

DOWNTOWN FARMERS MARKET

2026 Season Regulations

Thank you for your interest in the Downtown Bridgeport Farmers Market (Downtown Market). The market is located at historic McLevy Green in the heart of Downtown Bridgeport. The 2026 market season begins on July 9 and runs every Thursday from 10:30 am to 2:00 pm until October 29, 2026.

1. Governing Agency: The Downtown Market is located at historic McLevy Green in the heart of Downtown Bridgeport. The Bridgeport Downtown Special Services District (DSSD) produces the farmers market with the aim of providing **Downtown's growing residential population and 8,500+** office workers access to fresh, locally grown products and to supply a viable retail market for local farmers, food producers, and artisans. The market also features live music and entertainment to attract visitors each week.

The Bridgeport DSSD has complete authority over the operation of the market and reserves the right to limit and control the use of the space where the market operates.

2. The Bridgeport DSSD and its designate will act as administrator of the market. The **Administrator's duties will include: the selection of participating market sellers (Vendors), collection** of documentation from Vendors, and resolving or forwarding to the proper authority any questions, comments, or complaints involving the operation of the market.

3. The hours of operation and location of the market: The market will be held on Thursday beginning July 9 through October 29, 2026, at McLevy Green, Bank Street, Bridgeport, CT 06604. Market hours are 10:30 am to 2:00 pm. Vendors must be finished with set up and prepared to sell by 10:30 am. Breakdown may begin at 2:00 pm and not before. Hours of operation will be subject to change at the discretion of the Market Manager(s).

4. Obligations of market sellers to government agencies: All Vendors in the Downtown Market must comply with all Bridgeport DSSD, City of Bridgeport, State of Connecticut, and U.S. Government regulations and requirements. All Vendors must conform to all requirements of all pertinent health agencies and must maintain all pertinent health documents at their market site to be produced upon demand. All scales must bear a Connecticut Department of Consumer Affairs seal. Any required sales tax charges are the responsibility of each Vendor. Vendors who sell anything subject to collection of sales tax are responsible for doing so themselves. Vendors must adhere to additional requirements of law and regulation as they arise, or any requirement that the Market Manager(s) in his/her sole judgment believes necessary to maintain an orderly market.

Prepared Food Vendors: Per the CT Department of Public Health, the following farm products are exempt from a Temporary Food Permit requirement

- Fresh produce (fresh, uncut fruits and vegetables)
- Unprocessed honey (raw honey as defined by the National Honey Board)
- Maple syrup
- Farm fresh eggs (must be stored and maintained at 45 degrees F or lower).

All other food product vendors are required to obtain a Temporary Food Permit from the City of Bridgeport. Vendors who sell ready-to-eat foods prepared on site and/or commercially prepared **foods that are not packaged must hold the necessary vendor's license. If you do not have the necessary licenses, please see the links below for more information:**

- [City of Bridgeport Environmental Health Permits](#)
- [State of Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection Food Licensing and Registration](#)

Food and produce products sold at the Downtown Market must be in line with our vision to provide residents with healthy, nutritious, local food. The Downtown Market is only permitted to sell **products that fit within the confines of Connecticut's vendor regulations found here:** [Connecticut State Department of Consumer Protection Laws & Regulations](#).

If you are accepted as a Downtown Market Vendor, you will be asked to provide a copy of your Commercial Kitchen License, Cottage Food Operator Permit, Bridgeport Health Department permits, and [ServSafe Certification](#), as applicable.

5. Who may sell in the market: Only Vendors who have satisfied all of the requirements of this Market Regulations document are allowed to sell in the Downtown Market. No other activities other than the selling of approved products will be allowed without permission of the Market Manager(s), and in accordance with the restrictions of the City of Bridgeport.

6. Vendors are only permitted to sell items that they have themselves produced. All items must be grown, handmade, and/or created from locally owned operations.

7. Samples: If sample food products are offered to the public, samples must be kept cool in clean, covered containers and distributed in individual portions with clean disposable serving utensils. Please refrain from using plastic utensils wherever possible. Hand sanitizers and paper towels must be available to customers at all times. Sampling must conform to the City of Bridgeport Department of Health guidelines.

8. **Farmer's Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) Certification** (to accept WIC, Seniors and Veterans checks) is required for Farmers who are eligible. Each state's relevant agency is responsible for authorizing individual farmers to accept and redeem FMNP coupons. Individuals who exclusively sell produce grown by someone else such as wholesale distributors, cannot be authorized to participate in the FMNP. For more information, [please visit the USDA's website](#).

9. For Food Vendors - **Per the City of Bridgeport's Department of Health:** All processed and prepared foods to be sold at a farmers' market must come from an approved source and must be prepared at an approved, inspected facility. These facilities can be commercial kitchens, inspected church kitchens, or other retail or wholesale food establishments. Each vendor should make arrangements with the appropriate personnel to use these facilities. Private kitchens cannot be used for processing or preparing foods. In addition, all vendors serving food must be licensed. Please refer to the [Food Safety Guidelines](#) document for additional information.

