



The Community Food Bank Abundant Harvest Cooperative (AHC) is part of the Community Food Bank Local Food Pathways program. Abundant Harvest Cooperative Guidelines and Procedures must be agreed upon at the time of submission of Abundant Harvest Cooperative Application. Please direct any questions about these Guidelines and Procedures to the application team.

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I. Vision

Building a vibrant network of backyard gardeners and small farmers by creating economic and educational opportunities that support healthy communities in Southern Arizona.

II. Purpose

The Community Food Bank's Abundant Harvest Cooperative is a cooperative of local growers and producers, operated administratively out of the Community Food Bank. This cooperative:

- Offers backyard gardeners and small farmers an opportunity to sell locally-grown produce, eggs, nuts, honey, and dry goods at a shared Farmers' Market table.
- Serves as a business incubator for local producers by minimizing cost risks associated with marketing and sales outlets.
- Promotes community health through geographically accessible and culturally appropriate spaces to purchase naturally grown produce.
- Promotes access to fresh, quality food by people of all economic classes, by accepting Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits and participating in the payment instruments provided by the Arizona Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (AZFMNP) and Women, Infants, and Children (WIC).
- Contributes to food security by supporting local farms and producers, keeping food dollars in the local economy, and creating consistent options for affordable nutritious food in urban areas.

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- Builds a strong network of local growers who share knowledge and resources. Members have the opportunity to attend and teach workshops, serve as a lead grower, visit other members' gardens and farms, socialize at quarterly member mixers, and participate in annual Cooperative meetings.

III. Application and Approval Process

- A. All complete AHC Applications will be reviewed by the Abundant Harvest Cooperative team on a monthly basis. Applications will not be reviewed until all fields on the Application are complete, including growing information, product ingredients and sources, and applicant signature.
- B. In line with the Market purpose and to minimize health code risks, only the following products will be allowed for sale via AHC: vegetables, fruits, herbs, nuts, honey, eggs, beans, grains, and other edible dry goods. Meat, dairy, and craft products are not sellable via AHC.
- C. Existing Member Growers are asked to complete a new application with any significant changes to products or growing practices.
- D. All Member Growers must receive documented approval by the Abundant Harvest Cooperative team before bringing goods to sell at Market.
- E. All Member Growers are required to complete an annual Crop Plan in the format provided by the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) Farmers' Market Nutrition Program administrators.
 - a. Given the cooperative structure and centralized liability of the Abundant Harvest Cooperative, the Program itself is an AZFMNP/WIC approved grower, and registered as such for all the Member Growers' locations.
 - i. Once Crop Plans are received, the Abundant Harvest Cooperative submits them to ADHS to be in compliance with AZFMNP regulations.
 - b. The Abundant Harvest Cooperative can only accept AZFMNP/WIC payment instruments for products from farms/gardens that have submitted a complete Crop Plan, and thus requires all Member Growers to do so.
 - i. Member Growers who do not submit a complete Crop Plan in a timely way will not be allowed to continue selling through the Abundant Harvest Cooperative. Selling non-approved grower produce increases financial risk, is logistically burdensome, and more importantly, is contrary to the Program's goal of healthy produce access for all community members.

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IV. Member and Payment Structure

Member Structure

- A. Member Growers' participation in the Abundant Harvest Cooperative is completely voluntary, and can be terminated at any time by the Member with no cost.
- B. To enable Abundant Harvest Cooperative growth through new members, increased production, and increased sales, Member Growers can take on a 'Lead' role by:
 - a. Becoming a Market Volunteer and serving at least 50 hours per year; and/or
 - b. Serving as a Resource Grower to other Member Growers through mentorship and garden tours at least four times per year.
 - c. Insert your imagination and skill here- Create the Lead Grower position that speaks to you! Reach out with your idea and we'll flesh it out together.
- d. Member Growers must be part of the Abundant Harvest Cooperative for at least six months before applying to become a Lead Member Grower.

Lead Growers Commit to:

1. Invest 4-5 hours per month (or the equivalent of 50 hrs/year) into their Lead Grower role.
2. Attend Quarterly gatherings for Lead Growers to share about their projects, and pass on anything they've learned or challenges they've faced with the group.

Revenue and Fee Structure

- A. Member Growers will receive 80% of the total amount for which their products sell. The Abundant Harvest Cooperative will keep 20% of the total amount for which Member Grower products sell; this represents a small service fee to help cover the administrative and overhead costs of operating the program.
- B. Due to their contributions of time and expertise, Lead Member Growers will receive 95% of the total amount for which their products sell.

