

VALLEY JUNCTION  
Farmers  
Market

2024

Valley Junction Farmers Market  
Policies & Procedures



LAST UPDATED DECEMBER 19, 2023

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Contact the Historic Valley Junction Foundation (HVJF)

By phone: (515) 222-3642                      By e-mail: [events@valleyjunction.com](mailto:events@valleyjunction.com)  
 By mail: 137 5<sup>th</sup> Street, West Des Moines, IA 50265

## A. Introduction

Historic Valley Junction is home to over 150 distinctive businesses — art galleries, craft shops, antique stores, restaurants, and unique destinations line our streets. A nationally accredited Main Street America community, state certified Cultural & Entertainment District, state certified Iowa Great Place, and 2012 Great American Main Street Award Winner, Historic Valley Junction is also home to over 60 events annually. Our farmers market got its start in the mid-1970s and has been operating in its current format since 1988.

Vendors offer fresh produce, arts and crafts, prepared foods, baked goods, specialty foods, flowers, plants and more. One of Iowa's largest farmers markets, this event has become the place to be in central Iowa on Thursday evenings from May—September. In addition, free live music is offered each week during the farmers market in a beverage garden at our Music in the Junction concert series.

Meet your friends and neighbors in Historic Valley Junction for this free event!

Key information to know:

- ✓ **Registration for our market is online starting January 1.**
- ✓ Visit <https://valleyjunction.com/farmers-market/> to start your application.
- ✓ Our annual vendors' meeting will be held in-person on **Thursday, April 11, at 6:00 pm, at the stage in Railroad Park (425 Railroad Place)**. It is mandatory for new vendors and encouraged for all vendors. We will discuss the market opening/set up procedure, safety guidelines, highlighted changes from last year, and other important topics.

## B. Farmers Market Dates & Times

The 2024 Valley Junction Farmers Market will begin on Thursday, May 2, 2024 and be held every Thursday through September 26, 2024. The Valley Junction Farmers Market is from 4 - 8 pm.

Other important dates:

January 1	Applications open
February 29	Applications due
April 11	Vendor meeting
May 2	Vender fees due

## C. Product and Merchandise Guidelines

The primary focus of the Valley Junction Farmers Market is Iowa grown produce and other farm items— all other merchandise will be limited at the discretion of HVJF Board/Management. Merchandise available for sale must be produced or grown in your individual home or business. Mass produced or franchised items including Avon, Mary Kay, Pampered Chef and Tupperware, etc. will not be allowed. **HVJF reserves the right to refuse acceptance of any vendor or item that is not in keeping with the rules or quality of the Valley Junction Farmers Market.**

The Valley Junction Farmers Market includes ten categories as defined below:

1. **Produce:** Certified organic produce, chemical free produce, and Iowa home grown produce. Produce grown outside of Iowa will be allowed only when such items are not in-season locally. Out-of-state produce must be pre-approved when such items are in-season locally.
2. **Plants & Floral Products:** Fresh and dried flowers, seeds and potted plants.
3. **Meat, Dairy & Eggs:** Farm raised meat, dairy, and egg products, such as beef, chicken, turkey, cheese, milk, ice cream, eggs, etc.
4. **Baked Goods:** Breads, pies, cookies, etc. and other homemade baked goods.
5. **Specialty Food Items:** Specialty homemade food items that are not considered baked goods, including honeys, mustards, salsas, jams and other homemade food items.
6. **Wine & Beer:** Wine and beer products made in Iowa.
7. **Crafts:** Homemade home décor items (candles, soaps, handmade jewelry, and other art items). Because the crafts category is very broad, it is important to maintain a high level of quality for our market. All vendors in this category must include adequate photos of each type of item that will be sold in each booth when you apply online.
8. **Prepared Foods:** Ready-to-eat items such as sandwiches, cooked items, and snack items. A complete menu must be submitted with the application and any additions must be approved by market management. Space for this category is limited to 20 vendors to maintain the integrity of the market.
9. **Merchant:** Valley Junction businesses who rent space to sell their store's products. Merchant spaces may not be sublet and are subject to all other market rules. This category is only available to current Valley Junction merchants.
10. **Other:** Vendor types that do not fit into the above categories. Mass produced and franchised items are not allowed at the Valley Junction Farmers Market.

All participants apply and are reviewed annually. Vendors are reviewed based on several criteria, including product quality and origin (how and where the product is made/produced), category and space availability, previous attendance and other pertinent criteria. To maintain a vibrant and appealing market, a limited number of applications are available in each category with the exception of produce and farm/agricultural products. All applications are subject to approval by HVJF.

