



2026 Fondue Fest Policies

Each year, the Downtown Fond du Lac Partnership (DFP) organizes a variety of special events with the intent of supporting downtown Fond du Lac businesses and helping to position downtown as a central hub for our community, both socially and economically.

Fondue Fest began in 2007 and has grown to over 200+ vendors and 15,000+ attendees. The event requires a significant level of coordination including street closures and the management of various vendors, live musicians, and family activities.

To keep this event successful, enjoyable, safe, and family-friendly, we have developed this guide detailing current policies for event vendors.

The Downtown Fond du Lac Partnership is a 501c3 non-profit organization dedicated to bringing people, activity, business and a thriving civic life back to the heart of Fond du Lac. The DFP serves 214 properties with 280+ businesses, 76% of which are small, locally owned and operated.

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Vendor Information

- Fondue Fest is always held the Saturday after Labor Day.
- September 12, 2026, Saturday, 9:00am – 5:00pm.
- Music locations may continue into the evening.
- Approximately 200 vendors on Main Street in Downtown Fond du Lac from Division Street to Second Street.
- The Kid’s Zone on Sheboygan and Portland Streets can hold up to 50 additional vendors.
- Fondue is sold on Forest Avenue by Moraine Park Technical College. It is highly encouraged for all vendors to add a cheesy theme or product to their mix to support the cheese event theme.
- Unless otherwise notified by staff, the festival is held rain or shine.
- General correspondence can be directed to info@downtownfdl.com or 920-322-2006.

Vendor Application and Acceptance

- The Downtown Fond du Lac Fondue Fest has five types of vendors. All vendors are to fill out an online application at www.downtownfdl.com.
 - Downtown Businesses – limited to businesses within the Business Improvement District
 - Event Sponsors
 - Prepared Food and Beverage Vendors
 - Kid's Zone Vendors (will be located on Sheboygan Street)
 - Merchandise, Art, Craft, Produce, Informational Vendors
- Vendor applications are not considered complete and will not be processed until all required documentation and full vendor fee payment has been received.
- The applicant will be charged any non-sufficient fund fees.
- Part of the vendor application is acknowledgment and acceptance of these Fondue Fest Policies.
- The DFP staff reserves the right to deny any applicant if said applicant's goods, services or organization ideals do not align with the mission and views of the DFP. All products and messaging must be suitable for a family friendly audience of all ages.
- Event vendors are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the local, state, and federal regulations, guidelines and permits that govern the products they sell. The notes and guidelines included in this document are included as a courtesy, and do not take precedence over governmental policy.
- Event vendors must provide a description of products on their vendor application. This information is necessary to determine product eligibility and to assist DFP staff in consideration of similar product lines when coordinating vendor placement.
- Once accepted as a vendor, you are committed to the event and no refunds will be given.
- An event map and general updates will be sent to vendors via US mail and email 2-3 weeks prior to the event. We will do our best to accommodate the space requests noted on vendor applications.

Downtown Business Participation

- A significant part of the DFP's mission is to promote and gain exposure for existing downtown Fond du Lac businesses. Therefore, downtown brick-and-mortar businesses are offered a complimentary 10'x10' vendor space at Fondue Fest for the purposes of selling their merchandise or promoting their business. Additional spaces are available at the regular vendor fee.
- Downtown businesses must abide by the same vendor and event policies, rules, regulations and guidelines as any other vendor including registering online.
- A downtown business can apply to use their complimentary business space to host a vendor affiliated with their business. However, their product line must be a product line sold within the store. Vendors must be approved by DFP staff in advance, according to the general Booth Sharing Policy within this manual.
 - Example: Gallery and Frame Shop may submit an application to host an artist they are featuring in their store; however, they could not have a vendor selling food, produce, or other unrelated goods.
- If a downtown business located outside of the Fondue Fest event area would like to claim a complimentary vendor space, DFP staff will work with you to find an available space.
- Downtown businesses with liquor licenses must monitor customers so they are not leaving their permitted area with alcohol.

