



Revisiting conditions for restaurant participation at FMO MyMarkets in 2017

April 10, 2017

The East Lynn Park MyMarket is one of only three branded MyMarkets® in Ontario. As such their mission is for each one to be a 'bona-fide producer based entity which will champion the cause of real farmers and producers across the province.' These three markets allow as vendors only farmers who have been verified under the MyPick® Verification Program. MyPick farmers have been verified as having produced all that they sell on their farms and participating at MyMarket market(s) provides them with access to an urban and diverse consumer base.

The MyMarket brand exists to showcase local farmers and their products. As with most customer-focused farmers markets, our goal is to create a welcoming environment that celebrates local food while offering visitors the opportunity to not only purchase fresh local food, but have the option of enjoying some ready-to-eat food while at the market. We therefore encourage participation of local restaurants and prepared food vendors at the market, providing they have complied with the MyMarket Prepared Food Vendor regulations and agreement.

The conditions for FMO approval of Prepared Food Vendors for MyMarkets reflect our core purpose – to support and celebrate Ontario farmers in the best, most effective way we can. Restaurant participation as a MyMarket vendor is therefore based in part on the extent to which its business at the market supports the MyPick vendors who are part of that or other MyMarkets. We believe this requirement to purchase some local product from MyPick vendor(s) creates a WIN WIN for both the vendor who produces the food (fresh produce and or meat), and the restaurant or other vendor who is preparing the food for customers to eat on the spot. In some cases, this will be a restaurant from the neighbourhood, and in other cases, it may be a creative producer, preparing dishes from their locally-produced products.

In 2017 we once again encourage a small number of restaurants and or other prepared food vendors to participate in the MyMarkets. Given that there are typically numerous applications for these limited spots in the market, preference is given to those vendors who have demonstrated a consistent commitment to their role as a MyMarket vendor in the past and

also meet all the conditions as noted in the Prepared Food Vendor agreement. Commitment to participate in the market on a weekly basis for the entire season is a requirement for our vendors. Each year we receive many requests to join our markets. Unfortunately, we are unable to select every vendor who applies. Returning vendors are chosen based on their desire to return and their compliance with permit conditions in previous years.

Mary-Margaret McMahon, local Councillor for East Lynn Park and one of the Founders of East Lynn Park Farmers' Market is thrilled with the way the market kick started the revitalization of the Danforth. "I am proud of the efforts of the volunteers, businesses, residents and Farmers' Market Ontario to work together for the greater good of the community. East Lynn Park Farmers' Market is a true community hub which promotes sustainability and food security while at the same time educates locals on the importance of supporting Ontario Farmers. How lucky are we to enjoy such vibrancy and connectivity in our wonderful East Lynn Park!"

FMO and the East Lynn Park MyMarket hope that community supporters of the market can and do appreciate our desire to not only cater to the desires of the community and market customers, but also to support the intent of the MyMarket premise -- showcasing and celebrating verified local farmers. We promise to continue the market's tradition of offering the best, freshest and verified locally-grown food this summer. The market opens June 1st.

For more information on Farmers' Markets Ontario and our MyMarket program, visit us at www.farmersmarketsontario.com.