Common Ground Country Fair
September 19, 20 & 21, 2014

Guidelines for Media Vendors

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The Common Ground Country Fair has the right to close any exhibit or booth, or require the removal of any item from an exhibit or booth, that fails to comply with the guidelines set forth. Please familiarize yourself with these. Thank you.

MISSION STATEMENT OF THE MAINE ORGANIC FARMERS AND GARDENERS ASSOCIATION

MOFGA, formed in 1971, is the oldest and largest state organic organization in the country. The purpose of the Association is to help farmers and gardeners grow organic food, protect the environment, recycle natural resources, increase local food production, support rural communities, and illuminate for consumers the connection between healthful food and environmentally sound farming practices. MOFGA is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization that welcomes financial contributions and volunteer participation.

Volunteer leadership, the dedication and idealism of our members, and a grass-roots approach to carrying out education and change underlie the success of our programs:

* Organic certification
* Farm apprenticeship
* Technical assistance (phone, mail, on-site visits, publications)
* Common Ground Country Fair
* Farmer to Farmer Conference, farm and garden tours, other outreach events
* Local Chapters
* Public Policy (initiatives in food safety and environmentally sound agriculture)

GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF THE COMMON GROUND COUNTRY FAIR

Goal: The Common Ground Country Fair (CGCF) serves to encourage the revival of agriculturally-based rural communities.

Objectives: The volunteers and staff of the CGCF work toward this goal by:

1. Prominently promoting MOFGA, its goals and objectives, and its role as sponsor of the Fair.
2. Designing and coordinating an educational, smoothly operating, attractive, and enjoyable fair that serves as a major fundraiser for MOFGA.
3. Promoting local, environmentally sound, and sustainable food production.
4. Promoting organically grown Maine produce and good nutrition.
5. Promoting a forum for alternative lifestyles.
6. Coordinating agricultural activities and demonstrations with like-minded groups.
7. Serving as a common ground for a wide variety of organizations and ethnic groups to explore shared values and possible areas for cooperation.
8. Contributing to maintaining and improving the quality of rural life, particularly by creating an awareness of the human and physical resources in Maine.
9. Actively encouraging fairgoer participation in CGCF activities.
10. Having fun during all CGCF activities, while encouraging learning about, enthusiasm for, and enjoyment of our environment.

The Common Ground Country Fair has the right to close any exhibit or booth, or require the removal of any item from an exhibit or booth, that fails to comply with the guidelines set forth.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE COMMON GROUND COUNTRY FAIR

Each year, the Common Ground Country Fair (CGCF) takes place on the third weekend (Friday, Saturday and Sunday) after Labor Day. The following guidelines apply to all people attending the Fair in any capacity.

1. Pets are not permitted on the fairgrounds or in the Fair parking areas. Animals tied to trees or cars, or left within vehicles (whether locked or not), may be removed by the local animal control officer.
2. Smoking is prohibited in the following areas of the Fair: the Children's Area; the shuttle and wagon rides; all food preparation, service and eating areas; all buildings, including barns and all tents; within 20 feet of any entrance or window to any enclosed area, including all buildings, barns and tents.
3. Fair participants may not build fires without written permission from the CGCF office.
4. The CGCF strictly enforces Maine laws prohibiting public drinking of alcohol and use of illegal drugs on the fairgrounds and in the Fair parking lots.
5. Audio and video devices audible to the general public are prohibited on the fairgrounds unless they are part of a CGCF-approved demonstration.
6. Do not feed livestock or other display animals unless tending to your own animals.
7. Skateboards, bicycles or other unauthorized wheeled vehicles on prohibited the fairgrounds.
8. The CGCF office assumes no liability for damage to or loss of personal property.

GUIDELINES FOR ALL DEMONSTRATORS, EXHIBITORS AND VENDORS

Henceforth, the words “vendor” and “vendors” refer to “demonstrator(s)” and “exhibitor(s)” as well.

Application Process

1. A non-refundable application fee must accompany each application (with the exception of Youth Enterprise Zone applications) for booth space in commercial areas.
2. Area Coordinators determine application deadlines for respective areas. The Crafts Area Coordinators do not accept applications postmarked after their established deadline. Other Area Coordinators process timely applications before late applications, allocating space first to timely applicants. Late applicants receive space if available.
3. A late fee may be applied to late applications.
4. Area Coordinators review vendor applications each year, and give preference to vendors in good standing who meet respective area guidelines. The “vendor in good standing” guideline does not apply to areas where juries review applications for quality.
5. Failure to meet application and/or contract fee deadlines will result in forfeiture of booth location and/or booth space.
6. Area Coordinators, in consultation with the Fair Steering Committee, may refuse to accept any vendor who does not meet the Guidelines of MOFGA, the CGCF, or the Area itself.
7. The CGCF office does not grant vendors exclusive rights to sell any particular item.
8. Vendors must reside in Maine, and represent Maine-based businesses or organizations. The CGCF accepts goods and services not made in Maine if they are important to the quality of rural living, and are not yet available from a Maine-based business or organization.
9. Area Coordinators give preference to applicants who make their products with sustainably harvested, natural resources from Maine. When a product made in Maine depends upon materials or components from elsewhere, its approval will depend upon the need it fills, the value added by the Maine worker who makes it, and the source of the materials or components. Examples of products not made in Maine but acceptable if they contribute to the quality of rural living are: books; farming and gardening tools; cotton fabric; soil supplements; hardware; animal feeds; home heating units for renewable energy sources; tractors, rototillers, and accessories. Examples of unacceptable products not made in Maine are: those making no essential contribution to the quality of rural living; those detracting from Maine’s becoming more self-sufficient; or those which exploit producers or consumers.
10. Vendors must list on their application all items and services that they wish to sell. Items and services listed on the application must relate directly to the area to which the vendor applies. Vendors serving or selling

