

Vendor Information

Flavors of the Valley 2020

Sunday April 19, 2020

11 am - 3 pm

Hartford High School Gymnasium

White River Junction, VT

Flavors of the Valley 2020 is the 19th annual celebration of local foods in the Upper Valley. Flavors is a marketing opportunity for local farms and farm-related businesses, showcasing the Upper Valley's bounty and promoting local food consumption. It is a great opportunity to meet your customers, find new customers, and make professional connections with other vendors.

Vendor Registration Deadline is March 15. After this date we cannot guarantee table choice or inclusion in promotional outreach materials.

Register online at vitalcommunities.org/flavors.

Early-Bird Registration Deadline is February 17. Register early and save!

Mini-Grant Deadline is February 17. See below. Applications received after 2/17 will be considered on a rolling basis if funding is still available.

If you have questions about Flavors of the Valley, please call Doreen Guillette at 802-291-9100, or send an email to flavors@vitalcommunities.org.

We look forward to seeing you at Flavors!

Doreen Guillette
Flavors of the Valley Coordinator

****Important Event Information****

***Vendor Mini-Grants:** These grants will help your farm, food business, or restaurant defray the costs of vending at Flavors of the Valley. The maximum mini-grant award is \$200. Any vendor that is a farm, food business, or restaurant that registers to vend at Flavors of the Valley is eligible to apply for funds. Find mini-grant details and application at vitalcommunities.org/flavors. Deadline for grant application is February 16, 2020.

***Electrical Appliances:** Due to the electrical constraints of the space, there will be a maximum electrical load of two heat-producing appliances for each eight-foot table.

***First Hour Limited Attendee Entrance:** Discounted advance tickets will be available for sale to the public for entrance to the event from 11 am-noon. In an effort to ease crowding and provide a better vendor-customer experience, only advance ticket holders will be allowed in the gym from 11 am-noon.

Who are Flavors Attendees?

Every year, half of Flavors attendees are new to the event, drawn by our extensive publicity and marketing. In 2019 we had more than 800 attendees from around the region, with the highest numbers from Hanover, Lebanon, Norwich, and Hartford. Typically, attendees are evenly spread in income, age, and preference for buying local foods. All are interested in meeting local farmers and food producers, talking about farms and the food system, and tasting samples. They are eager to meet the vendors and learn about new products as well as familiar favorites.

Who are Flavors Vendors?

Flavors is a marketing and sales opportunity for farms and farm-related businesses in the Upper Valley region of Vermont and New Hampshire. Vendors are a mix of farms, value-added producers, specialty food producers, restaurants, grocers, and nonprofit organizations. We typically have 50 vendors. Vendors frequently partner together, most commonly as farms providing ingredients for restaurant samples (e.g. carrots for a soup) or for nonprofit organization samples.

The Venue

Flavors is held at the [Hartford High School](#) gym, in Hartford, Vermont. Conveniently located off I-91 Exit 12, just one block off Route 5. The gym has easy access for vendor off-loading, and we usually have volunteers to assist in carrying materials. Detailed directions will be sent with your confirmation packet.

Vendor Hours

Public admission is from 11 am – 3 pm. The venue opens for vendor set up at 9 am and set up must be completed by 10:30 am. Vendors must remain at tables and greet attendees until 3 pm, when breakdown can begin.

Table Options and Fees

Registration Fees	8' table	8' early discount (ends 2/16/20)	4' of a shared 8' table	4' early discount (ends 2/16/20)
Farms	\$100	\$75	\$70	\$55
Locally Sourcing Restaurants and Businesses	\$100	\$75	\$70	\$55
Nonprofit Organizations	\$150	\$125	N/A	N/A

Your total allotted space is a full eight-foot event table with two chairs behind it, or four feet of a shared eight-foot event table. **Due to the electrical constraints of the space, there is a maximum electrical load of two heat-producing appliances for EACH eight foot table.** Most vendor tables abut other tables on at least one side. The gym is arranged in three aisles; tables are either in front of folded bleachers or rented drapes (see photos below). Toaster ovens, convection ovens,

propane stoves, griddles, crock-pots, warming trays, and sterno flames are all allowed. Please note that kitchen facilities are not available. No live animals, alcohol, or CBD products are permitted at the event. Please specify how many electrical outlets and the electric load of heating/cooking equipment you will need when registering.

Vendor fees include admission for two staff; all other support staff must register as paid attendees.

Flavors of the Valley Mini-Grants

These grants will help your farm, food business, or restaurant defray the costs of vending at Flavors of the Valley on April 19 at Hartford High School. The maximum mini-grant award is \$200. Any vendor that is a farm, food business, or restaurant that is eligible to vend at Flavors of the Valley is eligible to apply for funds. Grant funds may be used to offset the cost of vendor registration, food sample costs, or the cost of staffing the event.

Applicants must complete the mini-grant application form (**this is separate from the Flavors vendor registration form**) by February 17. Email any questions to Doreen Guillette at flavors@vitalcommunities.org. Applications received by February 17 will get first consideration. Thereafter applications will be considered on a rolling basis.



