

Spot Assignments for 2018 West Lafayette Farmers Market

The word for what we hope to accomplish every week as we set up the market is synergy. In other words, the ...

"... interaction or cooperation of two or more organizations, substances, or other agents to produce a combined effect greater than the sum of their separate effects."

We believe our whole is greater than the sum of our parts. And oh, the parts! There are many. The West Lafayette Market is a veritable cornucopia of coolness every week.



We have many vendors including those who sell produce, flowers, wine, prepared food, bread and cakes, jewelry, clothing, meat, arts and crafts. We also have non-profit organizations such as the West Lafayette Public Library, Purdue Extension, Wabash Valley Astronomical Society, Food Finders, The Lion's Club and others. We have local musicians such as Steve Michaels, TJ Rosa, Jeffery Bowen, Sharon McKnight, and many more. Then there's WIC, and Joe White the balloon guy, the DARE officer for the Drug Take Back program, the city tent and other community oriented groups. There's room for all of it at the West Lafayette Farmers Market.

Below is a list of some things we keep in mind when assigning spots in the market.

The overall look of the market. We try to have an even spread of vendors who are selling similar products, rather than having all the produce in one section and all the prepared food in another. Also, we want the vendors whom we know to be quite popular with customers to occupy strategic spaces which we believe will draw people into the market. Also, although there are no prizes given out for 'most photogenic' we do notice that some vendors have a booth that has an extra measure of curb appeal and we want to have those vendors in key places.



Legal issues. Wine vendors need to be on the park side of the area. There's an invisible line that divides the parking lot between the school and the city -- it's illegal to sell alcoholic beverages on school property. Also, to be in full compliance with the law, alcohol needs to stay within a roped in area. The shade sail space on the north end of the market seems to work best for this.

Efficiency during load in and load out. Someone with a large rig many not be able to access certain spots during load in. Especially for vendors who are unable to come early and avoid our rush hour — usually from 2pm to 3pm — when most of our folks want to get into the market area.

How many spaces a vendor has purchased. If a vendor has purchased two or three spaces we think that's great! We work hard to make sure the vendors with a bigger foot print have a space that works for them and the good of the market as well.

The date a vendor's payment was received. Was it with the application / contract submitted in March? May 1st? Or did they join us mid season?

Personal preferences of the vendor. Many of you have shared with me your concerns about how your product reacts poorly in certain spots due to sun or wind or another environmental factor. We do the best we can to listen and be accommodating when possible.

The number of years a vendor has been with the market. We value our faithful, returning vendors because our shoppers do. One of the most frequently asked questions we get at the info tent is, "Where's _____ today?" They may not tell you so, but a large number of our customers come to the market because of a specific, and usually well established, vendor. We want to do everything we can to help build this kind of relationship.

The vendors attendance record and communication about absences. When vendors let me know when they will be absent we can give away their spot for that week. We can also answer people when they ask, "Where's _____ today?" by saying, "They'll be back next week!" When we know a vendor will be with us, we can help promote their business on Facebook and other media.

The first market of 2018, OPENING DAY, is May 2nd and there is an epic amount of work to be done leading up to this day to make sure all the very cool elements work together. The sooner we have your contracts in, the better prepared we are for opening day. With this in mind we are implementing a new policy. If your application /contract and payment are received on or before April 13th the cost per space will be \$100. After this date the cost will be \$125. We expect to have openings for both new and returning vendors throughout the season. The cost per space will be \$120 for vendors joining mid season.

