**How to become a Certified Producer and sell at a Certified Farmers Market**

To become a Certified Producer and be able to sell in the ten Ventura County Certified Farmers Markets as well as other County Certified Farmers Markets there are a few steps to take. First off, a Certified Producer’ application will need to be filled out and submitted to our office, which can be found on our website. Along with the application, we have a Certified Producer Certificate Checklist that we have producers fill out that addresses some common items required, notarized lease agreements if you are leasing the property that you are growing on, farming partnership, sharecropping agreements, or similar contractual agreements, and if you authorize another Certified Producer to sell for you or you want to sell for another Certified Producer and the requirements for this.

Once all the paperwork has been submitted, an Agricultural Biologist/Inspector will contact you and set up a time to come inspect your production site and verify all the commodities that were listed on the Certified Producers Application. At the time of inspection all commodities listed will need to be planted and identifiable to allow them to be able to be listed and sold at the Certified Farmers Markets. Once the inspection has been completed, a Certified Producers Certificate will be created that will need to be signed, and then embossed copies will be issued as well as a copy of Direct Marketing Rules and Regulations. The Certified Producers Certificates can be picked up at either of our two office locations. Any additional commodities that are not currently being grown at the time of the initial inspection can be added by calling the office and scheduling an appointment to have an inspector come out and verify the production of the additional commodity’s and amend the current certificate. Amendment inspections usually are a 20.00-dollar fee.

\*\*\*If you have CPCs in multiple counties, you will need to register them differently (different email or phone number) otherwise the system will automatically direct you to only one of the certificates\*\*\*

**Instructions For Filling Out Certified Producers Certificate Application**

  If you only have one site (your house), you will list each commodity as site 1 (just put "1" in that column).  Commodities should be the agricultural product (ex: tomatoes, celery, roses, honey, or basil). For the amount/unit grown, please use sq. ft., acres, number of rows and length of rows or number of trees and be sure to include the units (example: 2 trees, 5.5 acres, 1 x 20 ft row, or 9 sq. ft).  The harvest season should be the earliest month that the commodity will be harvested to the latest month that it could be harvested (example: June – August, March – April, or Year-Round).  Do not list seasons (Spring, Summer, Winter, or Fall). The “Est. Production” is asking for your annual production and should be listed in Lbs., or for flowers (bunches), or for strawberries (flats). The “Season Altering Device” is for greenhouses or other devices that can extend the regular growing season for a crop. “Months in Storage” is referring to how long the commodity can be kept in cold storage (which must be listed under Storage Locations). See the example on the following page.

**Example**

The example below shows the manner in which a certificate should be completed.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **SITE#** | **COMMODITY** | **VARIETY/TYPE** | **AMOUNT/UNIT GROWN** | **HARVEST SEASON** | **EST. PRODUCTION (LBS.,CTN.)** |
| 1 | Anemone |  | 300 sq. ft. | Nov – March | 1100 bunches |
| 1 | Artichokes | Globe | 3 acres | March – Oct | 1.200 cartons |
| 1 | Basil |  | 9 sq. ft. | Year Round | 30 lbs |
| 1 | Eggs | Chicken | 35 hens | Year Round | 40 dozen |
| 1 | Honey |  | 2 hives | Year Round | 100 lbs/hive |
| 1 | Ivy | English | 1600 sq. ft. | Year Round | 2000 4 inch pots |
| 1 | Oranges | Navel | 3 trees | Dec – Feb | 120 lbs |
| 1 | Peas | Sugar Snap | 10 acres | March – Dec | 1500 cartons |
| 1 | Peppers | Red & Yellow | 2 X 20 FT Row | Aug – Sept | 400 lbs |
| 1 | Roses |  | 500 sq. ft. | Year Round | 500 bunches |
| 1 | Tomatoes | Heirloom | 3 X 100 ft Row | June – Sept | 200 lbs |

**List of Farmers Markets**

Our website for the Ventura County Dept of Agriculture/Weights & Measures has a list of the farmers markets operating within Ventura County.

<https://cdn.ventura.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Farmers-Market-List-2020-2021.pdf>

**Egg Handler**

If you plan on selling eggs from any species of fowl, you must be registered with CDFA as an egg handler.

<https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/ahfss/mpes/esqm.html>

**Organic**

If you plan to advertise as organic (verbally or with signage), you must be registered with CDFA as an organic producer. If you sell over $5,000 as organic, you must also be certified organic by an approved certifier.

<https://organic.cdfa.ca.gov/organicreg/>

**Banner Requirement**

All vendors of agricultural products selling within a certified farmers’ market must post a sign or banner at the point of sale that states:

1. The name of farm of ranch (this name should match the DBA listed on the CPC)
2. The **county** where the farms maintain the production grounds
3. A statement that “We Grew What We Are Selling” or “We Raised What We Are Selling” or “We Grow What We Sell” or a similar phrase.
4. \*if you are selling for another producer in a second certificate situation, you must have an additional banner for that producer.

**Nursery License**

In order to sell seedlings or potted plants, you will also need a Nursery License.  If you will be selling less than $1,000, you may qualify for a Fee Exempt Nursery License. Here are the links for both (once you have completed the application, please submit it to our office (or CDFA) for approval:

Fee Exempt Nursery License: Please Submit to the Ventura County Agriculture Department for processing:

<https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/plant/pe/nsc/docs/nipm/nipm_2_4_fee_exempt_lic.pdf>

Nursery License: Please submit to the CDFA for initial processing: they will accept payment, process the application, and forward to our department for issuing.

<https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/plant/pe/nsc/docs/nipm/nipm_2_1_nsy_lic_app.pdf>

**Selling by weight**

When any agricultural products are sold by weight, the type of scale used shall be legal for trade. A legal for trade scale must have a Certificate of Approval issued by the California Type Evaluation Program (CTEP) or a Certificate of Conformance issued by the National Type Evaluation Program (NTEP).

See <https://www.ncwm.com/ntep-certificates>

All scales used for commercial purposes must be registered, inspected, and sealed by the Agriculture/Weights and Measures before being used or placed into service.

Scales may be brought to the Weights & Measures Meter Lab for inspection:

Ventura County Saticoy Yard

11201. Riverbank Dr, B

Ventura, CA 93004

Tuesday 8 AM -Noon

Thursday Noon-4pm

**Farmers Market Scale Fees:**

$50 location fee, $11.50 per computing scale, $10.00 per counter scale, and $2.20 State Admin fee per scale. So 1 scale would be $63.70 (computing) or $62.20 (counter) and 2 scales would be $77.40 or $74.40.

For more information regarding registration or scale inspections please contact County of Ventura Agriculture/Weights & Measures office: (805) 654-2444