Zero Waste at Flavors

We need vendor cooperation to make Flavors a zero-waste event. Vital Communities provides, **free of charge**, compostable napkins and 2-ounce paper sample cups for all vendors. We also provide biodegradable containers and spoons for attendees. **Please plan to provide a sample that can be served on an edible platform, on a napkin, in a paper sample cup, or in a reusable cup.**

Criteria for Vendors

Flavors promotes the Upper Valley's working landscapes. Therefore, all vendors must be located within the Vital Communities [69-town service area](#) of Vermont and New Hampshire, integrate farm products from our service area into their products, or work with Upper Valley farmers. (Visit vitalcommunities.org/about for details on our service area.)

Vendors are expected to comply with all required state regulations and licensing and have Product Liability Insurance.

Farm Vendors are those who raise food or farm products that they sell in our service area. These vendors are eligible for the half-table option. Food sampling is not required for farms but is a traditional part of the event and is expected by attendees. One good option is to partner with a participating restaurant/grocer vendor.

All Other Vendors must either purchase and use local food and farm products, use local foods as key ingredients in processed foods, or support local agriculture in the organization's mission and programs (e.g., bakers using local flours, co-ops selling local products, chocolatiers using local butters, organic certifiers, etc.).

Fiber Vendors & Farm-Related Businesses are those who produce fiber or have a product integrally connected to local farms or food systems (e.g. wool, compost, wood products, agricultural books).

Nonprofit Vendors must support Upper Valley agriculture in the organization's programs (e.g. NOFA-VT, NH Department of Agriculture, Markets & Food). Food sampling is not required for these vendors, but sampling of some kind is encouraged. One option is to partner with a participating farm vendor.

All Restaurant/Grocer/Caterer Vendors are required to sample their delicious wares and **display a list of local farms and farm products they procure throughout the year.** Partnering with a participating farm vendor is encouraged. See details below about forming vendor partnerships.

Vendor Feedback

- "As a new business, we wanted to market ourselves and our food. We met new potential clients. Everyone was nice and helpful."
- "It is a great community event. Shows a connection of farm and restaurant to the community."
- "We are here to promote our product. This was a wonderful experience."

Getting the Most out of Flavors for Your Business

Marketing

The goal of Flavors is to connect farms and food businesses with customers. We promote Flavors of the Valley widely, attract attendees from around our region, and consistently bring hundreds of new attendees each year. We promote via print ads, posters and postcards, radio, social media, and e-mail. We promote vendor businesses by highlighting products, telling stories about vendors, and generally being enthusiastic about the amazing food system in our region.

Sales

Vendors are encouraged to sell gift certificates, CSA shares, and products to take home, such as frozen meats, preserved foods, bagged produce, cheese, soap, jam, etc. Wi-Fi is available for the use of Square or other online payment systems; however, the signal is not strong, so it is good to have backup methods. **Vendors may not sell prepared food for consumption at the event.** Prepared food is acceptable as the free sample offering.

Sampling

Tasting of locally grown products is a traditional highlight of Flavors. Attendees pay an admission fee and expect to sample local foods from a majority of vendors. Food samples encourage attendees to stop at your table and learn about your farm or food business. All restaurant/grocer/caterer vendors are required to provide food samples, and all others are encouraged to provide samples.

Food samples should contain locally grown food. Samples for event attendees should be bite-sized—not meal portions. Due to Hartford High School policy, alcohol may not be served or sold (but may be used in cooking), and live animals are not permitted at the event. Some years we have more than 1,000 attendees, so please plan on bringing at least 1,000-1,200 samples.

Even if you run out of samples, you must stay for the duration of the event to talk to attendees about your business. If you are not sampling food, bring other products and/or marketing materials to share. Vital Communities staff are happy to consult about what might attract attendees to your table.

Food sampling advice from past vendors:

- “My advice would be to bring LOTS!”
- “Go small with the size of the samples and make it something that can be done quickly.”
- “Be prepared for at least 1,000 samples, and lots of promotional materials. Most people wanted to know where to buy our products.”
- “Keep it simple, and if you are also selling at your table, have one person to sell/chat and one to serve samples.”

Vendor Partnerships

Vendor partnerships are a great way to showcase and demonstrate the use of local ingredients. If

you are a specialty food producer, chef, value-added producer, or grocer, partnering with a participating farm on the day of Flavors can help build excitement about your business.

In a restaurant/farm partnership, for example, the restaurant might use the farm's parsnips in a soup. The two vendors will have adjacent tables, to cross-promote. Chefs can partner with multiple vending farms.

To partner, choose a farm or restaurant located in the Vital Communities service area with which you already have an established business relationship. Or, Vital Communities can help you make a new connection. At your request we will provide you with a list of registered vendors who would like to be partnered for the event. When any two businesses form a partnership for this event, they have full responsibility for the details of their partnership.

Checklist for Partners:

- What products are being provided by the farmer?
- What recipe(s) will the chef/grocer prepare for sampling?
- Will the farmer/producer also provide samples of their own product (e.g., will the producer sample plain cheese cubes, while the partner chef samples cheese quiche)?
- Is the restaurant purchasing the farm products or is the farm providing them at no charge?
- Will you each have your own table at the event? Do you want your tables adjacent to each other? If you are sharing a table, how will you divide the space and the registration fees?

Please contact Doreen Guillette at Vital Communities with any questions. We look forward to speaking with you about how Flavors of the Valley can be a good fit for your business.