

Sitka Farmers Market Manager Job Description (2024 version)

About the Sitka Farmers Market

The Sitka Farmers Market enters its 17th year of operation with 6-8 markets scheduled for 2024 happening from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on selected Saturdays from July through September. Our dates for 2024 have not yet been established, pending booking ANB Founders Hall. We tentatively have requested seven dates — June 29, July 13, 27, Aug. 10, 24, Sept. 7, and 21 — for 2024.

The Sitka Local Foods Network hosts the Sitka Farmers Market, and the market falls within the SLFN's mission to increase the locally harvested and produced foods in the diets of Southeast Alaskans. In addition to providing locally grown and harvested food, the market educates the public about nutrition and the importance of eating locally grown and harvested foods. It also offers musical entertainment, special events, cooking and other demonstrations to create a community festival for the town.

Though the focus is on locally grown and harvested foods, due to the limited number of food producers in Sitka, the markets also feature locally produced art, crafts, and wild-crafted herbal products. Ideally the number of vendors selling local food products will increase each year. The Sitka Farmers Market Manager must actively seek local food producers to sell their products at the market.

Job summary

The Market Manager is responsible for the operation of the Sitka Farmers Market, working with market vendors, customers and other stakeholders, and provides all administrative functions to ensure a successful market. The Market Manager also oversees the Assistant Manager (Sitka Local Foods Network board president Charles Bingham), who assists with all planning, marketing and activities associated with market days. Charles has been in this position for seven years, and he's only missed five markets in 16 years, so he is a good resource about what has worked and hasn't worked in the past. The Market Manager oversees the actual market, getting tables set up, getting the Sitka Local Foods Network farm stand ready, coordinating sales with a crew of volunteers, and putting the market equipment back in our trailer at the end. The Assistant Manager does most of the administrative duties and helps out at the markets.

Education and community outreach programs, are also an important part of our mission and we welcome creative ideas in this regard. The Manager receives direction from the Sitka Local Foods Network Board of Directors, but has a single point of contact with the board representative to the Farmers Market. The SLFN Board members provide hands-on assistance at the markets such as help with set up and clean-up and selling produce from St. Peter's Fellowship Farm at the SLFN Farmers Market booth.

Job responsibilities

Board-Management Relations

- Participate as a team member to promote market goals working closely with the SLFN Board of Directors. Work closely with the Board of Directors to communicate ideas, provide feedback, and identify potential problems, as well as offer creative solutions to further the organization's goals to promote the production and consumption of local foods.
- Work with the Board pre-season to develop and implement an annual action plan for the market.
- Prepare and present a Market Manager's report, during the season for any problems and at the end of the season for a complete overview.
- The Market Manager can become a member of the SLFN Board of Directors, and is encouraged to attend monthly board meetings.

Market Operations

a. Pre-Market

- Recruit vendors for the markets. While there aren't many vendors growing local produce in Sitka, we have seen several new food carts and similar businesses that we'd like to attract to the market. Host at least one (preferably two) market vendor meetings in May and/or June to let people know about the market. Host at least one intro to cottage foods business classes, in partnership with the UAF Fairbanks Cooperative Extension Service (usually Sarah Lewis of Juneau teaches by teleconference).
- Design market table set-up to accommodate the maximum number of vendors with adequate spacing.
- Conduct spring inventory and assessment of market equipment and supplies (tents, totes, etc.). With approval of the Board, arrange with Charles to purchase needed supplies and equipment for the coming market season.
- Assist SLFN Board to recruit volunteers for set up and take down and other functions.
- Assist with promotion of the Markets: radio spots, interviews, public relations, etc. Be a point of contact for the community about the market.

b. Market Day

- Actively manage market operations from set up at 7:30-8 a.m. to final clean up (usually done by 2-2:30 p.m.).
- Be present and visible at the markets to answer questions, assist vendors as needed, maintain public order and identify any potential hazards or problems to ensure a clean and safe environment.
- Be aware of the rules for use of the ANB Hall and make sure all vendors and other users are abiding by the rules.
- Interpret and apply the market rules for vendors and others in a consistent and fair manner.
- Settle conflicts in a diplomatic manner.
- Place market signs and barricades where appropriate.
- Locate ANB Hall first aid kit and make sure it is available. Same with fire extinguishers. Make sure emergency exits are not blocked.
- Make sure restrooms are properly cleaned and stocked.
- Direct and supervise volunteer activities.

c. Vendor Relations

- Work with the Board to refine Market rules, policy, and application process to meet the goals of the SLFN.
- Actively recruit and support vendors, handle all vendor communications.
- Ensure all vendors complete an application form and pay required fees using our online registration website, <http://sitkafarmersmarket.eventsmart.com>.
- Ensure all vendors are given a copy of the market rules.
- Educate vendors and customers about SNAP EBT card and WIC farmers market voucher programs. We match the first \$20 in benefits used by SNAP/WIC clients, and we have had at least one other vendor (Middle Island Gardens) accept WIC vouchers. If someone in Southeast Alaska, such as SEARHC, starts distributing Senior farmers market vouchers, we also will match them. There usually is a mandatory WIC training class in May or June offered by the state.

d. General On-going

- Work with Sitka's Alaska DEC Food Safety representative (Alex Carlson) to ensure vendor compliance with health department requirements regarding food safety.
- Manage activities and volunteers for each market – volunteers, music, chef demos, educational events, and community partners.
- Assist with all administrative functions, including vendor billing and receipts, maintenance of volunteer records, mailing list. Charles usually coordinates this.
- Work with the SLFN Board to ensure a professionally run market.
- Maintain positive relationships with all vendors, stay current with vendor offerings, create and manage a vendor application process.
- Actively promote the market to increase awareness and customers using the market.
- With the education/events committee, present events that will educate the public about health and nutrition.
- Be the spokesperson to the media, town, the community, and to other markets.
- Present new ideas, best practices from other markets, list serves, etc., to the SLFN Board.
- Suggestions for improving the markets are needed and welcome.
- Actively support the strategic planning process of the Board.
- Monitor the sitkafarmersmarket@gmail.com email address for vendor recruitment.

Position requirements

- Able to work with minimal direction
- Excellent interpersonal skills, including tact, and negotiation ability
- Clear and organized work habits, positive attitude, flexible
- Excellent oral and written communication skills
- Creative problem solver
- Commitment to local food, nutrition, health and wellness and SLFN's mission
- Skill in program development and management
- Ability to collect and analyze data about the market
- Keep a current food handler's permit from Alaska DEC.
- Our Sitka Farmers Market supplies are kept in a construction trailer. It will help if the market manager has access to a pick-up truck or similar vehicle to haul the trailer to the

market. The trailer currently is stored in front of Charles Bingham's duplex (Charles does own a vehicle, but can't tow the trailer).

Pay

- This is a contract position and the market manager receives \$4,000 for the summer (\$800 a month from May through September). The SLFN may pay a bonus, or it may not, depending on the success of the season and the SLFN financial picture.
- The market manager will be required to submit an IRS W9 form when hired for tax purposes.

Further information

Further information about the Sitka Farmers Market, our vendors, and our policies can be found on our website <http://www.sitkalocalfoodsnetwork.org>. We also have Sitka Local Foods Network and Sitka Farmers Market pages on Facebook. To apply for the Sitka Farmers Market Manager position, please submit a cover letter and a resume by Friday, March 15, 2024, to sitkalocalfoodsnetwork@gmail.com. For more information, contact Charles Bingham at (907) 623-7660 or charleswbingham3@gmail.com.