## D. Farmers Market Fees

Application Fee	\$20.00 (non-refundable)
Deposit	\$100.00 per seasonal space
Small Seasonal Space (10ft wide x 15ft deep)	\$325.00 per season
Standard Seasonal Space (20ft wide x 15ft deep)	\$475.00 per season
Corner Seasonal Space	+\$50.00 per space
Two Standard Seasonal Spaces (40ft wide x 15ft deep)	\$925.00 per season
Seasonal Trash fee (seasonal prepared food vendors only)	\$100.00 per space/season
Occasional Small Vendor Space	\$35.00 per week
Occasional Standard Vendor Space	\$55 per week
Occasional Trash fee (occasional prepared food vendors only)	\$10 per space/week
Reckless Driving Fee	\$50 per incident

A non-refundable application fee of \$20.00 due at time of applying, and a refundable deposit of \$100.00 per space is required with your application to secure your reservation if applied by the February 29 deadline. Vendors not accepted will have their deposit refunded. **Vendors approved, but who choose not to participate (for any reason) after April 12, 2024 will not have their deposits refunded.**

Occasional vendors will be accepted on a first-come first-served basis at the rate of \$35.00 per week for a small space and \$55.00 per week for a standard space. A schedule will be available by April 11. There is no guarantee that temporary spaces and/or a particular location will be available.

## E. Applying to our 2024 market

**To be considered for a full-time seasonal space, applications must be received through our website by 11:59pm on Thursday, February 29, 2024.** All applications received after this date will automatically be placed on a waitlist and be accepted on an available space basis. Each small market space is approximately 10' wide x 15' deep and each standard market space is approximately 20' wide x 15' deep. No more than two continuous market spaces may be purchased. Spaces fill quickly and a limited number of spots in each category are available. HVJF management recommends submitting your application as early as possible, especially if you will be a new vendor. It is the sole responsibility of HVJF to fill vacant spaces—vendors may not sublet space. HVJF retains the right to approve and facilitate all arrangements for sharing a space. Preference of location requests should be noted on the application. Space preference will be considered but is not guaranteed for any vendor.

*By submitting an application online, potential vendors acknowledge they have received, understood, and agreed to follow all the policies and procedures set forth by the Historic Valley Junction Foundation (referred to as HVJF) as stated herein. HVJF reserves the right to remove any vendor at any time for failure to comply with the Farmers Market Policies and Procedures. Disregard for any guidelines established in this document will be just cause for action to be taken. HVJF retains the right to prohibit a vendor from participation in the Valley Junction Farmers Market, without refund.*

Application timeline:

- **January 1 – Go to <https://valleyjunction.com/farmers-market/> and apply.** Every vendor must apply online. Your application is not considered received until you have also submitted your application fee and deposit payment if applying prior to the February 29 deadline.
- **March 1 – We will begin assigning spaces to everyone with complete and received applications.** You may not see any change to your application right away, so please be patient. You will receive a notification when we update your application. Wait-list means we are not able to assign you a space yet, you have not paid your application fee and deposit, or you applied after the March 1 deadline.

**NOTE: Any space assignments are subject to change at any time.** This includes after the market has opened for the season.

- **April 12 – Last day to withdraw from the market (for any reason) and receive a deposit refund.** Application fees are non-refundable.
- **May 2 – Opening day of the market.** Remember that season payments are due in full BEFORE you set up at your first market, unless you set up a payment plan IN ADVANCE.

## F. Farmers Market Set-Up

### 1. Set-Up Hours

Set-up will begin at 3:00 p.m. each Thursday. Vendors may not set up prior to 3:00 p.m. Any vendor entering the event area prior to 3:00 p.m. will be asked to leave and re-enter at the appropriate time. NO EXCEPTIONS. We have limited staff to clear the streets safely of all signage and vehicles. We need our space to clear the street, so you have your space to set up. Vendors not set up by 4:00 p.m. will have their spaces reassigned or have tables setup in their booth space. If you will be arriving late or not attending the event, please notify the HVJF office at (515) 222-3642. Official market hours are 4:00–8:00 p.m. **Vehicles are not allowed to drive on 5th Street from 4:00-8:00 p.m. during Farmers Market.**

### 2. Set-Up Regulations

Vendor spaces are set up as follows: Each small space is 10' wide (along the curb) x 15' deep (into the street), and each standard space is 20' wide (along the curb) x 15' deep (into the street). The vendor's booth should be set up facing the sidewalk (not the middle of the street). Vendors must provide all set up materials (tent, tables, signage, etc.) HVJF will not loan any materials to vendors. By law, fire lanes in the center of the streets must be kept open at all times, including during set-up. Vehicles (not used for direct sales) should be parallel parked behind the booth if a standard booth, and see the vendor map for vehicle parking for small booths. Only ONE vehicle per vendor is allowed inside of the market area. Extra vehicles may be parked in the public parking lots.

