

Anacortes Farmers Market

History

The Anacortes Farmers Market was established in 1989. Its mission is to support local family farms and artisans from Skagit and surrounding counties and to create a place for the community to connect and refresh.

Location

The market is located next to an old historic railroad depot two blocks from the downtown core at 611 R Avenue. The space is owned by the City of Anacortes and is available to the farmers market at a reasonable cost.

While the market is in a centralized location with businesses and other community activity around the site, visibility is an issue. People cannot see the market from a distance. The market is accessible to customers, including handicapped access, and there is sufficient parking for both vendors and customers. Vendors have ample room to set up their displays. Local highway access makes it easy for farmers to get to.

Public facilities, bathrooms and telephones, are available. There is water available to wash and cool produce. However, there is no shade/shelter available as protection from the weather.

Characteristics

	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004
Number farm vendors:	20	18	17	11	6	6
Number crafters:	20	19	17	10	12	10
Number other food vendors:	10	8	6	5	4	5
Gross market sales:		\$318,830	\$296,807	\$226,965	n/a	n/a
Gross Farm vendor sales:		\$219,684	\$195,831	\$178,374	n/a	n/a
Number of customers:	1,500	1,500	1,000	500+	500+	~500

Approximately 94% of the farmers are returning vendors and average 9.8 years selling at the market.

Product makeup. The market tries to focus on healthy and local products and includes produce, plants, bread and other baked goods, prepared foods, jewelry, dog treats, granola, photography, and recycled clothing.

Customer makeup. Largely European ancestry, ages 25-65, average income \$30,000. The market receives a lot of tourists.

IV. Organization

How is the market organized, managed and staffed (e.g. board of directors, volunteer management, paid staff, etc)? There is a volunteer Steering Committee, Paid Manager and volunteers.

Are management and staff full or part-time? Part time. How many paid and part-time staff per market season? One (1)

For the market manager, what are the average hours worked per week in-season? 25-30 hours. Off-season? 15 – 20 hours.

Does the market:

Have bylaws?	Yes
Have a budget and plan for annual business operations?	Yes
Seek sponsorships?	Yes
Have short- and long-range plans?	No

In what manner and how frequently does the market manager communicate with vendors? Weekly at the market and via weekly newsletter, also lots of phone and email correspondence.

V. Rules & Regulations

What are the rules and regulations governing market operations and vendors? For example, how are stalls assigned? Seniority. Market Manager assigns spaces, vendors participating regularly may have their space assigned for the season.

Is product sampling allowed? Yes

Does the market accept Food Stamps? Yes

What are stall fees and basis for fees? \$20/week, annual membership fee \$30

Who may sell in the market? WA State registered business owners

What products may be sold? Handgrown, hand produced or hand crafted

Is the market producer-only or is resale allowed? Only farmers are allowed to resell farm produce that is not grown by any other farmer at the market. Brokered items are limited to cultivated farm produce and must be grown within the county or adjacent counties, with the exception of limiting wild grown foods to being grown within the state of Washington.

Prohibited items? Anything outside of Skagit or surrounding counties.

Pets allowed? Yes

VI. Advertising, Promotion & Outreach

Who controls development and implementation of advertising and promotion for the market? Advertising Committee, but ultimately the Steering Committee.

What is the annual budget for advertising and promotion? \$4,269

Does the market currently have specific marketing goals and strategies? Yes & No

If yes, please describe. Our goal is to increase customer base; however, we have nothing established in writing.

What types of advertising does the market conduct? Some print ads in local papers, day-of-market signage, some permanent signage throughout city.

What types of promotion does the market conduct? Please include things like posters, signs, banners, flyers, special events, chef demonstrations, etc. Posters, day-of-market signs, some permanent signage throughout the city, rack cards, infrequent chef demonstrations.

Approximately how many events are held each year? One this year to celebrate 20th Anniversary, otherwise none.

Have these been successful in attracting customers to the market? No

If yes, how has success been measured?

Does the market actively work with other community groups? Yes

If yes, what types of groups does the market work with (e.g. Chamber of Commerce, restaurants and other businesses, etc). City of Anacortes, Chamber of Commerce, restaurants, local downtown businesses.

Is the market open to other community group participation (e.g. tabling)? Yes

If yes, what types of organizations participate? How frequently? We allow 3 non-profit groups per week to offer information and occasionally have fundraisers.

VII. Challenges & Opportunities

Please describe what you feel are the biggest challenges to the long-term viability of the market. What opportunities do you see for the success of the market?

Challenges: Location. We are definitely off the beaten path. Although we have grown quite nicely these last few years, we struggle with growing a larger solid core

of local shoppers. Many local residents shop maybe once or twice per season. We still need to educate many of our residents about the benefits of buying from local farmers.

Opportunities: We are a tourist destination so we get a good bit our tourist traffic in July and August. The number of tourists continues to increase yearly.