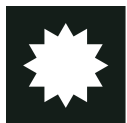


Produce Purchase Guarantee (PPG)

A Farmers Market Food Recovery Program

User Manual



**Franklin
Farm Hub**

Contents

Sections

Section 1: Overview

Section 2: Pilot Program

Section 3: Guidelines For Farmers Market Managers

Section 4: Guidelines For Farmers

Section 5: Guidelines for Value-Added Food Producers

Section 6: Payment Processing

Section 7: Tracking Impact

Section 8: Supporting the Program

Appendices

A: Application Form for Farmers Markets

B: Template Invoice for Farmers

C: Quality Standards for Fresh Produce

D: Quality Standards for Meat, Dairy, Eggs, and Value-Added Food Products

E: Inclement Weather Policy

F: W-9 for Vendors

Section 1: Overview

The Produce Purchase Guarantee Program is a weekly farmers market food recovery program. The program was first piloted in partnership with Macon County Farmers Market in 2024.

How it Works

For the duration of the market season, Franklin Farm Hub will purchase any leftover produce at the end of market, up to \$1000 per week. The program allocates \$30,000 annually to support local farms, farmers markets, and food banks. The purchased produce will be donated to local food pantries to feed food-insecure individuals and families.

Why it Works

This program is a win-win for all. Food goes unwasted, local farmers benefit economically, and people in need gain access to fresh, local produce.

Let's Keep Local Food, Local!

Section 2: Pilot Program

The Produce Purchase Guarantee Program was first piloted at Macon County Farmers Market in 2024.

The program started in May 2024 and ran through November 2024. Initially, the program only aggregated fresh produce. It then grew to include minimally processed, value-added food products from small local food businesses such as a local sourdough bread baker.

Over a 30-week market season, the program demonstrated the following successful outcomes:

- Approximate # participants: 15
- **\$15,000** worth of local food purchased
- Approximately 150 crates of food

The success of the pilot program was attributed to the dedication of our Market Managers and the meaningful connections that they nurture with their market vendors. Market Managers demonstrated strong leadership, organization, reporting, and communication skills.

Section 3: Guidelines for Farmers Market Managers

We value our relationship and work closely with farmers market management to successfully implement the Produce Purchase Guarantee Program.

The following guidelines offer a framework for Farmers Market Managers to better understand their role in the program.

Farmers Market Managers are integral to the success of the program in the following ways:

- Distribute and collect template invoices for vendors to complete and submit at the end of each market.
- Aggregate food from vendors at the end of each market.
- Facilitate vendors getting produce to the Food Transporter.
- Spread the word to market goers about the program and distribute information about ways customers can support the program through donations or volunteerism.
- Relay any feedback (positive or negative) about programmatic operations from vendors to Farm Hub management.
- Identify potential new farm vendors that would be a good candidate for the program.

Standard Operating Procedures for Market Managers:

- 1.** 1-hour prior to end of market: distribute Template Invoice to participating vendors.
- 2.** By end of market: collect produce and Template Invoice from vendor.
- 3.** Any new vendors should also submit a W-9 (required).
- 4.** Send produce to the local pantry via Food Transporter.
- 5.** Submit Invoices to Franklin Farm Hub for payment processing. Submit via email to cara@franklinfarmhub.org

We are grateful to our Farmers Market Partners for their commitment to the Produce Purchase Guarantee Program.

Section 4: Guidelines for Farmers

We encourage new produce vendors to talk with Market Managers about participating in the program. We accept new vendors on a rolling first come, first serve basis.

The following guidelines are designed to inform farmers about their role in the program and any expectations.

Farmers are integral to the success of the program in the following ways:

- Contribute up to \$100 worth of fresh produce leftover at the end of market.
Note: Vendors should prioritize direct-to-consumer sales. Anything leftover at the end of the market can be allocated to the program.
- Agree to follow the Quality Standards for Fresh Produce (see Appendix C).
- Serve as good ambassadors for the Farmers Market and Franklin Farm Hub.
- Spread the word to customers about the collective impact we are making to address food insecurity in our community and share ways to contribute via donations or volunteerism.
- Assist with tracking and timely payment processing by completing and submitting Template Invoices at the end of each weekly market.
- Provide testimonials, as requested, about how the program has helped to support your business.