Non-Profit and Community Organizations

- Any organization promoting causes considered to be controversial, offensive, or unsuitable for a family audience will not be permitted at the Fondue Fest.
- Clear signage of non-profit or organizational name on booth is required.
- Non-profit monetary donations may be accepted, but may not be aggressively solicited.
- All promotion and information sharing must be conducted within the assigned 10x10 booth space. Organizations may not approach/solicit event attendees outside of their booth space.
- Organizations out of compliance with these rules and/or general market policies will be asked to leave.

Code of Conduct

- Fondue Fest attendees, participants, vendors and their employees shall conduct themselves in a pleasant and courteous manner towards all market patrons, volunteers, and staff.
- Verbally and/or physically threatening behavior, and/or acts of violence at the market, the DFP office, within downtown businesses, or by electronic means will not be tolerated.
- Hate speech, obscenity, verbal threats, speech meant to invoke violence or unlawful action, illegal or misrepresentative speech, and symbols and/or acts of discrimination are considered to be threatening and violent. Any person who engages in this behavior will be reprimanded and/or removed from the premises.
- No Solicitation: No soliciting, hand-billing, circulating of petitions, protesting, or demonstrating by political, religious or other groups or individuals is permitted.
- Smoking, vaping, and/or illegal activities are prohibited within vendor spaces.
- Alcohol consumption is prohibited.

Rule Violations

- Violation of any of the event policies may result in action up to and including immediate expulsion from the event without a refund.
- Violations resulting in a police report or protection order being filed may result in immediate and permanent expulsion from future DFP events without refund.
- The DFP staff reserves the right to expel any vendor from the event when a policy has not been upheld.

Rule Changes

The DFP has established these policies, which are subject to change. Complaints or concerns regarding DFP events should be addressed to the staff of the DFP. If concerns are still not addressed, any member of the DFP Executive Committee can be contacted through www.downtownfdl.com.

Disclaimer

The DFP is not responsible for any injury, theft, or damage to buyers, sellers, or their property, that occurs before, during, or after Fondue Fest. By participating, organizations and individuals agree to indemnify and hold the DFP harmless from any claims for such injury, theft, or damage.

Operations Policies

Space Assignments

- Vending spaces are EXACTLY ten feet wide. You will have other vendors set up in the spaces next you. Be sure that your tent/display will fit within the space or purchase additional spaces as needed. If you would like customers to shop all sides of your booth, you will need to purchase an additional space to allow flex room around your booth.
- Vendors are assigned vending spaces by DFP staff. Note on your application any preferences you might have for location. Staff will do their best to accommodate requests, however it is always a goal to keep vendors with similar products a good distance apart.
- No vendor may switch to a different booth location without the prior approval of DFP staff. Booth locations will not be moved unless a valid reason is presented.
- Vendors may not take liberty of occupying an adjacent empty vendor space. Empty booths are often intentionally placed throughout the event to allow access to sidewalks, for fire code purposes, etc. This does not give any vendor the right to occupy the space.
- No vendor or downtown business may grant the use of event spaces to another organization or business.

Set Up

- Vendors can begin booth set-up when plastic barricades are in place and thru traffic has ceased. Generally, at 6:15 am.
- All vendor vehicles should drive from north to south whenever possible. Vendors should enter Main Street from the cross street immediately to the north of their space to ensure all traffic flows one way.
- 20 feet of clearance must be maintained down the center of Main Street to accommodate emergency vehicles.
- Vendors must furnish their own booth items such as tents, tent weights, tables and chairs.
- For safety purposes, tents MUST be secured by a minimum of a 25-pound tent weight on each leg. Severe wind and weather can cause unweighted tents to become airborne and a serious hazard to market attendees. Vendors are responsible for any and all damage done by their tent or any other items.
- Quickly unload vehicles and move vehicles out of event area as soon as possible to avoid traffic congestion among vendors.
- All moving vehicles must be out of the event area by 8:30am. Vendors can park on side streets, public parking lots or ramps. Downtown parking is free on Saturdays.

Tear-Down

- Vendors who sell out early should stay in their booth space and should post a "sold out" sign until the end of the Market Event.
- Vendors may not begin booth tear-down until the event end time.
- Vendors are not permitted to leave before the event end time, even if they sell out of product. If a vendor has an emergency and needs to leave, please contact DFP staff for options and/or to obtain an exception.
- After the Market, booth space must be completely disassembled before bringing a vehicle into the Market area for loading. Vehicles must be removed from The Market immediately after being loaded and may not be left parked in the Market area.
- Vendors should have all booth materials removed and space cleaned by 6:00pm.