Payment Schedule

- A. Member Growers' payment will be available for pickup at the Market during drop-off time for two weeks. After two weeks, payments will be mailed to the address on file for the Member Grower.
 - a. In general, payment will be available for sales from the previous week's drop-off.
 - b. All payments will be paid in the form of a check.
 - i. Payments will only be issued to Member Growers or the representatives they have authorized on their Application.
 - ii. If a Member Grower needs a check cancelled and re-issued for any reason, this can be done minus a \$30 check-cancelling service fee.
 - c. Any check older than 90 days will be automatically cancelled.



- i. If a Member Grower needs a check reissued after it has been cancelled, it will be issued minus the \$30 check-cancelling service fee.

V. Member Grower and Product Qualifications

All Member Growers must:

- A. Reside and produce food or other products in Southern Arizona.
- B. Only sell produce grown by the Member Grower.
- C. Only sell produce that is naturally grown without pesticides, chemicals, or synthetic fertilizers.
- D. Comply with laws, permits, and licenses required by the City of Tucson, Pima County, State of Arizona, and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), including:
 - a. Eggs: All egg producers must be registered with the Arizona Department of Agriculture as Egg Dealers (for selling more than 750 dozens of eggs per year) or as Nest Run Egg Producers (for selling 750 or less dozens of eggs per year). Egg Dealers' containers must be clearly marked with appropriate grade, while Nest Run Egg products must be marked with "unclassified/nest run" and all other markings, including grade and producer, must be removed from the carton. All eggs must be kept at or below 45°F at all times.
 - b. Packaging and Labeling: Packaged consumer commodities must comply with the federal Fair Packaging and Labeling Act for all non-produce items; they must be labeled with item name, net contents, ingredients listed in descending order of quantity, and name and address of product manufacturer.
 - c. Certified Kitchen: Processed or value-added foods prepared off-farm or with a majority of non-farm ingredients must be prepared in a certified commercial kitchen. If you prepare products in your own certified kitchen or use another certified kitchen, please provide proof of the kitchen's certification.

VI. AHC Drop-off Procedures

AHC Product Drop-off:

- A. Member Growers may drop off products to the AHC shared table before any of our Farmers' Markets (days and times listed below). Market vendors may drop off products prior to Market close. In special circumstances Member Growers can make an appointment to drop off products at the Community Food Bank. Products dropped off outside of these hours may not be accepted.

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Drop-off Time: Wednesdays from 11am-1pm	Drop-off Location: Community Food Bank of S. AZ 3003 S. Country Club Rd
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- B. All products brought by the Member Grower must be labeled with the:
 - a. Grower Name
 - b. Item Name
 - c. Date of Drop Off
 - d. Item Price per Unit (weight, bag, or each)
 - i. Prices can be issued by weight, bag, or per unit. The Farmers' Market team has a price list of recommended prices based on market comparisons and sales, but each Member Grower has the right to set their own prices.
 - 1. Citrus fruits can be held and sold for two weeks. .
- C. All products brought by the Member Grower must be accompanied with a triple-copy Drop-off Log of all items and prices.
- D. Products accepted at drop-off must be in sellable condition; this means:
 - a. Produce must be pre-sorted and not include signs of rotting, mold, or damage.
 - b. Produce must be properly bunched or bagged in food-grade bags for sale. No produce will be accepted in non-food grade bags, including plastic grocery bags.
 - c. Bagged, boxed, and jarred products must be properly labeled for sale.
 - d. All egg cartons must be labeled with the Grower Member's name, the date of drop-off, and USDA classification ("Nest-run" or "Dealer").
- E. All decisions about product acceptance made by the Abundant Harvest Cooperative team at the time of drop-off are binding.
- F. At the time of drop-off, Member Grower products will be verified per the Drop-off Log, adjusted as needed, and signed by an Abundant Harvest Cooperative team member. The Member Grower will keep one copy of the Log for their records, while the Abundant Harvest Cooperative team will keep the other two copies to track sales and payment.
- G. Member Growers are encouraged to share a recipe that uses their products, as customers are more willing and able to purchase a new food if they know how to use it.

AHC Shared Table at Market:

- A. Market set-up begins 1 hour prior to Market opening hours, and not earlier.
- B. Selling may not begin before the Market opening time, nor continue after the Market closing time.