Sidewalks are not included in your space and are required to be kept clear during event hours. Vendors are responsible for set-up items such as tables, chairs, canopies, and tents. Vendors are not allowed to set-up (or give out free samples) on the sidewalks or against storefronts to provide proper customer walkway access. **Glass containers for products consumed on site are not allowed.** Vendors may not smoke or drink alcoholic beverages within their booth space or outside of permitted areas. Failure to comply with these rules will result in immediate removal from the market.

**Electricity is not available for vendors at the Valley Junction Farmers Market.** If you require electricity, you are required to provide your own generator. All generators must be muffled to respect Valley Junction residents, merchants, and customers. (Suggested generator - Honda EU3000is or equivalent with a volume of less than 60dB). **Without refunding vendor fees, HVJF may request a vendor to leave if the vendor's generator is deemed too loud.** Vendors attempting to use electricity outlets located on or near Valley Junction trees or buildings will be immediately removed from the market without refund.

These outlets are for HVJF use and **may not** be used by market vendors without prior HVJF approval.

## G. Vendor Requirements

### 1. Attendance

Because of the importance of keeping a full and active farmers market, all full-time vendors are expected to attend the farmers market each week for the full season. Occasional vendors are expected to attend each scheduled date, and should not request dates they cannot attend. An absence is considered unexcused if a vendor notifies our office after 12:00pm on the Wednesday before the market or does not show up to the market without notification. **Vendors who have three or more unexcused absences may be removed from the market without refund and/or not accepted for following years.** Vendors not able to attend a scheduled market date are required to notify HVJF with as much notice as possible by emailing [events@valleyjunction.com](mailto:events@valleyjunction.com) or calling Larry Kaster at 515-222-3642. Full-time seasonal vendors are required to notify management of planned absences on the market application. Unforeseen emergencies will be taken into consideration on a case-by-case basis. Cancellation or no-show date fees are not refunded or waived. Attendance is enforced, and will be taken into consideration when accepting application each season.

### 2. Liability Insurance

All Valley Junction Farmers Market vendors are required to have a current Certificate of Liability Insurance for the minimum amount of \$1,000,000 on file with HVJF. This certificate must be submitted by all vendors prior to setting up at your first market. **Historic Valley Junction Foundation must be listed as additional insured and certificate holder.** Please note that a copy of your insurance policy does not satisfy this requirement. An updated certificate will need to be provided to HVJF for any policies renewed during the market season. Provide your certificate of liability insurance to HVJF by submitting by uploading the document to your application. Insurance requirements will not be waived for any Valley Junction Farmers Market vendors. If there is a question about what you need from your insurance agent, please show them this page and they will know what policy to prepare.

### 3. Sales Tax

It is each vendor's responsibility to know if they are required to collect and remit Iowa Sales Tax. HVJF does not accept responsibility for vendors who fail to meet this obligation. Vendors who are required to remit sales tax must have a permanent valid Sales Tax Permit. Temporary sales tax permits are no longer issued. **Failure to respond and reply to sales tax inquires by the Internal Revenue Service will eliminate vendors from future participation in the Valley Junction Farmers Market, as well as other Valley Junction special events.** For questions, please call the Iowa Department of Revenue and Finance at (515) 281-3114.

### 4. Health Inspection

All Valley Junction Farmers Market vendors are required to comply with the State of Iowa Public Health regulations governing the preparation, handling, and presentation of food. Prepared food vendors are responsible for obtaining all

necessary licenses and permits required by the State of Iowa. A permit fee will be imposed and is valid for all state of Iowa Farmers Markets.

**You must have your food license prior to the event.** If you do not have a license in advance, you will be required to shut down your operation, completely fill out the application, and you cannot reopen until inspected and approved by the inspector. Vendors are encouraged to contact the Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals at (515) 281-6538 with any questions or concerns regarding product regulations, licensing, and fees. HVJF is not responsible for health permits/inspections, however, HVJF is required by law to submit to the Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals the business information of all vendors at each market.

