



## VENDOR FAQ

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We are so excited that you are interested in being part of the South Carolina Grown Marketplace at the South Carolina State Fair. This marketplace was created to showcase the incredible talent, creativity, and agricultural excellence found right here in our state. Every vendor plays a role in helping us highlight what makes South Carolina special.

You can contact me directly at [kaylaw@scstatefair.org](mailto:kaylaw@scstatefair.org), and I will be happy to answer any questions.

We look forward to working with you and continuing to grow this marketplace together.

*Kayla Williams*

South Carolina Grown Marketplace Coordinator

### Eligibility & Application

#### **Who is eligible to apply?**

Vendors must sell products that are made, sewn, grown, or created in South Carolina. The marketplace showcases local artisans, farmers, makers, and food producers. Resale and national/direct-sales products are not accepted.

#### **What does “made, sewn, or grown in South Carolina” mean?**

The core product must be produced in South Carolina. Sub-components may be sourced elsewhere, but the primary product must be created here.

#### **Does applying guarantee acceptance?**

No. Applications are reviewed for product fit, category balance, and overall marketplace quality.

#### **When will vendors be notified if they are accepted?**

Applications close May 1. Vendors will be notified within approximately 3–5 days after closing.

#### **What if I’m unsure whether I submitted my application?**

Email the coordinator or resubmit. Duplicate applications can easily be managed.

### Licensing & Compliance

#### **Do I need a business license?**

Yes. A valid City of Columbia Business License is required.

- Website: [businesslicensing.columbiasc.gov/](http://businesslicensing.columbiasc.gov/)
- Email: [businesslicenseemail@columbiasc.gov](mailto:businesslicenseemail@columbiasc.gov)

**What are the requirements for food vendors?**

Food vendors must meet all applicable SCDA and SC Home Based Food Production Laws. A separate food vendor meeting will be held after approval.

**Can food vendors offer samples?**

Yes. Samples must be in labeled, lidded portion cups and comply with regulations.

**Is sales tax collected?**

Yes. Sales tax is automatically collected at checkout and reflected in the final vendor report.

**Communication & Support**

**How will vendors receive updates and instructions?**

All communication is sent via email prior to the fair. During the fair, vendors will also have direct phone and app contact.

**Will vendor information be available online?**

Yes. Approved vendors are listed on the marketplace webpage, and booth locations will be included approximately 2-4 weeks prior to the start of the fair.

**Will my business name be displayed?**

Yes. Vendor profiles including name, county, and contact information are displayed. Business cards are strongly encouraged.

**Booth Spaces & Display Setup**

**Can I come and work my booth or area?**

No. Vendors do not staff booths. Marketplace staff manage all sales and customer interactions.

**How are booth spaces assigned?**

Spaces are assigned based on product type, volume, and layout. Preferences may be discussed, but final placement is determined internally.

**Will I know my booth space in advance?**

Yes. A map with assigned space types and setup examples will be sent approximately 2-3 weeks before the fair.

**Will I have the same spot as last year?**

No. Layouts change as the marketplace grows.

**What do the display setups look like?**

Vendors are assigned either table shelving units or foldable 6x6 display units with shelving. Photos are provided prior to the fair.

**Can I customize my booth or display?**

Displays are standardized for consistency. Vendors may bring signage, branded tablecloths, QR codes, or small decorative elements.

## Inventory, Restocking & Storage

### **How much inventory should I bring?**

Bring as much as you reasonably can. Back-of-house storage is available.

### **How does initial setup work?**

Vendors may assist with initial placement during drop-off. Staff handle ongoing restocking and adjustments.

### **Can I restock inventory during the fair?**

Yes. Vendors drop off inventory before the fair and may restock if needed. Staff will notify vendors when inventory runs low.

### **Can I ship restock items if I'm far away?**

Possibly. Shipping arrangements can be discussed depending on location and timing.

### **Will vendors have access to live inventory tracking?**

Not yet. A live inventory system is being explored but may not be available for 2026.

## Sales, Pricing & Payments

### **How are sales handled during the fair?**

All sales are processed through the SC Grown Marketplace system. Vendors do not handle transactions directly.

### **How does the sales tracking system work?**

Each product is assigned a SKU number. Sales automatically assign to the correct vendor.

### **Do I need separate SKUs for every product?**

That depends on your tracking needs. If you need to track specific variations separately, each should have its own SKU.

### **Can I offer bundle pricing or discounts?**

Yes. Special pricing structures can be programmed into the system.

### **Should I mark up pricing to cover the fair's percentage?**

That decision is up to the vendor. Some adjust slightly. Consider pricing consistency if selling elsewhere at the same time.

### **When and how are vendors paid?**

After the fair, vendors receive a detailed sales report. Once approved, a check is mailed within approximately 2-4 weeks.

### **How does sales distribution work under one register?**

All vendors operate under a centralized checkout system. The system assigns each sale to the correct vendor automatically via SKU tracking.

## Product Strategy & Performance

### **What kind of traffic does the marketplace see?**

The SC State Fair averages about 400,000 attendees annually. The marketplace experiences strong daily traffic.

### **What types of products sell best?**

Smaller, giftable, easy-to-carry items tend to perform best. Holiday gift items are especially popular.

## Security & Loss Prevention

### **How do you prevent theft?**

Staff monitor the floor continuously, including designated associates and onsite security. Jewelry and small items are secured in locked cases when necessary. We also have Richland County Sheriff's Department assisting.

### **What happens if inventory discrepancies occur?**

Final sales reports are reviewed with vendors. Any discrepancies are addressed directly.

## Packaging & Customer Experience

### **Do you provide bags and packaging?**

Yes. Bags, wrapping paper, and fragile protection materials are provided.

### **Can I include QR codes for email lists or promotions?**

Yes. QR codes for newsletters, subscriptions, or websites are encouraged.