



Earth's Bounty-Local, Fresher, Better

The first Saturdays of April through November, 2016

Mission Statement:

To promote, support and enhance the downtown Meridian Area Farmers market; to broaden the scope of the Farmers Market by encouraging vendors of all agriculturally-based products to participate; to expand the customer base of the market by offering a wider variety of produce and agriculturally-based products; to increase area demand for fresh, healthy, local grown foods; to provide support for the work of Meridian Main Street and to stimulate tourism through a festive event that includes music, children's and adult activities designed to heighten the market experience.

Agriculturally-Based Products:

Earth's Bounty accepts only agriculturally-based products. These include: baked goods; dairy, fish, meat, poultry and seafood products; eggs; flowers; fruits and berries; herbs; honey; jams and jellies; potted plants; processed foods; seeds; syrups; vegetables; and small livestock and fowl. **Arts and crafts, including, but not limited to, ceramics, artwork, jewelry, stitchery, glass work, knickknacks, etc., are NOT allowed.**

Earth's Bounty Rules:

All products sold at the monthly market must meet the "agriculturally-based products" definition as detailed above. Earth's Bounty gives preference to produce grown in East Mississippi and West Alabama and to produce grown by the vendor. Exceptions may be made for produce purchased by the vendor if the produce does not substantially conflict with locally grown produce. All out-of-area produce should be clearly marked as to its origin. Vendors of products other than produce (baked goods, candles, soaps and others, for example) are **prohibited** from offering for resale any products not made by the vendor.

*The market will be open from 8 a.m. – 1 p.m. on the designated Saturdays. Vendors may set up as early as 7 a.m. and all vendors are expected to be open for business by 8 a.m. No sales may be made before 8 a.m. or after 1 p.m. Vendors may temporarily park in the festival area or on Front Street adjacent to the festival area in order to unload their products. **Once unloaded, all vehicles that are not used as an integral part of the vendors sales space MUST be moved to on-street or off-street parking that does not interfere with customer parking.** VENDORS ARE REQUIRED TO BE ON THE PREMISES DURING THE ENTIRE EXTENT OF THE MARKET AND SHOULD ANTICIPATE THE QUALITY OF PRODUCTS NECESSARY TO MEET CUSTOMER DEMAND. Exceptions may be granted to current members of the Meridian Area Farmer's Market.*

The market is located on Front Street in downtown Meridian, just east of Union Station. Vendors must provide their own produce vehicles, tables, tents and signage and are responsible for set-up and clean-

up. Power is available at limited locations. Anyone needing power should indicate that on the application form. There is an additional charge for power.

The monthly market will be held rain or shine. Customers must be able to expect the sale of Earth's Bounty products whether or not the weather is ideal. In the event of truly severe weather, the staff of Earth's Bounty will decide whether to cancel the market, open later than usual or close earlier than usual and will notify all registered vendors as soon as possible.

All vendors must comply with State of Mississippi law governing the cottage food industry. **The law, approved in 2013, can be viewed at meridianms.org.** In addition, vendors must prominently display their prices. Vendors selling by weight are required to use certified scales.

Each vendor is responsible for collecting his/her sales tax, where it is applicable. Sales tax collection envelopes will be provided by Earth's Bounty staff. Envelopes must be turned in at the registration desk at the end of the day.

All vendors must complete an application form and submit the fees detailed on the form no less than eight days prior to the festival. Late submittals will require an additional fee and may be denied due to space constraints. Members of the Meridian Area Farmers Market are exempt from Earth's Bounty fees unless they set up in the Earth's Bounty section.

Non-members of the Meridian Area Farmer's Market must submit a description of each product to be sold.

Vendors are responsible for pricing their own products and are encouraged to set prices at fair-market value. Customers come to Earth's Bounty for the best and freshest products and are not looking for "deals" or deep discounts. Conversely, overpricing will discourage customer participation. Whatever prices have been set by the vendor at the opening of the market must remain in effect for the entire day.

Any vendor unable to attend a particular market for which the vendor is registered should notify Earth's Bounty staff no later than Monday prior to the event, if at all possible. In the event there is a waiting list for that market day, the staff will then have time to notify additional vendors that slots are open.

Vendors must behave in a courteous manner to all staff, volunteers, other vendors and customers. Disrespectful conduct will result in the vendor being barred from **the festival**.

How to Apply:

The Earth's Bounty application is available online or at the City of Meridian Community Development Department Office. Visit meridianms.org **or like us on Facebook – Earth's Bounty. Click on REGISTRATION FORMS.**

Each booth is \$25 per festival if paid 8 days before event. If you elect to pay for all 8 events, the last month will be free (total of \$175 instead of \$200). Prepayment for all festivals will guarantee booth placement, if at all possible. If booth fee is paid after the 8 days prior to event, the cost is \$35, no exceptions. Except for emergencies, booth rental fees will not be refunded. Multiple

booths may be rented. An additional fee of \$15 is required for a power source per market. Also, vendors must provide a photo or describe each product to be sold. In addition to booth fees, each vendor will be expected to donate a small amount of produce/product for a gift basket to be given away as a door prize at the end of each festival.

Make checks payable to the City of Meridian, P.O. Box 1430, Meridian, MS 39302. For more information contact City of Meridian Cultural Affairs at 601-485-1944. or lauracarmichael@meridianms.org