Standard Operating Procedures for Growers:

- 1.** 1-hour prior to the end of market: receive Template Invoice from Market Manager and complete form in its entirety.
- 2.** At the end of market: deliver produce to Food Transporter and Template Invoice to Market Manager.
- 3.** New vendors must also submit a W-9 with their first invoice.
- 4.** Invoices must be submitted at the end of each market to receive payment the following week.

Section 5: Guidelines for Meat, Dairy, Eggs, and Value-Added Food Producers

Although the Produce Purchase Guarantee Program prioritizes farm fresh produce aggregation, Franklin Farm Hub may invite certified meat, dairy, eggs, and value-added food producers to participate on a rolling first come, first serve basis and at the discretion of the Market Manager.

Franklin Farm Hub will work with Market Managers to relay needs for meat, dairy, eggs, and minimally-processed value-added foods for local pantries to local food businesses. This may include low salt/sugar canned or frozen products and goods such as sourdough bread.

The following guidelines are designed to inform value-added food producers about their role in the program:

- Work with Market Managers to communicate availability of products that would be best suited for distribution to local food pantries. Ideally, value-added food products contain five or less whole ingredients.
- Agree to follow the Quality Standards for Meat, Dairy, Eggs, and Value-Added Products (see Appendix D).
- Serve as good ambassadors for the Farmers Market and Franklin Farm Hub.
- Spread the word to customers about the collective impact we are making to address food insecurity in our community and share ways to contribute via donations or volunteerism.
- Assist with tracking and timely payment processing by completing and submitting Template Invoices at the end of each weekly market.

- Provide testimonials, as requested, about how the program has helped to support your business.

SOP's for Value-Added Food Producers:

- 1.** 1-hour prior to the end of market: receive Template Invoice from Market Manager and complete form in its entirety. Please quantify units for optimal tracking.
- 2.** At the end of market: deliver produce to Food Transporter and Template Invoice and Market Manager. New vendors must also submit a W-9 with their first invoice.
- 3.** Invoices must be submitted at the end of each market to receive payment the following week.

Section 6: Payment Processing

- Transactions for the Produce Purchase Guarantee Program are processed on a weekly basis.
- All new vendors are required to complete a W-9.
- Vendors will receive a 1099 from Franklin Farm Hub at the end of the tax year.
- Vendors must complete and submit a Template Invoice at the end of each market for payment to be processed and disbursed via check at the following week's market.
- The Template Invoice is an important tool used for tracking our impact in dollars, units, and pounds.
- We value the honor-system method for vendor payment requests.
- Farmers Market Managers are not expected to cross check items and invoices.

Section 7: Tracking Impact & Reporting

We hope to quantify the impact of the Produce Purchase Guarantee Program in the most positive and accurate manner possible. By sharing tangible numbers with donors, grantors, and community members about the good work that you are doing to support local food access in our community, we hope to see the Produce Purchase Guarantee Program grow and thrive for many years to come.

We track the impact of the Produce Purchase Guarantee Program in the following ways:

- **Units** - Example, {Farm Name} contributed {XXX bunches of carrots} in 2025.
- **Dollars** - Example, we purchased {XXX \$\$\$} worth of produce from {Farm Name} in 2025.
- **Pounds** - Example: Macon CareNet has received {XXX lbs} of food through the PPG program at {Farmers Market Name}.

In partnership with the Farmers Market, Franklin Farm Hub is committed to managing the Produce Purchase Guarantee Program including coordinating logistics, payment processing, tracking, and reporting.

We proudly maintain the transparency of the program and share its impact in our annual reporting.

Section 8: Supporting the Program

The following are ways that you can support or encourage others to support the Produce Purchase Guarantee Program.

