



Augusta LOCALLY GROWN



20²⁰ GROWER²² HANDBOOK



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OUR PRIORITY:

Augusta Locally Grown is a 501c3 nonprofit organization. Our mission is to grow a more robust local food system throughout the Central Savannah River Area. We do this by educating the public about the health, social, environmental and economic benefits of locally grown foods. As such, one of ALG's activities is to create and manage farmers markets that connect the community to local, seasonal, sustainable-grown food sold directly from producers to consumers. This includes (but is not limited to) the Augusta Locally Grown On-Line Market, the Veggie Park Farmers Market and special event Augusta Locally Grown Pop Up Markets. **All "growers" (vendors) are required to abide by the guidelines of this handbook.**

PLEASE NOTE: As required by the State of Georgia, we ask that you have a Georgia Business License. Please contact your local Chamber of Commerce to apply for a Business License.

DEFINITIONS

GROWER:

A farmer, gardener, rancher, fisher, maker of prepared foods, or maker of healthy living products is defined as a 'Grower.'

LOCAL:

Local is defined as any item grown or made within 100 miles of the CSRA.

In cases where specific items don't grow in our region (such as coffee) Augusta Locally Grown will make a rare exception to include these items at market when there is a local and sustainable connection to the item.

At Augusta Locally Grown, we welcome all varieties of value-added products. These include breads, rolls, biscuits, cakes, pastries, cookies, candies, fruit pies, jams, jellies, preserves, dried fruits, dried herbs, seasonings, mixtures, cereals, granola, trail mixes, coated nuts, vinegar, popcorn, cotton candy, and more. We ask that you source at least one ingredient locally.

SUSTAINABLE:

Augusta Locally Grown expects all of its Growers to practice sustainable methods suitable for their industry. Sustainable is defined as practices that follow and exceed organic standards as is possible within our region.

Farmers: Standards can be found at:

- Certified Organic: **USDA.gov**
- Certified Naturally Grown: **Naturallygrown.org**
- Certified Humane: **Certifiedhumane.org**

Healthy Living products: Only Natural ingredients should be used in the making of healthy living products; avoid things such as preservatives, synthetic fragrances, petroleum products, genetically modified products, etc.

DIRECT, PRODUCER ONLY MARKET, :

Augusta Locally Grown manages producer-only markets. NO wholesale brokers are allowed. ALL AUGUSTA LOCALLY GROWN Growers MUST be the primary grower/maker of the items being sold, or partners for the purpose of sales with fellow local farmers who are also ALG approved.

PROPER LABELING REQUIREMENTS:

Augusta Locally Grown expects all of its Growers to adhere to State and Federal labeling requirements.

Links to these standards can be found at:

- **Sustainable Agriculture at UGA:** <https://sustainagga.caes.uga.edu/business/record-keeping.html>
- **FDA Cosmetic Labeling:** <https://www.fda.gov/cosmetics/cosmetics-labeling-regulations/cosmetics-labeling-guide>

LOCALLY GROWN INGREDIENTS:

Prepared Foods: Processed foods, such as jams and baked goods, must include some locally grown ingredients. In as much, products used should be sustainable and minimally refined.

Healthy Living Products: Locally grown ingredients for healthy living products are not always available; i.e. shea butter & rose hip seed oil. In as much, products used should be sustainable and minimally refined.

MEAT

In order to sell processed meat in the state of Georgia, you must have a license. Check with your local extension office to determine which licensing you need. If you are selling across state lines, your processing facility must be federally inspected. If only selling in the state, your processing facility may be state or federally inspected. At Augusta Locally Grown, we ask that you raise your own livestock. We ask that you do not re-sell meat produced by other farmers.

POULTRY

If you process less than 1,000 birds per year, you are permitted to process your birds on-site and sell them after obtaining a mobile meat license. Those processing 1,000–20,000 birds per year are required to have their chicken processed at a federally inspected facility. Certain exceptions are made for those that need to travel across state lines to access a closer federally inspected facility.

EGGS

To sell eggs in the state of Georgia, you must comply with the Georgia Egg Law and must have a Georgia candling certificate.

DAIRY

To sell dairy products through Augusta Locally Grown, we ask that you comply wholly with the Georgia Dairy Act. For more information on this, please visit the Georgia Department of Agriculture website.

FRUITS & VEGETABLES

At Augusta Locally Grown, we ask that you produce fruits and vegetables using sustainable practices. We would like for all producers to be certified organic. We recognize this may be time and cost prohibitive. If you are not certified organic, we would like for you to obtain a Certified Naturally Grown license. This certification shows our customers that all of our producers practice sustainable agriculture and are doing their part to grow food ethically and in an environmentally friendly manner.

PLANT SELLERS (TO INCLUDE CUT FLOWERS)

Per the state of Georgia, you are required to obtain a Live Plants License if any of the following conditions are met.