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- C. Abundant Harvest Cooperative representatives are expected to maintain the safety and sanitation of the Table space. This includes:
 - a. Produce must be stored at least six inches above the ground to reduce the risk of contamination (per Pima County Health Code).
 - b. Eggs must be stored in a cooler and held at 45° or below (per Pima County Health Code).
 - c. Provide sufficient stakes and/or weights for shade structures.
 - d. Use cord covers for any electrical cords that are laid across passageways.
 - e. Table representatives are responsible for the safety and behavior of their children and service animals.
 - f. Smoking tobacco or e-cigarettes is only allowed in designated smoking areas.
 - g. Table representatives are asked to report any safety incidents to Market staff, and Market staff will document the incident. The Community Food Bank maintains liability insurance for Market events to reduce individual vendor risk, so Market staff must be notified of incidents to properly effect insurance coverage.
- D. The Abundant Harvest Cooperative team and Member Growers are responsible for setting up the AHC Shared Table at Market, and ensuring accurate tracking by labeling all products and/or baskets with:
 - a. Grower Name
 - b. Product Name
 - c. Product Price
- E. All scales used at the AHC Shared Table must be calibrated and in compliance with the Arizona Department of Weights and Measures.
- F. Products are purchased by consumers directly at the AHC Shared Market Table.
 - a. Staff, volunteers, and members working at the AHC Shared Market Table are responsible for weighing/counting customers' items, as well as accepting and verifying payment on behalf of Member Growers.
- G. Clean-up must be completed within 1 hour after the close of the Market. Please clean up all trash and debris around Table.

Member Grower Produce After Market:

- A. The Abundant Harvest Cooperative will properly store and transport your produce from Market to Market until it is no longer in condition to be sold.
 - a. At this point, the Abundant Harvest Cooperative team will weigh any leftovers and give them away in the emergency food boxes at the Community Food Bank. If Member Growers prefer to take home any produce that does not sell, they may pick it up at the end of the Market.

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Conduct:

- A. Abundant Harvest Cooperative members and representatives are expected to uphold the community and business values of the Farmers' Market by treating all Market participants and parties with respect and integrity.
 - a. As a site for USDA funding via the AZFMNP and WIC programs, the Farmers' Market upholds the federal non-discrimination policy which prohibits discrimination against customers on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or public assistance status.
 - b. Discrimination complaints can be filed by anyone to Market management for resolution, or to the government via the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form.

Accepted Market Payments:

- A. Payments accepted at the Abundant Harvest Cooperative Table include cash, credit/debit, SNAP/EBT, and AZFMNP/WIC checks.
 - a. Cash: Shoppers may pay their bill with cash, and receive proper change.
 - b. Credit/Debit: Shoppers may pay with credit/debit cards, with a \$1 merchant service fee added to the total bill.
 - c. SNAP/EBT: Shoppers may pay with their Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) cards (with no merchant service fee).
 - i. Only SNAP-eligible products can be sold through EBT.
 - ii. No change or cash refund can be issued for EBT purchases.
 - d. AZFMNP: Arizona Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (AZFMNP) coupons are only redeemable for fresh fruits, vegetables, and herbs—however, herbs are not eligible for purchase with WIC CVVs (Woman, Infants, and Children Cash Value Vouchers).
 - i. No change can be issued for AZFMNP coupons. AHC Shared Table representatives are to help shoppers select the amount of produce equal to the value of the check.

VII. Member Grower Participation

One of the benefits of the Abundant Harvest Cooperative is that Member Growers create a network of knowledge and material resources. Below are the main opportunities and requests for Member Grower involvement.

Site Visits

The Abundant Harvest Cooperative Team may contact you to conduct a site visit to your garden or farm. This is a great way for Abundant Harvest Cooperative representatives to learn about

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your growing operation in order to share information with customers at the Farmers' Markets and other Member Growers.

Garden Tours

The Abundant Harvest Cooperative hosts at least two garden tours per year for Grower Members. We tour a number of gardens and farms, share ideas and garden stories, and generally have a good time learning from one another.

Annual Abundant Harvest Cooperative Open Meeting

A meeting for all Member Growers is held once each year to share updates, opportunities, and pertinent information about the Abundant Harvest Cooperative and Farmers' Markets. This is also a forum to get feedback and ideas from Member Growers.

Your Participation is Valued

If you are interested in sharing your knowledge on a specific topic by teaching a class for other gardeners and community members, or you have ideas for other great events or educational opportunities, don't hesitate to contact the Abundant Harvest Cooperative team. Participation and ideas are always welcome.

VIII. Enforcement of Abundant Harvest Cooperative Guidelines

Abundant Harvest Cooperative staff, representatives, and Member Growers are expected to follow all the guidelines laid out in this document. Any question about compliance is grounds for inspection and/or suspension or removal from the Abundant Harvest Cooperative.

Inspections:

- A. The Community Food Bank's Abundant Harvest Cooperative team reserves the right to conduct inspections of the production areas of products sold through the Market.
- B. The Community Food Bank Abundant Harvest Cooperative team reserves the right to conduct inspections of recipes and receipts for processed and prepared products.
- C. Failure to allow an inspection will be considered a violation of the Abundant Harvest Cooperative Rules and Regulations.

