



# Common Ground Country Fair

## September 19, 20, & 21, 2025

### Guidelines for Fine Art and Craft Market 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.*



# Fine Art and Craft Market Area Guidelines

## Common Ground Country Fair

September 19, 20 & 21, 2025

**Coordinators:** Nathan Allard, Kreg McCune, Mellisa Pickering

**The purposes of the Fine Art and Craft Market 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 Fine Art and Craft Market**

1. The CGCF will not accept applications, which include images, postmarked or submitted after the deadline specified in the Fine Art and Craft Market 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 crafts 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 Fine Art and Craft Market coordinators.

*Small enterprises with multiple employees where the craftsperson or artist is not creating each individual piece should apply to the Maine Marketplace area.*



## Jurying Process For Fine Art and Craft Market Area

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

1. The Fine Art and Craft Market 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 Fine Art and Craft Market vendors, other craftspeople, or crafts shop owners.
3. Jurors can serve for two years. The Fine Art and Craft Market 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 Fine Art and Craft Market 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 of it.

### 3. On-Site Inspection:

- a. On-site inspection inspects CGCF Fine Art and Craft Market area booths for quality and presentation of work, interaction with the public, educational content, and consistency with vendors' application and is done by the Fine Art and Craft Market 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: Statement of Purpose:** The fiber at the Common Ground Country Fair emphasizes Mainegrown/raised fiber. Whenever possible, 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 fiber, such as Superwash, is not allowed. Incorporating synthetic glitz into 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 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, digital artwork, 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. Similarly, the person who creates original paintings, drawings, or prints is prioritized over the artist creating digital artwork.

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 Fine Art and Craft Market area. After much discussion the Committee decided to continue to have unjuried vendors for the sake of loyalty to those vendors. In 2006 this issue 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 Fine Art and Craft Market Area**

1. A predetermined number of applicants shall be accepted by the Fine Art and Craft Market area coordinator, with the highest scoring applications receiving preference.
2. The Fine Art and Craft Market area has a category limit of 20% per medium. The Fine Art and Craft Market area coordinator reserves the right to balance the categories if needed to meet the 20% per medium limit.
3. The Fine Art and Craft Market 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 Fine Art and Craft Market 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 Fine Art and Craft Market area the following years if she/he completes and submits an application that meets the guidelines by the established Fine Art and Craft Market area deadline. NO IMAGES are NECESSARY.
2. A recognized vendor may not attend the Fair for one year and still be considered a recognized vendor the following year. If a vendor takes more than one year off, then they will no longer be considered a recognized vendor and must submit photos in their application.
3. Recognized Crafters are subject to the On-Site Inspection part of the jury process.
4. 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.
5. 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.
6. In the event that a Recognized Craft Vendor hands over the primary operations of their craft to another person, or sells their craft business, the status of recognition would end. The new owner or craftsperson would need to reapply as a new vendor.



## THE MAINE ORGANIC FARMERS AND GARDENERS ASSOCIATION

**Mission:** Transforming our food system by supporting farmers, empowering people to feed their communities, and advocating for an organic future.

**Vision:** MOFGA's vision is a future where local organic farming nourishes all people, and sustains thriving ecosystems, healthy communities, and fair economies. We'll accomplish this through our mission to transform our food system by supporting farmers, empowering people to feed their communities, and advocating for an organic future.

### GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE COMMON GROUND COUNTRY FAIR

Each year, the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association (MOFGA) hosts the Common Ground Country Fair (CGCF), which 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. No smoking on the fairgrounds, except for the designated smoking area across from the Fair Office.
3. Fair participants may not build fires without written permission from the CGCF office.
4. The CGCF follows Maine laws regarding public drinking of alcohol and use of controlled substances 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. All demonstrations must be approved by the CGCF office. Busking is not allowed.
7. Do not feed livestock or other display animals unless tending to your own animals.
8. Skateboards, bicycles or other unauthorized wheeled vehicles are prohibited on the fairgrounds.
9. Kites are not allowed. Drones are not allowed unless specially authorized by the CGCF Office in writing.
10. Unauthorized possession of firearms, weapons, or explosives is not allowed on the fairgrounds.
11. The CGCF office assumes no liability for damage to or loss of personal property.
12. Harassment (verbal, physical, or sexual) and physical altercations are not allowed.