1. Your production space is greater than 1,000 square feet.
2. You are shipping out of state or internationally.
3. You are bringing plants in from out of state for re-sale.
4. You are collecting wild plants for re-sale.

If none of the above applies to you, you are not required to have a Live Plants License. If you are selling cut-flowers only, you are not required to obtain a Live Plants License. Please refer to the Georgia Department of Agriculture for more detailed concerns. To sell through Augusta Locally Grown, we ask that you follow sustainable practices. Please only label your products "native" if you are strictly using native species, not a cultivar.

ARTS & CRAFTS

As an artist or craftsman, we ask that you obtain a Georgia Business License before selling through the Augusta Locally Grown market place. When possible, please source materials used locally. If this proves difficult, we ask that you source at least one input locally. For questions and concerns, please contact Augusta Locally Grown.

COTTAGE LICENSING

Cottage food laws in Georgia allow one to operate a food business from home. In the state of Georgia, cottage food makers are allowed to sell directly to the consumer at non-profit events, for-profit events, and through online market places. They are not allowed to wholesale or distribute their product. Nor are they allowed to sell their product across state lines. In order to distribute products, a business must obtain a Food Sales Establishment License. To qualify as a cottage food operator, you must complete an American National Standards Institute accredited food safety course. To sell through Augusta Locally Grown, we ask that you source one, or more, of your ingredients locally. For more information regarding cottage food licensing, please reference agr.georgia.gov/cottagefoods.

COMMERCIAL / COMMUNITY KITCHEN

Beginning in April 2022, Augusta Locally Grown will have full-time access to a shared commercial kitchen. If you would like to use the space, whether for teaching, growing a business, or anything else, please contact Augusta Locally Grown. We ask that you obtain all proper licensing for your product. We also ask that you comply with food service and food sales laws in the state of Georgia.

WHOLESALE

In 2022, Augusta Locally Grown began a wholesale operation selling locally grown products into restaurants and independent grocery stores. Selling wholesale requires a certain volume supplied consistently. If you believe your operation could wholesale, please contact Augusta Locally Grown.

For more detailed information, please visit: sustainagga.caes.uga.edu

LICENSES AND CERTIFICATIONS:

Copies of legally required licenses and certifications must be submitted to AUGUSTA LOCALLY GROWN at the beginning of each year, or when the grower joins one or more of our markets.

All produce growers (fruits, vegetables and herbs) are required to be certified: either as USDA Certified Organic or as Certified Naturally Grown. Each approved new grower that joins the organization will have one year to work toward certification if it is determined by the ALG Farmers Committee that the new grower's practices follow along those expected by USDA Organic or Certified Naturally Grown standards. ALG leadership will offer support and networking for growers working toward certification. Minimum standards for meat and dairy farmers are those that meet and exceed the standards provided by Certified Humane, but that specific certification is not required at this time.

LIABILITY INSURANCE & INDEMNIFICATION/HOLD HARMLESS PROVISIONS:

Participating vendors are required to maintain product liability insurance, to provide proof of insurance, and to list Augusta Locally Grown as an "additional insured" on such policies.

By signing on as an AUGUSTA LOCALLY GROWN Grower, you agree to indemnify and hold harmless Augusta Locally Grown for actions occurring in connection with any/all of its markets.

HANDBOOK ENFORCEMENT:

The director of AUGUSTA LOCALLY GROWN is responsible for enforcing the rules of this handbook. The Board of Directors oversees the director and reviews cases in which a dispute or infringement occurs. In such cases, the Board may suspend a Grower for participating.

SITE VISITS:

ALL AUGUSTA LOCALLY GROWN Growers agree to a site visit, at any time, by a member of the board and/or the director. Visitors will use guidelines from Certified Naturally Grown or Certified Humane to assess growing practices.

SALES & INCOME TAX:

AUGUSTA LOCALLY GROWN is a manager of farmers markets. It is NOT a retailer or re-seller. Therefore, all AUGUSTA LOCALLY GROWN Growers are responsible for their own sales taxes.

For more information on how to obtain a Sales Tax Certificate of Registration and how to pay your sales tax, go to: <https://online-tax-id-number.org/memdocs/state-sales-tax-applications/Georgia-State-Re-sale-Certificate-Application-Registration.htm>

Growers are also responsible for reporting their own income for tax purposes.

REFUNDS & CREDITS:

Growers are responsible for handling cases of dissatisfaction directly with their market customers. AUGUSTA LOCALLY GROWN may help to enable communication, and growers may ask AUGUSTA LOCALLY GROWN to issue a refund or credit or other resolve for a customer (at the grower's expense), but only after the grower has communicated directly with the customer about the issue.

SHARED COMMITMENT:

As a 501c3 nonprofit organization, Augusta Locally Grown relies on all participants to help promote its programs as well as the purpose by which it serves the community.

Commitment to fulfillment: growers/producers agree to be timely and accurate with delivery orders and understand they can be removed from the online market/in-person markets if they don't honor this.