

Crafts Area Guidelines

Common Ground Country Fair

Coordinators: Tim Reimensnyder, Lynn Plumb

The purposes of the Crafts area are:

1. to contribute to the quality of rural life for Maine craftspeople by giving them a place to sell their work, and
2. to encourage craftspeople to use Maine resources in ways creatively compatible with the goals and objectives of MOFGA.

It is the responsibility of all vendors/exhibitors to respect the area guidelines, area coordinators, and their fellow vendors/exhibitors at all times. Participation is a privilege not a right. All Common Ground Country Fair area coordinators are volunteers who work hard to make the fair successful. The success of our fair depends on us working together.

General Guidelines for Crafts

1. The CGCF will not accept applications, which include images, postmarked or submitted after the deadline specified in the Crafts area application packets. NO EXCEPTIONS.
2. Applicants must read and abide by the general guidelines for the Common Ground Country Fair.
3. Applicants must reside in Maine. The CGCF may require proof of Maine residency.
4. Applicants must make their craft in Maine.
5. Applicants must design and make the crafts they wish to sell.
6. Applicants' work must be original in design and concept.
7. Both traditional and contemporary (or innovative) work will be considered.
8. The CGCF accepts crafts in the following categories: basketry, ceramics, fiber, fine arts, glass, graphics, handmade paper, jewelry, leather, metal, mixed media, photography, and wood.
9. The CGCF will not accept vendors in the following categories: cosmetics, dried flowers, embellished objects, foodstuffs, herbs, toiletries, and works made from kits.
10. As an organization dedicated to protecting the environment by promoting organic agricultural practices, MOFGA is especially attracted to crafts that use non-polluting, organic materials and processes whenever possible.
11. Accepted vendors may only sell work included in their application and accepted by the Crafts coordinators.

Jurying Process For Crafts Area

The Crafts area at the Common Ground Country Fair is a juried show. All exhibitors must submit an application and be accepted to participate.

1. The Crafts area coordinator appoints the jury.
2. The jury consists of an odd number of people with knowledge of crafts and a connection to MOFGA. The jury may include former CGCF crafts vendors, other craftspeople, or crafts shop owners.
3. Jurors can serve for two years. The Crafts area coordinator maintains continuity by replacing members on a rotating basis.
4. The CGCF makes public the names of the jurors.

5. The applicants' images are anonymous to the jury and identified only by a number.
6. Jurors view images by category and at a pace slow enough to allow comments and questions.

Applications are scored on three criteria: answers to the application questions; images of the crafter's work; and on-site observations.

1. Questions:

- a. The CGCF asks applicants a series of questions about their residency, where their work is made, the items they intend to sell, the price range of their items, their intended customer interaction, (e.g., demonstrations, educational displays, commission work entertainment, staffing), sources of their raw materials, their means of production, other craftspeople involved in making their product, etc.
- b. The Crafts area coordinator and a person involved in MOFGA and the CGCF will review the answers to the application questions.

2. Images:

- a. Applicants must submit with their application four high-resolution digital images of their work to be reviewed by the jury. The size of each image should be roughly 4"x6" or 1200x1800 pixels. The maximum file size is 1.8 megabytes per image.
- b. The images must be representative of the range, both in price and originality, of the products the applicant intends to sell.
- c. Regardless of the applicant's Craft, if they wish to sell jewelry as part of their booth they must include an image if it.

3. On-Site Inspection:

On-site inspection inspects CGCF Crafts area booths for quality and presentation of work, interaction with the public, educational content, and consistency with vendors' application and is done by the Crafts area coordinator.