Be a Good Ambassador

Share information about the positive impact of the program with customers. Let the community know about ways that they can learn more through the following channels:

Website:

www.franklinfarmhub.org

Social media:

Facebook: www.facebook.com/franklinfarmhub & Instagram: [@franklinfarmhub](https://www.instagram.com/franklinfarmhub)

Spread the word about opportunities to:

Volunteer

Volunteer to help us sort and transport food from farmers markets to our cold storage space or directly to local pantries. Our main aggregation and distribution days take place Wednesday through Saturday. Contact info@franklinfarmhub.org to sign up to volunteer.

Donate

The sustainability of the program is attributed to generous contributions from private donors and grantors. To make a donation, please visit our donation portal at www.franklinfarmhub.org

For any inquiries regarding the Produce Purchase Guarantee Program, please contact:

Project Manager, Cara-Lee Langston

Phone: 404-323-7026 | Email: cara@franklinfarmhub.org

Appendix A:

Application Form for Farmers Markets

Date of Application [mm/dd/yy]: _____

Farmers Market Name: _____

Market Location [Address]: _____

Market Dates: from [mm/dd/yy] to [mm/dd/yy]: _____

Market Day(s): _____

Market Hours: _____

Farmers Market Manager(s): _____

Contact Email Address: _____

Contact Phone Number: _____

Does the Market have an onsite Market Manager? Y / N _____

How long has the market been in operation? _____

Number of Local Produce Vendors: _____

Number of Value-Added Food Product Vendors: _____

Do you have access to cold storage facilities? Y / N _____

Are you able to help transport donated food to a local pantry? Y / N _____

Thank you for completing this form. Applications are reviewed on a rolling first come, first serve basis. We will review your application and contact you about program availability.

Appendix C:

Quality Standards for Fresh Produce

Importance of Standards

Clear quality standards help programs efficiently utilize resources and ensure that the food they recover is of high nutritional value and safe for consumption. Consistent quality helps build trust with donors, volunteers, and recipients, encouraging ongoing participation in the program.

Food Safety

The primary concern is ensuring the produce is safe for consumption. This involves proper handling, storage, and transportation to prevent bacterial contamination or spoilage. Farmers should adhere to produce safety guidelines put forth by the North Carolina Department of Agriculture (NCDA).

Edibility

While minor cosmetic flaws are often tolerated, produce must be free from significant damage, decay, or signs of spoilage that would make it unsafe to eat.

Shelf Life

To ensure optimal shelf life, please refrain from contributing produce items to the program that have not been stored well or that have sustained multiple refrigeration cycles. For instance, a sample head of lettuce that has been placed on a vendor table for display for the duration of market would not be appropriate to sell to the PPG program.

Communication

Clear communication between farmers, recovery programs, and food banks is crucial. This includes informing the program about the type and quantity of produce available, its condition, and its expected shelf life.

Appendix D:

Quality Standards for Meat, Dairy, Eggs, and Value-Added Products

Food businesses that specialize in meat, dairy, eggs, and value-added products should follow the same guidelines as suggested in Appendix C: *Quality Standards for Fresh Produce* with the following additional considerations:

- Value-added food products must be produced in a certified kitchen in accordance with federal/state/county regulations.
- Preference is given to purchasing value-added food products that contain five ingredients or less.
- Preference is given to purchasing of products that are considered lower sugar, reduced sodium, and that adhere to other healthy eating standards put forth by the [USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#).
- Meat, poultry, and egg processors must comply with USDA regulations relevant to each operation.

Appendix E: Inclement Weather Policy

If a market is canceled due to inclement weather or other unforeseen circumstances, participating vendors may coordinate directly with FFH to explore options for mid-week pickup or carryover to the following week.

Appendix F: W-9 for Vendors

Participating Vendors are required to submit a W-9 for payment processing.

Please download a copy of the W-9, complete form, and deliver it to the Market Manager when you submit your first invoice.

You can also email your completed W-9 directly to cara@franklinfarmhub.org. Please include your business name in the subject line. For example, *Full Moon Farm W-9*.

Download Form Here: <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw9.pdf>