



Farmer Community Collaborative

Mr. Dan Maxsom  
Administrative Services Manager  
Greensboro Parks and Recreation Department  
1001 4th Street  
Greensboro, NC 27405  
Date 1/30/11

4169 Dick's Mill Road  
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T 336-264-2866  
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Dear Mr. Maxsom,

The USDA and others have recently reported that one in six North Carolinians can't afford to buy food and nearly one in four children (24.1%) of our infant to five year-olds lacks consistent access to nutritious food. Even more disturbing, Greensboro ranks 10<sup>th</sup> in the nation for food insecurity, meaning that many of our citizens lack the availability or access to food.

These are bleak statistics for any city but worse for a city whose farmer's market is located next to low income housing. Clearly, opportunities are being lost for the community and our farmers.

We are a group of bona fide farmers, and to us, farming is our livelihood not a hobby. Together, we represent centuries of agricultural experience and marketing expertise. The majority of our families have been at the Greensboro Farmer's Curb Market (GFCM), proudly serving the community, for several generations. For us, the GFCM is our sole outlet for selling directly to the public and we value the relationships we have established there.

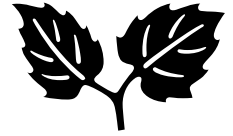
We see the market as a unique place for Greensboro to incubate and grow new businesses. It is our vision to extend that opportunity to a broader range of local farmers and other qualified entrepreneurs. It is our belief that through our proposed change in management, the market can flourish and become one that serves the citizens of Greensboro on many varied levels. Our goals are to provide wholesome, affordable, local food for all citizens, and to strengthen the community and farming relationship, as we share our agricultural skills and knowledge.

Support for our proposal has been given by established marketing and agricultural experts at local universities and North Carolina State agricultural agencies. It is our belief that we are uniquely qualified to assume control of the GFCM. With our extensive customer experience and our agricultural knowledge, we are ready to meet the challenge.

We remain hopeful that through the award of this contract, the market will forge a new direction, one that not only benefits the community but also builds and strengthens our local agriculture for today and future generations.

Thank you for your time and interest in reviewing our proposal.

Sincerely yours,



Farmer Community Collaborative

# Greensboro Farmer's Curb Market

## Request for Proposal

Prepared for: Mr. Dan Maxsom, Administrative Services Manager, Greensboro Parks and Recreation Department

Prepared by: Ruth Ann Foster, Farmer Advocate

January 30, 2011



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I. QUALIFICATIONS:

A. Marketing Specialist:

Mr. Bill Mullins	Master Bee Keeper
Quaker Acres Apiary	Marketing/Insurance business owner 50 years
6302 W. Friendly Ave.	
Greensboro, NC 27410	
(336) 294-9700	
<a href="mailto:mullbill@aol.com">mullbill@aol.com</a>	

B. List of Farmers and Market Selling Experience

Jeff and Wanda Amick	66 acres
4749 Scythe Rd.	Farming/selling 50+ years
Julian, NC 27283	
(336) 697-1757	
Bill and Betty Collier	100 acres
7025 Old 421	Farming/selling 48 years
Liberty, NC 27298	Farm ID# 1274
(336) 622-2664	

Tim Crouse 310 combined acres  
Crouse Farms Farming/selling for 35+ years  
P.O. Box 237 Farm ID#s 850, 915, 6084, 6085, and 711  
Alamance, NC 27201  
(336)214-7696

Rodney Gann 114.22 acres  
Gann Farms Farming/selling for 20 years  
4169 Dick's Mill Rd. Farm ID# K 2111  
McLeansville, NC 27301  
(336) 264-2866  
[gannlawn@bellsouth.net](mailto:gannlawn@bellsouth.net)

Kevin Gray 109 acres  
1475 Burnett Chapel Rd. Farming/selling 10 years  
Greensboro, NC 27401 Farm ID# 141767

Dot and Lindsey Vernon 70 acres  
Vernon's Orchard Farming/selling 45 years  
1257 Bushy Fork Rd. Farm ID# VA1987  
Cana, VA 24317  
(276)755-3579

Bill and Barbara Walker

142 acres

Walker Farms

Farming/selling for 38 years

3477 Old Brower Mill Rd.

Farm ID# 8564

Franklinville, NC 27248

(336)824-8602

[walker-farms@hotmail.com](mailto:walker-farms@hotmail.com)

## II. MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS

Central to the present unrest at the GFCM is the loose interpretation of the term “farmer”. In theory, farmers are given priority for obtaining permanent tables. To circumvent the rule, several craft and food vendors have been granted farmer status from market management by producing a small quantity of eligible items. In one example, a craft vendor was given the title of farmer and awarded a permanent table, after obtaining a grower’s certificate for items grown in a community garden.