Enforcement Decisions:

- A. Abundant Harvest Cooperative staff members have discretion to make any on-site decisions regarding Market violations.
- B. Any Member Grower violating the rules and regulations in this document, or those of other local, state, and federal agencies, will be issued a written or verbal warning by Abundant Harvest Cooperative staff. Warnings will be documented, and the Member Grower will be asked to correct the problem in a timely way.
- C. Repeated non-compliance, or non-compliance that threatens safety or integrity, will result in a written notice of suspension or expulsion from the Abundant Harvest Cooperative. It is possible for this to occur in a single day.

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- D. Per liability and safety standards, any serious violations or illegal activity will be reported to the proper authorities.

Appeals:

- A. Member Growers have the right to appeal any notice of violation or decision for suspension/expulsion from the Abundant Harvest Cooperative.
- B. All Appeals must be submitted in writing within two weeks of the notification date for the violation or suspension/expulsion.
- C. Appeals should contain an explanation of the situation, grounds for the appeal, and proposed solution.
- D. Abundant Harvest Cooperative management staff will review and respond to the appeal within 45 days.
 - a. Request for more information, documentation, or an in-person meeting with the Member Grower is a discretionary part of the appeal process.
- E. Decisions of Program Management are final and binding.

Changes to Guidelines and Procedures:

- A. These Guidelines and Procedures are reviewed annually by the Community Food Bank's Abundant Harvest Cooperative staff, and are subject to change to ensure the quality and success of the Market.

IX. Resources

The Community Food Bank is committed to serving as a resource to potential and existing Member Growers for required permits and registrations; please contact Abundant Harvest Cooperative staff and representatives with any questions, and/or refer to the resources below.

Cleaning, Storage, and Display

- A. For the freshest produce, harvest the morning of drop-off. Harvesting in the coolest part of the day will yield better tasting and longer lasting produce.
- B. Please have all produce washed before market, and bagged or bunched when appropriate. Please don't hesitate to ask Abundant Harvest Cooperative team members for ideas about the best way to package your produce.
- C. Generally, greens and herbs should be stored in the refrigerator in a sealed bag. Sprinkle greens with a little bit of water and keep them sealed to prevent them from drying out.
- D. Please refer to the Produce Storage document for more information on the safe harvest, cleaning, and storage of fresh produce.

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Packing Supplies

The Abundant Harvest Cooperative can buy packaging supplies in bulk, and pass the savings on to Grower Members for purchase at-cost. Please inquire if you are interested in produce roll bags, zip-seal bags, twist ties, egg cartons, or other items.

Licenses and Taxes

- A. Arizona Department of Revenue License and Tax information:
<http://www.azdor.gov/Business/LicensingGuide.aspx>
 - a. Tucson Business Privilege Licenses can be obtained for a \$25 application fee and \$45 annual permit fee at Tucson City Hall: 255 W. Alameda St, 520-791-4566,
<http://www.tucsonaz.gov/business/start-new-business>
- B. Pima County Health Department Licenses and Permit information:
http://webcms.pima.gov/health/food-safety/permitting_and_inspections

Weights and Measures

- A. Device licensure for Arizona Department of Weights and Measures:
<https://agriculture.az.gov/weights-measures/licensing>

Product Labeling

- A. Federal guidelines for Fair Packaging and Labeling:
<http://www.ftc.gov/enforcement/rules/rulemaking-regulatory-reform-proceedings/fair-packaging-labeling-act>

Eggs

- A. Arizona Department of Agriculture Egg Product Control Program information: [Egg Inspections | Arizona Department of Agriculture \(az.gov\)](#)
- B. Egg Dealers Licensure (for more than 750 dozen eggs per year; \$25 application fee):
[2023.02 - Egg - Egg License Application.pdf \(az.gov\)](#)
- C. Nest Run Egg Producer Registration (for 750 or less dozen eggs per year; no fee):
[Nest Run Producer Info App \(12-24-19\).pdf \(az.gov\)](#)

Arizona Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (AZFMNP)

- A. AZFMNP guide and contact information: <http://www.azdhs.gov/azwic/farmers-market.htm>

Federal Non-Discrimination Policy and Complaint Process

- A. Federal non-discrimination policy: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/usda-nondiscrimination-statement/>
- B. Form to file a complaint of discrimination to the USDA:
http://www.ocio.usda.gov/sites/default/files/docs/2012/Complain_combined_6_8_12.pdf

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- A. The Community Food Bank operates year-round Farmers' Markets in Tucson. Member Growers are encouraged to become a free-standing vendor when their product reaches a volume that could fill its own table. There is a separate Application process and set of Rules and Regulations for becoming a Farmers' Market vendor. Please contact Abundant Harvest Cooperative or Farmers' Market staff for more information about this.