handcrafted Artisan vendors round out the market. They add variety but should not crowd out food vendors.

The vendor caps above are recommended starting points. The Board may adjust them by season or market need.

Who Gets Priority at Our Market?

Think of this like a simple ladder. Farmers who grow or raise products always come first. Then come vendors who use local ingredients. Artisan crafts fill remaining spots.

Tier	Priority	Who They Are
 1	HIGHEST	True agricultural producers — farmers who grow or raise their products
 2	HIGH	Food-based value-added vendors using local ingredients (e.g. jams, baked goods)
 3	STANDARD	Handcrafted artisan vendors (soaps, pottery, fiber arts, woodworking)

How We Evaluate New Vendor Applications

When a new vendor applies, we work down this checklist in order. The higher up the list a vendor scores, the stronger their application.

#	What We Look For When Approving a New Vendor
1	Is it a true agricultural product? (Farmers get first priority)
2	Is the product unique — something we don't already have?
3	Is the product quality good?
4	Are ingredients sourced locally?
5	Is the vendor reliable and consistent?
6	Is the booth professional and presentable?
7	Does this fill a gap in our current market offering?
8	Is it seasonally relevant?

What Makes Two Vendors "Different Enough"?

We don't just look at the category — we look at whether two vendors would be selling nearly the same thing to the same customers. Here are real examples of what we'd allow versus decline:

✓ ALLOWED — Different Enough	✗ LIKELY DECLINED — Too Similar
Sourdough bakery + French pastry bakery + gluten-free bakery	A 4th vendor selling nearly identical cookies & cupcakes
BBQ vendor + Hispanic cuisine vendor + breakfast vendor	Multiple vendors with overlapping menus
Raw honey producer + specialty bee products vendor	Several vendors selling identical honey products

Category Waitlists — Keeping Things Fair

When a category is full, we don't just say no. We put qualified vendors on a waitlist so they have a real chance when a spot opens up. This helps us track demand and recruit the right people.

Waitlist Category	Why We Need a Waitlist Here
Bakery Waitlist	High demand — avoid duplicate baked goods competing for same customers
Soap & Body Care Waitlist	Saturated category — ensure handmade quality & product differences
Produce Grower Waitlist	Priority spots — track demand and recruit specialty growers
Prepared Foods Waitlist	Ensure cuisine variety — no overlapping menus
Plant & Flower Vendor Waitlist	Seasonal demand — manage edible vs ornamental balance
Artisan Crafts Waitlist	Prevent craft-fair overload — preserve farmers market identity

Implementation Roadmap — How We Get There

We don't flip a switch overnight. This is a 6-phase rollout that the Board can approve, monitor, and adjust at each step. Nothing in Phase 2 starts until Phase 1 is approved.

Phase	Step	What It Means in Plain Terms
1	Define & Approve Categories	The Board votes to officially adopt the new sub-category structure.
2	Place Current Vendors	Every current vendor is sorted into their new sub-category.
3	Find Overcrowded Categories	We identify which sub-categories already have too many vendors.
4	Set Caps & Create Waitlists	Put a limit on how many vendors each category can hold; start waitlists for the rest.
5	Update Applications & Bylaws	Revise our paperwork so new applicants apply under the right category from the start.
6	Communicate the New Vision	Share the updated structure publicly so vendors and customers understand the change.

The "Rule of 3" — Our Competitive Balance Standard

For most sub-categories, we aim for no more than 3 vendors: 2 core vendors with proven track records, plus 1 specialty or seasonal vendor for variety. This protects everyone's livelihood while keeping the market interesting.

Slot 1	Slot 2	Slot 3 (optional)
Core Vendor	Core Vendor	Specialty or Seasonal
Established, consistent, fills a clear product need	Different specialty or style from Vendor 1	Unique twist, seasonal product, or incubator vendor

Why does this matter? Because a vendor who isn't fighting 6 competitors for the same customers does better work, shows up more consistently, and stays with us longer.

Benefit for Vendors	Benefit for Customers
Less direct competition = better sales	More variety across every visit
Knowing their spot is protected encourages investment	Scarcity makes products feel special and local
New vendors can enter when genuine gaps open up	Higher quality — vendors who aren't fighting to survive do better work

Juried Review — For Oversaturated Categories

When a category is full and multiple vendors are on the waitlist, a small jury (3 Board members) reviews applications on these criteria to choose who gets the next available spot:

What the Jury Looks At	Why It Matters
Product originality	Are they offering something truly different?
Booth presentation	Does it look professional and represent the market well?
Product quality	Is it a quality product our customers would be proud to buy?
Local sourcing	Are ingredients or materials from this region?
Packaging & branding	Is it clearly labeled and attractively presented?
Market need	Is this a gap we actually need to fill right now?
Past attendance reliability	Have they shown up consistently when given the chance?