any food item must submit an Ingredient Form with their application. The CGCF will not permit the sale of items not listed or approved on the applications. The CGCF requires vendors to remove such items from booths immediately. Vendors may not take orders for display items that are not approved for sale.

11. Vendors may sell their own business T-shirts, but may not sell T-shirts of other businesses or organizations. The CGCF restricts sales of other promotional products.
12. Vendors may not share booth space. Each business or organization must apply for booth space separately.
13. Vendors needing any amount of electricity must fill out electricity request forms and return them to the CGCF office by the contract deadline. Vendors needing electricity in excess of an amount designated by the CGCF Electrical Coordinator must pay for it. Payment is due by the respective area contract deadline.
14. Vendors wishing to be listed in the directory of Fair participants must fulfil contract or registration obligations by respective area deadlines.
15. Applicants must answer all questions on their area application forms. Area coordinators may ask applicants for clarification on questions answered unclearly. Area coordinators reserve the right to reject applicants who fail to provide requested clarification.
16. The CGCF does not accept applications from network or multi-level marketing businesses.

Participation in the Fair

1. Vendors agree to make no misrepresentations, implicit or explicit, about the nature of their businesses, the nature of their products and services offered, or their ethnic and/or cultural backgrounds.
2. All MOFGA-certified growers and processors are eligible to receive a $10/day reduction in vendor booth fees for all areas of the CGCF.
3. All food or ingestibles served or sold at the CGCF, even free samples, must adhere to the MOFGA Food Policy.
4. The CGCF prohibits raffles on the fairgrounds.
5. Food and meals served by the Common Kitchen are for use by current CGCF volunteers only.
6. Vendors who camp in their booths must contact the Fair office to get a permission form and must attach the form to the outside of their booths for the evening. Vendors may not camp elsewhere on the fairgrounds.
7. The State of Maine requires the CGCF to send a list of commercial vendors and their tax ID numbers to the state tax office. Vendors are responsible for reporting earnings and workers' pay to the IRS and the State of Maine.
8. Vendors assume all risk for their property. Neither the CGCF nor MOFGA will be responsible for any loss or damage from any cause.
9. MOFGA, doing business as the CGCF, disclaims any authority of control over the operation of vendors. Vendors assume all rights and responsibilities for the conduct of their operations including, but not limited to: obtaining liability and general coverage insurance for vendor-related activities; and adhering to all local and state ordinances and regulations. MOFGA does not have separate vendor coverage under any insurance it may maintain.
10. In the event of a dispute, the decision of the CGCF officials will be accepted as final.

Passes

All vendors and personnel are required to have a gate pass for admission to the Fair. The CGCF provides a limited number of gate passes for vendors. Vendors may purchase additional tickets in advance from the Fair office. Vendors and staff without passes will not be granted admission to the Fair.

Booth Operation

1. Vendors must set up booths and be ready for business by 8:45 a.m. each day of the Fair.
2. Vendors must staff their booths for the duration of the Fair—from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Friday and Saturday, and from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Sunday.
3. Vendors should bring an adequate amount of food or merchandise to last through the entire Fair.
4. The CGCF assigns booth spaces to vendors. Vendors may not change booth location or designated boundaries of any booth space. Vendors must place all supports within the boundaries of their assigned booth spaces.
5. Vendors must restrict their activities to their booth spaces. The CGCF prohibits hawking of wares.

6. Vendor contracts are for space only. The CGCF does not supply tables, chairs, etc... Vendors should prepare for dirt/grass floors in tents and outside vendor locations.
7. Vendors must make their booths as attractive as possible. Vendors may not use plastics (clear, colored and poly-tarps) in the construction of booths. The only exception to this is rip-stop nylon. Preferred materials include canvas, denim, and cotton. Vendors may cover booths with plastic tarps at night, but must remove them by 8:00 a.m. daily.
8. Be prepared for inclement weather.