Barricades

- Vendors may not begin booth set-up until plastic road barricades are in place and thru traffic has ceased. This is generally at 6:15am.
- When moving a plastic barricade to enter/exit the event area with their vehicle, vendors must return the barricade to its original position. Failure to do this endangers pedestrians, event staff and vendors.
- Mobile Vehicle Barricades (Police Barricades) will be placed at each intersection at 8:30am by Fond du Lac Police. Vehicles will not be able to enter or exit the event area after that time. Fond du Lac Police will remove the Police Barricades beginning at 5:00pm, or as soon as pedestrian traffic has cleared from the event area. It is important to stop selling at 5:00pm to allow for pedestrian traffic to clear the streets.
- Vendors may enter the event area with vehicles after the Police Barricades have been removed by Police.
- Vendors and staff cannot move the Police Barricades. Only Police personnel can move Police Barricades. Vendors who move Police Barricades will be expelled from the event.
- Plastic barricades will stay in place, blocking vehicle traffic, until all vendors are packed up and exiting the event. Generally, 7:00pm.

Clean Up

- Vendors are responsible for cleaning their vendor area before leaving and taking all trash with them.
- Dumpster locations are noted on the event map.
- Trash, including produce debris and food items, must be completely removed from the area. Vendors are responsible for disposing of their own waste - public trash containers are for customer use only.
- Vendors must NOT discard trash of any kind in or around trash receptacles on event grounds including business dumpsters and city trash cans.
- Grease and other hazardous materials must not be poured down the city sewer system.

Electricity

- Electricity access is available to vendors in a limited capacity.
- Electrical access can be requested on the Application Form and will require an additional fee.
- Electrical access provides access to one 10-amp outlet. If more than one outlet is needed, please list this on your application.
- Do NOT attempt to use more than the 10-amp, this will overload and trip the outlet, making it unusable.
- Please note that some outlets are 10 or more feet away from the vendor space; you are responsible for providing your own extension cords. Cords must be secured down with tape or rugs to prevent tripping.

Vehicle Usage

- Vehicles are permitted to be used for load-in; however:
 - Vendors are asked to unload all goods/equipment and immediately remove their vehicle from the event area before unpacking to avoid traffic congestion.
 - Vehicles must be removed from the event area by 7:30am.
- Vehicles are permitted to be used for load-out; however:

- No vehicle is allowed to enter the event area until pedestrian traffic has cleared, and Police Barricades have been removed.
- Vendor booths and displays must be completely disassembled before bringing a vehicle into the event area to allow for the shortest pack up time.
- Vehicles must be removed from the event area as soon as they are loaded to avoid traffic congestion.
- Vendors may NOT purchase additional booth space simply to park their vehicle.
- Vendors may park their vehicle within their booth space ONLY if the vehicle is being used in the selling of their product (ex: Food Truck, classic car show)
- Vehicles used within vendor booths must be parked along the curb and will require the purchase of at least two vendor spaces to ensure the vehicle will fit entirely within the vendor's assigned area. Larger vehicles may require additional space. Please work with DFP staff to determine how many spaces you will need.

Fire Safety Requirements

Under the provision of the NFPA 1 & 101 as amended by the State of Wisconsin, and the City of Fond du Lac, the vendor is responsible for meeting or exceeding the following requirements. The complete provision can be [found here](#).

- Any cooking involving combustible cooking media (e.g. vegetable or animal oils and fats) will require a Class K fire extinguisher in addition to the 2-A-10-BC class fire extinguisher.
- All tents used near cooking equipment must meet be labeled as meeting the required flame propagation performance criteria specified in NFPA 701.
- All extension cords must be rated for the appliance they are servicing and must be kept off the ground. Extension cords should only be used where absolutely necessary.
- Do not leave food cooking unattended
- Do not wear loose-fitting clothing when cooking
- Only non-combustible materials should be used in cooking areas and around heat sources
- Clean all cooking surfaces regularly to prevent the build-up of grease
- A minimum of five feet (5') of clearance must be maintained between the public and neighboring vendors from ALL cooking devices.
- A physical barrier must separate all cooking activities from the public. This may include purchasing additional vendor spaces to allow for separation.
- Butane or propane equipment must be protected from damage and secured in the upright position.
- Tanks must be turned off when not in use
- Tanks and stoves must have a shut-off valve
- Charcoal barbecue cooking and open flame cooking is prohibited. Propane grills are allowed.
- Fumes must not impede on another vendor. This may include purchasing additional vendor spaces to allow for separation of space.