In keeping with our goal of making the market more farmer oriented and to eliminate customer confusion, we propose identifying and reclassifying vendors as follows:

**Farmer** - those who own and farm on 10 or more acres and possess a valid farm ID number, issued by USDA Farm Service Agency, as well as a federal tax ID number

**Associate Farmer** - those who farm on more than 5 but less than 10 acres, including those who rent or lease the land

**Gardener** - those who grow on less than 5 acres

**Horticulturalist/Florist** - those whose primary products are plants and/or flowers

### A. Ratio of farmers, food vendors, and crafters

Over the past years, GFCM has experienced a growth in commercial food vendors, which has given many of those vendors a second or third retail outlet. As it is our goal to rebalance the market and provide more opportunities for farmers, we propose a general goal of 70% farmers, 20% food vendors, and 10% crafters. These ratios are subject to seasonal availability.

For example, during the peak growing season, farmers will be given table priority. Food vendors will be (eventually) required to produce at least 30% of ingredients used or purchase them from a market farmer. Craft items will be categorized as farm and non-farm, with the emphasis and priority on farm-related crafts. Sunday afternoons will be an option for additional craft and food vendors.

### B. Days and hours of operation

To begin with, we will maintain the established hours. In the future, these hours/days may expand to accommodate school trips, senior days, and special programs.

Saturday 6 am to 1 pm

Wednesday 7 am to 1 pm

Optional: Sunday 1 pm to 5 pm (for crafts and food vendors, as needed)

### C. Programming

#### Education:

As education is a primary goal, the GFCM is a terrific opportunity for farmers to connect with citizens and share our passion for farming. We envision programs for students, families, community groups, health agencies, and clubs, etc, which can increase public awareness for growing healthy food. Through our relationships established with agricultural experts and university faculty, we have received several offers for demonstrations and workshops. (Details to be announced upon award of contract.) Karen Neill, North Carolina Agriculture Extension Agent, has also volunteered her services.

To foster the growth of farming in future generations and to increase awareness of healthy eating at an early age, we would encourage schools to make the GFCM a class trip destination. Initially, school trips could be scheduled for Wednesday morning with other week days by special arrangement.

In addition, we plan to offer farmer/vendor led workshops, demonstrations, and/or seminars during Saturday market hours. We propose to convert Room 3 to a classroom for this purpose. An optional small fee or donation could be collected for fundraising purposes.

#### Information Table:

Realizing the importance of education, it is our plan to establish a permanent information table for the market. Ideally, this table will be located at a main entrance and easily recognized. We propose creating a complete vendor directory for this table. First Aid supplies could also be available here.

#### Special Events:

The market provides a perfect opportunity for many groups to showcase their members to the community. At the same time, such events draw new customers to the market. Local chef demonstrations and food samplings are always popular. Other special events to include health fairs, community club events, church and youth group activities. The Future Farmers of America (FFA), as well as 4H Clubs, have agreed to participate/host in GFCM's special events. Special table(s) will be reserved for market guests.

### D. Financial Arrangement with the City

With a lack of complete financial records from the GFCM, it is difficult to propose a financial arrangement. Income received from table rental will be offset against expenses, which include but are not limited to:



Staff salary(s)

Insurance

Promotion and Advertising

Office expenses

Business licenses and/or permits

It is anticipated that rent collection will net a profit, which after adjusting for expenses, will be divided between the market and the city.

#### E. Fundraising

Additional sources of income will come from direct and indirect fundraising. Direct

fundraising will include such items as breakfast events and local chef sample plates. Indirect fundraising will be obtained from a percentage of the proceeds raised by outside groups like churches and clubs while at the market.

Additional avenues for fundraising include partnerships and sponsors, donations, and grants. We plan to apply for the Rural Advancement for Farming International (RAFI) Tobacco Buy-Out grant this fall.

#### F. Management

As our goal is to rebalance the market by increasing the farmers's presence, we propose the the market be governed by a Board of Directors (BOD) consisting of seven **Farmers** as previously defined. (This is a similar to the Reidsville Farmer's Market.) The BOD's responsibilities will include:

Establishing market rules and regulations

Setting the budget

Setting the fees

Hiring the market manager

Selecting market interns

A Market Manager will be hired to manage the day to day business of the market. We have secured a few candidates for this position to be announced upon award of the contract. These candidates have

extensive agriculture and marketing background and share our passion for farming. The Market Manager's responsibilities will include:

Creatively promoting the market to consumers

Recruiting farmers

Enforcing the market's rules and regulations fairly and with a minimum of conflict

Representing the market to the local municipality and community groups

Administering the day to day operations of the market, both on-site and off.