## 5. Clean-up and Trash Removal

Vendors must provide tables, chairs, brooms, dustpans, and their own garbage removal. Any vendor serving food must place a tarp or mat under the space to protect the street from grease spills. Grease spills may not be left on the street as it is dangerous and gets tracked into stores. All vendors are responsible for cleaning their stalls at the end of each market. All garbage must be removed. **Garbage MAY NOT be placed in any city trash bin, private dumpsters, event trash box, or left on the curb.** These are for customers only. Failure to follow these standards is a violation of these policies and procedures and repeat offenders may be removed from the market without refund of dues. Seasonal prepared food vendors will be charged an additional \$50 per space (\$5 per space for occasional prepared food vendors) for trash maintenance due to the extra waste created by Farmers Market customers who purchase prepared food. Additional trash maintenance fees will be applied if necessary.

## H. Other Policies & Information

### 1. Coronavirus safety guidelines

The safety of our guests and the community is our biggest concern. In 2021, the Valley Junction Farmers Market followed guidelines meant to ensure the public could visit our market safely. As of the 2022 Farmers Market, HVJF lifted almost all mandatory coronavirus safety guidelines and maintained a safe and successful market season. As of 2023, vendors are expected to follow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines regarding COVID-19, which can be found at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) in addition to any local or state regulation. These guidelines are subject to change at any time as new information becomes available.

### 2. Severe Weather Protocol

The Valley Junction Farmers Market is held rain or shine, and vendors are expected to attend regardless of weather. Announcements of cancellation due to severe weather will be made to vendors via event management software notifications. Regarding the personal safety of vendors, patrons, and the general public, HVJF will determine if or when a closure or cancellation of the market is imminent. With the assistance of local police, the message and pertinent information will be broadcast to onsite vendors via event management software notifications to your mobile devices.

### 3. WIC, FMNP and Food Stamps

Produce vendors may register to accept WIC checks as a way of increasing sales at the Valley Junction Farmers Market. To accept WIC checks, vendors must be certified through the State of Iowa. HVJF is not responsible for losses incurred from accepting WIC checks without certification. All WIC certified vendors must adhere to the State of Iowa rules and regulations. A WIC certified vendor found not adhering to the rules will be immediately reported. Vendors seeking certification in the Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) for the first time must be certified through classroom instruction scheduled by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship at (515) 242-6239. Reservations for



classes must be made in advance. Food, seeds and food producing plants may be purchased with USDA Food Stamps. Contact the Federal Dept. of Agriculture at (877) 823-4369 for more information.

#### 4. Valley Junction Gift Certificates and Tickets

Vendors are not expected to accept Valley Junction district gift certificates. All Valley Junction district gift certificates have the Valley Junction logo on them. These gift certificates are good for the merchants only. Occasionally, visitor groups will receive Valley Junction tickets or gift certificates to spend at Farmers Market. When this occurs, all vendors will be informed of all pertinent information prior to the market date. Vendors are expected and agree to accept these special occasion gift certificates and/or tickets. Valley Junction. Vendors may turn in gift certificates or tickets for reimbursement during market hours and non-market hours (9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monday-Friday). Reimbursement checks will be issued.

#### 5. Vendor Compliance Checklist

The following is a list of policies that vendors must follow to be in compliance with the Historic Valley Junction Farmers Market. Please understand that this is not an all-inclusive list, and policies and procedures listed on other pages of the application must also be followed. *If a vendor is non-compliant, possible repercussions include vendor status being up for review with the Board of Directors, fines, or suspension or expulsion from the market.*

- ✓ Vendors will read, understand, and agree to follow coronavirus safety guidelines put in place for the Valley Junction Farmers Market. Those guidelines are subject to change at the discretion of market management.
- ✓ Signage with the name of the business is neat, clear, and visible within the vendor's booth space.
- ✓ Vendors are not allowed to smoke or drink alcoholic beverages within their booth space or outside of permitted areas. Outdoor alcoholic beverages require a wristband and are limited to Railroad Park during a concert.
- ✓ Burning of any kind of substance including incense, smoking ships, candles, etc., is prohibited.
- ✓ Only one vehicle is allowed per vendor within the market area. That vehicle must be parallel parked at the back of the space if renting a standard space, and be in a designated parking spot if renting a small space. Be sure to keep a fire lane in the center of the street clear at all times by making sure some of the white parking lines are visible from the middle of the street. For vendors with extra vehicles, parking is available in the public lots on 4th and 6th Streets.
- ✓ Pets (excluding service animals) are not allowed within the vendor's booth space.
- ✓ Driving is not permitted on 5th Street between 4:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. on market days. Violations of this rule will result in a \$50 reckless driving fee, and a vendors will not be able to return to market until this fee is paid.
- ✓ Vendors are expected to have consistent attendance. Failure to notify HVJF of an absence and repeat absences may result in removal from the market. Attendance is strictly enforced.
- ✓ Vendors will not sublet their booth space. It is the sole responsibility of HVJF to fill any vacant spaces.
- ✓ Vendors may not place garbage in city trash bins, private dumpsters, event trash boxes or on the curb. The additional trash fee for prepared food vendors is for Farmers Market customer garbage. District bins are NOT for vendor use.
- ✓ All vendors must provide HVJF with proof of insurance as stated in section G.2.
- ✓ All vendors must comply with health code regulations. No exceptions.
- ✓ It is each vendor's responsibility to know if they are required to collect and remit Iowa Sales Tax. HVJF does not accept responsibility for vendors who fail to meet this obligation.

