

REACH NEW CUSTOMERS

GUIDELINES & REQUIREMENTS
FOR DIRECTORY LISTINGS



The Minnesota Grown Directory is designed to help you reach customers interested in buying local, no matter your business model! This guide will help you understand directory listing **content requirements, style requirements, and key things to include.**

Minnesota Grown reserves the discretion to modify listings to meet requirements and delay posting directory listings until they meet the requirements.

Please contact us with any questions, concerns, or clarifications at mngrown.mda@state.mn.us or 651-201-6140.

Content Requirements

The Minnesota Grown Directory is focused on direct-to-consumer sales. If selling wholesale, please check out our [Wholesale Directory](#). Businesses and markets listed in the direct-to-consumer directory must:

1. Sell directly to the final customer (e.g. online sales, farm stand, farmers market, CSA shares.)
2. AND fit in one of the following categories:
 - Sell products that are at least 80% grown/raised in Minnesota by your business. If producing wild rice, it must be 100% grown in Minnesota to be eligible,
 - -OR- Be a Minnesota farmers' market with vendors who sell products they grow/raise in Minnesota, OR
 - -OR- Be a business creating a value-added product featuring ingredients that are at least 80% grown/raised in Minnesota.

Listing Descriptions

Descriptions are limited to 460 total characters, including spaces and punctuation. Listings should focus on your business/market practices rather than broad claims. No political references of any kind or profanity is allowed.

Regulated Market Claims. Many food marketing claims are legally regulated and must be accurate/verifiable. Many words such as "lean", "low-fat", "high-protein", and "organic" have legal definitions. Other product claims such as "no-hormones" or "no-steroids" may not be used when describing meat, poultry, and seafood. If you are uncertain about the legality of wording for your directory listing or labeling, please call the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) Food and Feed Safety Division at **(651) 201-6272** for clarification.

Product Types are the way customers search our directory. Be careful in selecting products you currently offer to ensure your listing appears on the correct search pages. You may **only select product types for items that you grow, raise, or create** from Minnesota Grown agricultural products. Select all product types that apply for your online listing.

Categories Requiring Certifications, Licenses, or Program Participation

Accepts SNAP/EBT. This should only be selected by producers or farmers' markets who accept SNAP/EBT directly.

Food Hub/Aggregator. Persons, farms, or organizations selling aggregated products from multiple farms must hold a food handler license from the MDA.

GAP Certification. Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) Certification is a voluntary, regulated food safety verification and certification process. Only members who have *current* GAP certification at the time of license application/renewal may use this term in their directory listing.

Hemp. Producers selecting hemp as a product type must be a current licensed member with the [MDA Industrial Hemp Program](#).

Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP). This category may only be selected by farmers' markets who are registered authorized markets with [FMNP](#).

Milk and Other Dairy Products. Persons selling milk and other dairy products must be following all MDA [Dairy Inspection Program](#) requirements for their farm.

Minnesota Ag Water Quality Certified (MAWQC). This category may only be selected by businesses who hold a current certification from by the [MAWQC program](#).

Certified Organic. Certified organic is a regulated market claim based on the USDA National Organic Standards. This category may only be selected by businesses with up-to-date organic certification through an accredited body. Members must e-mail their most recent certification to mngrown.mda@state.mn.us, which will be cross-referenced with the [USDA Organic Database](#).

Nursery Stock Growers and Dealers. Persons selling nursery stock must have a valid [MN Nursery Stock Dealer or Nursery Stock Grower certificate](#) through the MDA, sell only certified nursery stock, and provide verification of certification:

Other Categories

Producer Identity Filters. In response to requests for this feature from buyers, we are piloting filters that will allow buyers to search for producers by identity. Providing this information is optional. The information will be public on your directory listing and can be removed at any future time. We will be collecting feedback on this pilot throughout 2025 and will have an opportunity to fine-tune the filters or change course for 2026 renewals.

Farmers Markets. Members may only use the "Farmers' Market" category if your market includes at least three vendors selling products they grew/raised. Additional categories available to farmers markets are "Winter Farmers' Market" and "Farmers' Market Nutrition Program". Markets whose Winter Market(s) are at a different location than their summer market must purchase an additional listing. Similarly, businesses such as nurseries or garden centers that host a farmers' market on site – in addition to selling their own Minnesota Grown products – are required to purchase two listings: one for the farmers' market and one for their business.

Do not select product types that customers can find at your market (ex. sweet corn, bakery products), as these are reserved for individual business. You may describe the types of items customers will find at your market in your [listing description text](#).

CSA Farms. This category should be selected by members offering CSA shares. If you would like your pick-up locations listed on our [CSA map](#), be sure to also send an updated list of your pick-up locations, including location names (e.g. Lakewinds Co-op Richfield, or Duluth Member Home) and full addresses (street, city, state, zip) to mngrown.mda@state.mn.us.

Style Requirements

- Refrain from using all-caps.
- Use hyphens between phrases like “cut-your-own” and “pick-your-own” for clarity.
- Phone numbers, websites, addresses, and email addresses may not be repeated in the listing description text, since they are already included in separate fields and appear in buttons directly above the listing text.

Space-saving Abbreviations

Minnesota Grown uses abbreviations in all directory listings to maximize your available description text. Exceptions may be made if needed. Please reach out if this applies to your business.

- **Open hours.** Format as Month-Month: day time, day time. (Ex: *Nov-Dec: Mon-Fri 8a-5p, Sat 11a-3p, Sun 5-7p.*)
- **Months.** All months will be shortened to three letters, except July and June. (Ex: *Mar, Apr, Sep, Oct*)
- **Days of the week.** All days of the week will be shortened to three letters. (Ex: *Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu*)
- **Time.** Hours will be listed as a single number (no colon or additional zeros), unless needed for clarity. A single “a” or “p” will be used instead of AM or PM. “Noon” may be used for clarity. (Ex: *10:30a-1p, Noon-2:30p, 2p-5p*)
- **Other abbreviations** will be used where commonly understood by the public. (Ex: *hrs* (hours), *wk* (week), *wknd* (weekend), *yr* (year), *lb* (pound), *mkt* (market), *pls* (please)).

Maximize your Listing

Answering these four common questions in your listing will help potential customers purchase from you!

What do you sell?

Product Types must be items you grow/raise/create from agricultural products yourself, but additional items may be mentioned in listing text:

“We make artisan farmstead cheese on our central MN dairy farm.”

“Tours & private events are available yr-round.”

“Gifts, candy, and decorations can be found in our on-farm holiday store.”

What makes your product(s) unique?

Set yourself apart from the crowd by mentioning features unique to your business/market.

“We specialize in 8 University of Minnesota varieties, including Honeycrisp, Zestar! & SweeTango.”

“Our crops, pasture, produce, and herbs are certified organic.” (See Content Requirements for more info on using the term “certified organic”.)

Do we share a mission/values?

Customers “buying local” for a wide variety of reasons. Be sure to include info that will help people match their values to your mission and/or values:

“We are a CSA farm that provides meaningful employment to people with disabilities.”

“Our farm focuses on restoration of soil, protection of water, and humane treatment of livestock.”

How can I buy from you?

Now that they’re interested, don’t forget to tell your customers how to take the next step:

“Call ahead for picking hours and weather conditions.”

“Shop our website or call for more information.”

“Find us at the Blaine Farmers Market: July-Oct.”

Enhance Your Listing with Photos

Review our [photo policy](#), then send up to seven photos (including maximum of one logo) to mngrown.mda@state.mn.us. Be sure to say which image you want to be the featured image at the top of the listing. If you are replacing current photos, please tell us which to remove.