Arbitrating disputes that may arise between vendors and/or with consumers

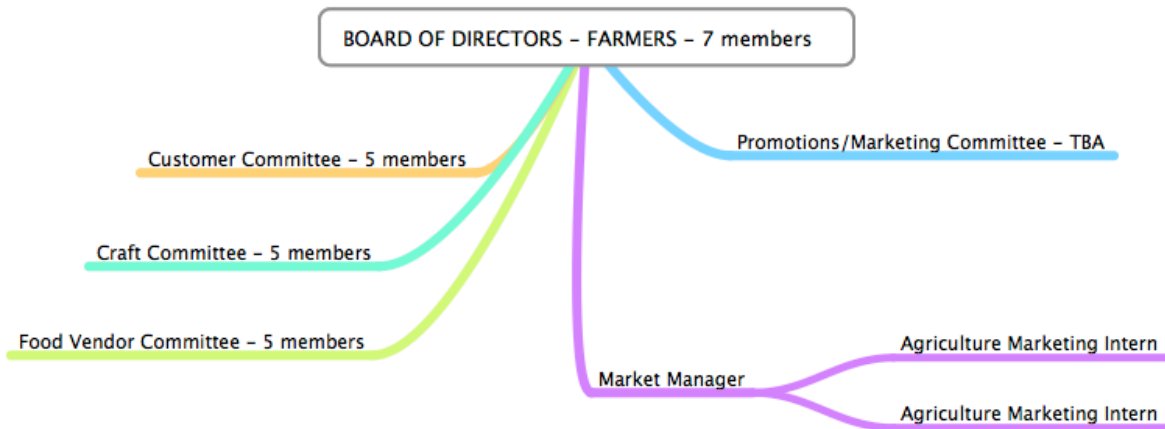
Working with a board of directors or market committee

Maintaining the financial records of the market

Understanding the needs of farmers and balance them with the needs of the consumers and the community at large

To provide a voice for other vendors and customers, three committees will be formed. These will be the Food Vendor Committee, the Craft Committee, and the Customer Committee. Each of these committees will be comprised of five members who fit the category. In addition, a committee will be formed to handle market promotion and advertising. These four groups will present their input/concerns/decisions to the BOD for consideration or approval. All committee and BOD positions will be unpaid.

G. Organizational Chart



H. Methods to collect input and measure performance

We propose that all participants in market management be continuously looking for ways to increase the market’s social and economic value for all. Valuable information can be obtained through the following proven methods:

Rapid Market Assessments (RMA) - This is a collaborative learning process reciprocated with another farmer’s market. The visiting team of market managers and others study the host market with fresh eyes and new insights benefitting both markets.

Each RMA team learns data gathering methods and how to examine their own market more analytically. We propose partnering with the Reidsville Farmer’s Market.

Consumer focus groups - The may be conducted semi-annually or as needed.

Dot Surveys - These simple surveys are an effective data collection method in which a limited number of simple questions are posted in the market and consumers answer the questions using adhesive “dot” labels. This method provides greater participation than written surveys resulting in a more accurate assessment of consumer preference and behavior. Dot Surveys are a great way to attract media attention and promotion for the market.

Attendance counts - This method allow vendors to estimate their sales as well as monitor community interest.

### III. Marketing and Promotions

There are several avenues to promote and advertise the market. As previously mentioned, the Market Manager and the Promotions Committee will share this responsibility. Additional methods include:

- Cross promotions with community groups during their fundraising at the market
- Church newsletters
- Update website weekly
- Monthly newsletter and/or mailing with water bill
- New signage
- Special events/fundraiser announcements in local media
- Dot Surveys results

### IV. Improvements to the GFCM

A. Initial improvements to the market should include the following items, which will enhance public safety. Some will necessitate City approval due to cost or regulation:

First Aid items to be located at the Information table

Expand and secure the bridge to prevent small children or items from falling into the creek below

Devise better parking arrangement

Suggest that Homeland Avenue to Charter Street be one way going west during Saturday hours

Improve Handicap Accessibility:

Make market entrance doors larger and automatic

Restroom facilities

Parking

B. Additional improvements include:

Weekly website updates

Landscaping and beautification of market exterior, which can be completed with volunteers

Make the market “greener”:

Supply dumpster for cardboard

Recycling

Upgrade exterior signage

C. Community improvement - Implementing a 21st Century Farmer's Market Program for EBT customers

As it is our goal to increase the availability of nutritious local food to all members of the community, we have been advocating this program for some time. As previously mentioned, food insecurity is a critical issue for too many of our citizens. Implementing the 21st Century Farmer's Market Program will create better purchasing opportunities for those on low or fixed incomes.

At the same time, partnering with this program will create the impetus to rebalance the market to provide more of the food items required (i.e. more fresh farm products less and commercially prepared foods).

As a group, we care greatly for those in need. Each year we collectively contribute tons of food to the Urban Ministry and St. Andrews. We will gladly welcome the 21st Century Farmer's Market Program to the GFCM and work with the City to insure its success.

D. Future improvements:

Expand the cooler area, potentially through a grant

Increase storage

Construct a greenhouse, which has been promised through a donation