

The Downtown Waterville Farmers' Market Association (DWFMA) is a membership organization that serves as the governing body of the *Downtown Waterville Farmers' Market*. At its annual meeting of members on January 28th, 2010, the DWFMA voted unanimously to accept the following position:

The DWFMA opposes any changes to Maine state law which would serve to weaken current rules regarding the legal definition of a “Farmers' Market”.

Specifically, we oppose the proposed changes to **Sec. 1. 7 MRSA §415, sub-§1, ¶A** because we feel that the proposed changes weaken the Maine Farmers' Market “brand” by allowing non-producing vendors to participate in Farmers' Markets. The proposed changes also open the way for unsuspecting consumers to be misled by those same non-producing vendors because consumers have come to associate the term “farmers' markets” with places or events where they can purchase locally produced foods and crafts **directly from the farmer or artisan who produced them**. Allowing non-producing vendors to sell at “farmers' markets” would pose a direct affront to the hard won trust of Maine consumers. Non-producing vendors could also negatively influence the economic dynamics of a market because they are not bound by the costs of production as are the vendors who produce their own products.

Furthermore, the DWFMA supports any changes to Maine state law which serve to strengthen the definition of “Farmers' Market”, including but not limited to:

- *continuing to ensure* that all products for sale at farmers' markets are grown or otherwise produced in Maine
- *continuing to ensure* that **all market vendors** produce **all or most** of what they have for sale
- *continuing to ensure* that the majority of products for sale at farmers' markets are agricultural and/or food products, and not simply arts or crafts
- *ensuring* that farmers and artisans across the state have the ability to access the markets which they feel best suit their farm and/or products
- *ensuring* that farmers and artisans can market their products to consumers in a safe, engaging and educational manner, including the use of samples