**Statement of inclusion** - MOFGA strives to promote organic food and a sustainable farming community that is inclusive of all people that validates diverse identities including race, class, ethnicity, tribal affiliation, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, or beliefs. We urge all exhibitors and presenters to consider their participation through the lens of race, equity, social justice, and supportive local food systems. We expect all attendees to be courteous, respectful and to refrain from inappropriate language, humor, gestures, or statements that discriminate against any individual or group.

If attendees are not abiding by the Guidelines, MOFGA Directors shall take actions to address and change the attendee's behavior. MOFGA reserves the right to ask attendees to leave the premises at any time and, to the extent their conduct constitutes a violation of law, may be subject to arrest. If an attendee is asked to leave or chooses to leave, refunds will not be given. In the event of a dispute, the decision of the MOFGA Directors will be accepted as final.



## GUIDELINES FOR ALL DEMONSTRATORS, EXHIBITORS AND VENDORS

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

*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.*

### **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. Interested vendors must apply each year.
3. Area Coordinators determine application deadlines for respective areas. The Fine Art and Craft Market 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.
4. A late fee may be applied to late applications.
5. 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.
6. Failure to meet application and/or contract fee deadlines will result in forfeiture of booth location and/or booth space.
7. Area Coordinators, in consultation with MOFGA staff, may refuse to accept any vendor who does not meet the Guidelines of MOFGA, the CGCF, or the Area itself.
8. The CGCF office does not grant vendors exclusive rights to sell any particular item.
9. 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.
10. 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; and 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.
11. 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 or sample that is not certified organic 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.
12. 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.
13. Vendors may not share booth space. Each business or organization must apply for booth space separately.
14. 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.
15. Vendors wishing to be listed in the directory of Fair participants must fulfill contract or registration obligations by respective area deadlines.
16. 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.
17. 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. All non-certified organic garlic sold at the CGCF should be labeled not certified organic garlic.
5. Only MOFGA/CGCF may have a raffle on the fairgrounds. All other raffles are prohibited.
6. Food and meals served by the Common Kitchen are for use by current CGCF volunteers only.
7. 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.
8. 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.
9. Vendors assume all risk for their property. Neither the CGCF nor MOFGA will be responsible for any loss or damage from any cause.
10. 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.
11. Vendors must have general liability and completed operations insurance coverage with \$2,000,000 general aggregate and \$1,000,000 for each occurrence for the duration of the Fair, including during the vendor's move-in and move-out; name MOFGA as Additionally Insured; and provide a Certificate of Insurance to MOFGA by June 1. MOFGA reserves the right to change this coverage requirement.
12. 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, or other booth supplies *unless otherwise specifically stated in that Area's Guidelines*. 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, or 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 once the All Clear has been given and the Gates have been opened by Safety. 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. Please note this re-entry time will vary due to conditions on the fairgrounds.
3. Vendors must obtain permission from the MOFGA's Facilities Coordinator before digging any holes. Vendors must fill in holes before leaving the fairgrounds.
4. Consult with your Area's Guidelines for the time your booth needs to be cleaned up and removed from your exhibition area.

## 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 light-emitting diode (LED) lights 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 participant using cooking equipment must have an appropriate 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. Cooking is only allowed in designated areas with 1lb propane or butane cylinders. No solid fuel may be used without permission. Food vendors wishing to use propane or butane tanks greater than 1lb must receive Fair Office approval, must pass the state onsite inspection before operating cooking equipment, and must operate in an approved area.
3. 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 of the trash they generate into compostable/non-compostable waste and take the waste to the CGCF recycling area daily (not public Resource Recovery Stations).
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, zip ties 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.



4. Vendors that leave trash in their area risk non-acceptance at future Fairs.

### **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.