Review Criteria

1. The person who has **more hands-on** involvement in the creation of his/her craft from start to finish will be chosen over the person who has less. Here are some examples of whom we will choose in certain categories:

Basketry: the person who gathers, splits or otherwise processes the materials they weave over the person who buys the materials;

Ceramics: the person who throws, or uses the slab or coil technique, over the person who slip casts and only decorates;

Fiber: the person who spins, and/or weaves or knits over the one who purchases yarn; the one who weaves or hand paints over the one who sews with purchased material; the one who prints on clothing they made over the one who prints on ready-made clothing; the one who uses natural fiber over the one who only uses synthetic fiber;

Jewelry: the one who creates the piece over the one who assembles purchased components.

Photography: Until recently a photographer took photos, developed, printed and sold them. We choose the one who did his own developing and printing over the one who sent his film out. Now there are many ways to reproduce a photo taken with or without film. We do not reject new technology just because it is not a traditional craft. But the same criteria apply: the more hands-on, the higher the craftperson's score. For example, the person who makes his own reproductions on his own computer in his studio will be chosen over the person whose work is reproduced by offset or computer by others outside his control. Original photographs or original hand-painted photographs **must** be available for sale.

Fine Arts & Graphics: Applicant must offer original paintings, drawings, or prints. The person whose small pieces (cards, postcards, etc.) are also made by them (screen prints, block prints, mixed media etc.) is chosen over the person who has their work offset or reproduced by others.

2. The person who offers a **range of items** from very expensive one-of-a-kind museum quality work to small, inexpensive production work, will be chosen over a person who only or mostly offers very high end work. This is a criterion that is different from those of other shows and it may be why certain very good crafts people are sometimes not accepted to Common Ground. The Fair Steering Committee (FSC) feels strongly that it wants fairgoers to be able to afford the crafts. However, all items must be made with the same attention to craftsmanship.
3. The person who concentrates on one medium usually fares better in the jury process than someone who works in several media. Perhaps it implies professionalism or seriousness about developing skill in one's chosen medium.
4. The person who uses non-polluting, organic, Maine materials and/or processes will be chosen over the one who does not.
5. **Recognized Craftspeople** - In 1997, the FSC revisited the issue of automatically accepting certain long time vendors in the Crafts area. After **much** discussion the Committee decided to continue to have unjuried vendors for the sake of loyalty to those vendors. In 2006 this issues was again addressed by the FSC and the guidelines have again been adjusted to slow the increase of recognized vendors. Please read the guidelines below carefully.

Acceptance to Crafts Area

1. A predetermined number of applicants shall be accepted by the Crafts area coordinator, with the highest scoring applications receiving preference.
2. The Crafts area has a category limit of 20% per medium. The Crafts area coordinator reserves the right to balance the categories if needed to meet the 20% per medium limit.
3. The Crafts area coordinator maintains a wait-list of applicants who met the criteria but were not offered an acceptance.
4. All applicants will be notified by mail of the decision regarding their application.

Recognized Craft Vendors

1. When the CGCF accepts a craftsperson for ten consecutive years, it will recognize that craftsperson for her/his commitment to the CGCF and for consistently producing quality work. The CGCF recognizes such a craftsperson by automatically accepting her/him into the Crafts area the following years if she/he completes and submits an application that meets the guidelines by the established Crafts area deadline. **NO IMAGES are NECESSARY.**
2. Recognized Crafters are subject to the On-Site Inspection part of the jury process.
3. When the recognized Craft Vendors reach 45% of all craft vendors, a waitlist will be established for recognized status. Applicants on the waitlist must continue to apply, with images, and submit to the jurying process. When a space opens up a name will be drawn from the waitlist in the order they were received. If there is more than one qualified vendor in a year a lottery will occur. This will occur in the MOFGA office with the Craft area coordinator and staff in attendance.
4. There is a limit within the Recognized Craft Vendor group to 20% in any medium category. For example, if there are 40 recognized vendors, no more than 8 may be in the same medium category. A waitlist will be established within a category for recognized status when the 20% limit has been reached for that category. Applicants on the waitlist must continue to apply, with images, and submit to the jurying process. When a space opens up a name will be selected in the same manner as noted in #3 above.