Move-in/Move-out

1. Vendors may set up booths all day Thursday before the Fair weekend, or before 8:00 a.m. on Friday of the Fair. Vendors needing to set up before Thursday should make arrangements with their Area Coordinators.
2. The CGCF restricts vehicle movement on the fairgrounds. The CGCF prohibits vehicles from entering the fairgrounds after 8:00 a.m. on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. All vehicles already on the fairgrounds must exit by 8:30 a.m. Vehicles may return to the fairgrounds at 9:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday, on Sunday all Vendors must wait till the Fair Safety Coordinator gives permission to move onto the grounds when all Fairgoers have left.
3. Vendors must obtain permission from the MOFGA's Facilities Coordinator before digging any holes. Vendors must fill in holes before leaving the fairgrounds.

Utilities

Water and/or electricity are not available in all areas or booth locations on the fairgrounds.

Electricity

1. The CGCF provides electricity, where available, for a fee to vendors.
2. Vendors needing electricity must indicate such on their application and, if accepted, submit an electricity request form and payment with their contract.
3. Vendors must bring suitable panels, cords and outlet strips to meet their electrical needs.
4. The CGCF encourages electricity conservation. Using Compact Florescent Lights (CFL) will cut consumption dramatically.

Water

Vendors needing water must contact their area coordinator to determine whether the CGCF can meet their needs.

Cooking/Heating Equipment and Propane

1. Any vendor using cooking equipment must have a 40 BC-minimum fire extinguisher. Any vendor who serves food must have a 20 BC-minimum fire extinguisher. The CGCF encourages all vendors to obtain 40 BC-minimum extinguishers.
2. Per State of Maine regulations, propane tanks must be secured firmly on a hard, non-combustible surface, i.e. cement blocks, tin, etc... Vendors must supply their own surface on which to secure tanks—the ground alone does not suffice. The Fire Marshall will check for compliance.

Compost and Recycling

CGCF strives to produce Zero Waste. To that end, all waste at the Fair is sorted for compostable and recyclable materials by our Compost and Recycling volunteers. To assist in these efforts:

1. Vendors must separate all the trash they generate into compostable/non-compostable waste piles, and take the waste to the CGCF recycling area or the nearest Resource Recovery Station.
2. Vendors shall break down and clean cardboard boxes of tape, staples, etc., tie them in bundles, and take them to the CGCF recycling area, or take them home.
3. Vendors must take their entire booths -- including carpets, display racks, storage containers, and decorations -- home with them. All booths must be taken down by Monday night unless special arrangements have been made with the vendor’s Area Coordinator.

Cancellation Policy

1. The CGCF makes no refunds for cancellations made after August 1.
2. The CGCF makes no refunds in the event of inclement weather.

MOFGA Food Policy

As of October 19, 2008

The food offered at all MOFGA events embraces MOFGA's mission "to help farmers and gardeners grow organic food, protect the environment, recycle natural resources, increase local food production, support rural communities and illuminate for consumers the connection between healthful food and environmentally sound farming practices."*

The food offered emphasizes seasonally available ingredients. Whenever possible, the ingredients are produced organically in Maine. Ingredients not subject to organic guidelines are produced or harvested sustainably. Ingredients produced or grown outside of Maine reflect MOFGA's commitment to support "sustainable, organic farming regardless of geographic boundaries. MOFGA is committed to building relationships, when appropriate, with farmers and movements who share our mission."**

** Statement of Purpose, MOFGA Bylaws.*
*** Policy adopted by the MOFGA Board at the June 2007 meeting.*

Decision Tree: When considering the use of any ingredient in your menu item or food product, ask these questions to determine if that ingredient may be used.

1. Is the ingredient/item organic and produced in Maine? If so, use it.
2. If not, is there a reasonable substitute that is organic and produced in Maine? If so, use it.
3. If not, is the ingredient grown or harvested sustainably in Maine? If so, use it.
4. If not, do farmers who share our mission produce the ingredient/item organically outside of Maine? If so, use it.
5. If not, do farmers who share our mission produce the ingredient/item sustainably outside of Maine? If so, use it.
6. If not, don't use it.

Any vendor applying to sell any food item at CGCF is required to submit a Food Ingredient Form listing the food items they wish to offer at the Fair and detailing the ingredients and sources of the ingredients in these items.

Common Ground Country Fair Animal Fiber Guidelines

Statement of Purpose: The animal fiber at the Common Ground Country Fair emphasizes Maine-grown/raised animal fiber. Whenever possible, animal fiber is to be grown/raised and processed by the farmer. Unless otherwise noted in the specific area guidelines, all animal fiber must be from the state of Maine. Chemically treated animal fiber, such as Superwash, is not allowed. Incorporating synthetic glitz into animal fiber items is not allowed.

Statement of Preference: The person who spins, and/or weaves or knits over the one who purchases yarn; the one who uses natural dyes from native & cultivated plants over synthetic; the one who uses unbleached fiber over the one who uses bleached fibers; 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 fibers over the one who only uses synthetic fiber

Guidelines:

- Applicants are required to name their fiber & processing sources and must produce receipts upon request to verify their sourcing.
- Participants are required to label animal fiber items for sale for fiber content and origin. Labeling can be individual labels on each item or signage for product displays.
- Participants are encouraged to include educational displays about their fiber's sources and processing.