10. Signage: Each Vendor is required to prominently display the name and location of their business.
11. Fair Pricing: All products must be properly labeled, and all prices must be clearly marked. All scales must be in good repair and display a Connecticut Department of Consumer Affairs seal.
12. **Vendor's attendance** in the market must be consistent. The Downtown Market is committed to holding markets despite inclement weather, unless there are dangerous weather conditions (lightning, snow and ice, for example). **If a Vendor is unable to attend a market, they are required notify the Bridgeport DSSD at least 24 hours in advance.**
13. Each Vendor is responsible for setting up and closing down their location. Each Vendor must provide cover for the vending location to protect products and customers from the elements and tent weights in the event of windy weather. Each Vendor must operate a clean vending location during market hours and must leave their location the way they found it.
14. All Vendors and their employees must act professionally. They must be courteous and honest with all customers. There will be no profanity, shouting, or causing of disruption to the Downtown Market.
15. Vendor agrees to defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the Bridgeport DSSD and its respective officers, Commissioners, employees, volunteers, and agents from and against any and all claims, demands, losses, damages, costs, liabilities, and expenses (including, but not limited to, **reasonable attorneys' fees and** costs of suit, investigation fees, and expert fees) of whatever kind or character, on account of any actual or alleged loss, injury, or damage to any person, firm, or corporation or to any property, arising out of or in connection with the negligent actions or omissions or willful misconduct on the part of the Vendor. In no event shall the Bridgeport DSSD, the Market Manager(s), or any of their respective officers, Commissioners, employees, volunteers, and agents be liable for any incidental, special, or consequential damages (including without limitation lost profits) even if they have been advised of the possibility of such damages.
16. The procedure for becoming a Vendor of the Downtown Market: The applicant will submit to an application via the [Bridgeport DSSD's website form](#) and in detail list all products the applicant would like to sell on the market, as well as any other information or documents that the Market Manager(s) may request, in order to determine the eligibility of the applicant to sell at the market. Only the [online Vendor Interest Form](#) is to be turned in at that time. The Market Manager(s) will then determine, based on the desired number and variety of Vendors, whether or not to accept the applicant as a Vendor of the Downtown Market. Acceptance as a Vendor in the Downtown Market shall be for one season only and all Vendors must reapply each season thereafter.

All interested 2026 season Vendors must submit the completed [online Vendor Interest Form](#) by Friday, April 3, 2026. The interested Vendor is not automatically selected as a Vendor by completing the interest form. Vendors are accepted based upon the availability of space, the **diversity of offerings at the market, the quality of product offered, and the Vendor's ability to meet** the criteria outlined in this document.

Once Vendors are notified that they are accepted, the Market Manager(s) will request a copy of their business insurance and required certifications or permits signifying agreement to abide by the Regulations in order to participate in the Market. For purposes of clarity, all Downtown Market members are Vendors who have been approved by the Market Manager(s).

SAMPLE DOWNTOWN BRIDGEPORT FARMERS MARKET ITINERARY

Date / Time: Thursdays from July 9 to October 29, 2026 / 9:30a – 3:00p Total; Market 10:30a - 2:00p

Venue: McLevy Green, 102 Bank Street, Bridgeport, CT 06604

Event Contacts

- Lauren Coakley Vincent, Bridgeport DSSD – 203.727.3930, lauren.dssd@colorfulbridgeport.com - Planning lead, vendor point of contact, parking coordination, hostess, feedback from attendees.
- Charles Suarez-Penn, Bridgeport DSSD – set up, parking coordination, event clean up
- Program Coordinator, Bridgeport Farmers Market Collaborative – bridgeportfarmersmarkets@gmail.com – SNAP/EBT and Bridgeport Bucks payment processing

Promotional Channels

We will send out a weekly e-newsletter with information on vendors, special meals, live music, and themed workshops. Please provide a brief profile (3 sentences) about your business and any preferred links, social media handles, and photos you would like us to use in the feature. Each vendor will be featured at least once.

We will be posting content on our social media promoting similar content to the e-newsletter. We would love your help with promotion! Please follow us and make sure to post, share, and tag your pictures to these profiles:

- DSSD/Colorful Bridgeport: [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#)
- Bridgeport Farmers Market Collaborative: [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)

Full vendor listings and links for your businesses will be on our [Colorful Bridgeport website](#). Please send the information you would like included in your individual listing to Lauren by June 1, 2026.

Drop Off, Set Up, and Parking

All vendors will have the same spot within the market. You will be guided to your permanent location when you arrive on opening day by Lauren. Please see the sample vendor map below for reference.

With exception to the farmers (who drive on the Green), all vendors must pull up alongside McLevy Green side of State Street or Bank Street (one-way streets), park, and unload their tent and supplies onto the Green and leave them at the appointed location.

Once you've unloaded, you will be given a weekly parking pass to keep on the dashboard and will be directed to Bank Street or the Imperial Parking Transit Center Garage (70 State Street) just a short distance from McLevy Green. Parking will be FREE. The entrance to the Imperial Parking Transit Center Garage is on State Street, between Middle and Water Streets.

Breakdown procedure is the same as set up. When you are packed and ready to leave, please go to the parking garage and return to the McLevy Green side of State Street or Bank Street to load your vehicle.

Market Schedule

- 9:30 AM: Vendor Set Up Begins – Vendors arrive, unload trucks, and pick up weekly parking pass from Lauren before going to park in the designated parking area.
- 10:00 AM: Bridgeport Farmers Market Collaborative Program Coordinator sets up SNAP/WIC/Senior FMNP doubling station and payment terminal.
- 10:30 AM: Market Opens
- 11:45 AM: Live music set up, performances begin at 12:00 PM.
- 12:00 PM: Cooking demonstration begins, if applicable, led by Chef Raquel Rivera.
- 2:00 PM: Market Ends, Breakdown / Clean Up Begins – Breakdown procedure is the same as set up. Vendors who accept SNAP tokens and other reimbursable forms of payment must report sales and return tokens to the Bridgeport Farmers Market Collaborative SNAP Match Coordinator before leaving the Green. Clean up is to be complete by 3:00 p.m.

SAMPLE EVENT LAYOUT