- ✓ Vendors are expected to have positive, friendly conduct towards customers, fellow vendors, market staff, and volunteers. Through cooperation we can all benefit from working together!

## I. Legal Agreement

By renting a space at the Valley Junction Farmers Market, all vendors agree not to hold HVJF, its members, staff, or Board of Directors responsible for damage of any kind. Vendors assume all responsibility for the operation of their booth, and any damages or injuries that may occur in that area during normal hours of market operation or from consumption of products or goods. This includes all lawsuits, demands and claims including court costs, legal fees, and damages. Vendors are also responsible for any loss or damages HVJF may incur on their behalf including, but not limited to, court costs and attorney fees. All merchandise will be handled and displayed at the vendor's risk and HVJF assumes no responsibility for theft, accident, or natural disaster.

The undersigned agrees to indemnify and hold the sponsors of the Historic Valley Junction Farmers Market harmless in regard to all liability for any damages to personal property, for any loss of life or personal injury or theft of property that may be sustained in connection with this event. I further give approval for HVJF to use photographs taken at this event, which might include my work, for publicity purposes.

**You must sign this portion of the online application for consideration.**

Please review the application carefully as there have been several changes made to the application.

## J. Important contact information for the market

Iowa Department of Agriculture & Land Stewardship .....	515-281-5321
<a href="https://iowaagriculture.gov/agricultural-diversification-market-development-bureau/farmers-market-nutrition-program">https://iowaagriculture.gov/agricultural-diversification-market-development-bureau/farmers-market-nutrition-program</a>	
Iowa Departments of Inspections & Appeals .....	515-281-6538
<a href="https://ia.foodprotectiontaskforce.com/resources1/farmers-market/#tab3">https://ia.foodprotectiontaskforce.com/resources1/farmers-market/#tab3</a>	
Federal Department of Agriculture .....	515-877-4369
<a href="https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/retailer">https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/retailer</a>	
Iowa Department of Revenue & Finance .....	515-281-3114
<a href="https://tax.iowa.gov/businesses">https://tax.iowa.gov/businesses</a>	

## K. Coronavirus Vendor Guidelines for the 2024 Valley Junction Farmers Market

We take the safety of our community members and our vendors seriously with our plan to continue the market in 2024. In 2021, our Board of Directors approved opening our market with mandatory safety guidelines in place. As of the last revision of this handbook, most of these guidelines have been lifted with the remaining still in place:

- Vendors are expected to follow Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and safe handling of food as well as local rules and regulations. CDC guidelines are available here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- If you are sick, test positive for the coronavirus, or you think you may have been exposed (for example, you have had close contact with a person who is showing symptoms or who tested positive for the coronavirus), or if you are showing any symptoms of COVID-19, you must stay home. DO NOT attend the market. Follow CDC guidelines regarding when to safely re-enter the market.

We all have different situations and tolerances regarding the coronavirus. Please work with your neighbors to ensure a safe and comfortable atmosphere at the market.

HVJF will continue to monitor COVID-19 information as it becomes available and adjust these guidelines accordingly.

ALL HVJF FARMERS MARKET POLICIES REMAIN IN EFFECT as printed in our policies and procedures booklet. This includes requirements that you provide HVJF proof of insurance and comply with all health code regulations, including guidelines for obtaining a food license, if applicable. For a complete listing of our guidelines, refer to the booklet.

## L. Vendor Supplemental Agreement for the 2024 Valley Junction Farmers Market

All vendors may be asked to sign an agreement prior to setting up at your first market that says you understand the public health situation and agree to follow our market safety guidelines.