Noise/Amplified Music Policies

- Loud and disturbing sounds or actions taken on the event grounds that will interfere with the rights, comfort, or convenience of other vendors and/or the public are strictly prohibited.

This includes but is not limited to: Stereos/speakers, vocal solicitation, selling/promotion outside of your designated booth space, etc.

- Generators **MUST** be **whisper-quiet generators**. (50-60 dB range)
- Amplified music is not allowed unless pre-approved by DFP staff.
- Approval of amplified music is based on musical value and relevance. To show consideration to all cultures and religions, approved music must represent a position of neutrality, neither promoting nor inhibiting any particular religious, cultural, or political views. Market staff and steering committee will review any public comments/concerns related to musical content on an as needed basis.
- DFP staff reserves the right to modify the volume level of any amplified music.

Busker Policy

- Buskers (street musicians) are not permitted at Fondue Fest due to the already numerous live music stages and venues.

Pet Policy

- We ask that animals or pets are kept at home, with the exception of service animals, due to crowd congestion and sometimes loud atmosphere.
- The DFP defines a service animal as trained to do work or perform tasks for a person who is unable to do so for themselves.

Weather Delay/Cancellation

- In the event of a weather delay, if possible, the plastic barricades will be put in place at the usual time. When severe weather has passed, vendors may set up as usual.
- Fondue Fest cancellation may occur if the National Weather Service indicates severe weather warnings during part or throughout the entire scheduled event time. However, the DFP reserves the right to cancel the Fondue Fest due to poor weather conditions at any time.
- In the rare event of a cancellation, DFP staff will make a specific and reasonable effort to notify vendors and customers in a clear and concise manner. Typically, this communication will take place on our DFP Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/DowntownFDL>), and the DFP Farmers Market Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/FondDuLacFarmersMarket>), but is not limited to such. Emails may be sent to vendors, dependent upon the lead time of such decisions.
- No refunds are given in the event of a cancellation.

Selling Policies

- The DFP does not provide any equipment. Vendors are responsible for bringing all necessary materials, including any table, chairs, tent, cash bank for selling/making change, etc.
- Tents are highly suggested, but not required, and are the responsibility of the vendor. If a tent is used, it MUST be properly weighted (25 lb. weight on each leg) for safety purposes, and must fit with the assigned vendor space. Severe wind and weather can cause unweighted tents to become airborne and a serious hazard to event vendors, staff and attendees.
- Event vendors are required to display a sign with their business name.
- Products and information displayed must be suitable for a family-friendly audience.
- Prices for all items should be clearly marked and posted in view of customers.
- Event vendors are responsible for collecting, reporting, and paying all applicable sales tax on taxable goods sold.
- All sellers and products must comply with and abide by all applicable federal, state, and local regulations.
- The sale of animals, drugs, firearms, ammunition, or other weapons is strictly prohibited.
- All product and information displayed must be suitable for a family friendly audience; tasteful and respectful.
- Food and/or product sampling, and/or giveaway of branded promotional items is allowed; however, the offering of any product for free that may be sold elsewhere within the Market Event is strictly prohibited.
- Vendor booth materials, goods, signage and vehicles (when applicable – see Vehicle Policy) must not extend beyond allotted boundaries of the assigned vendor space.
- Display and selling techniques must not impair other vendors' ability to sell, nor create a hazardous situation for customers. All promotion, solicitation, information sharing, sampling, etc., must be conducted within the assigned 10x10 booth space. Our intention is to create a visually enticing, legal, safe market for customers, and to enable all vendors to maximize their selling space.
- We ask that participating vendors/organizations advertise the event on their Facebook page, websites or in social media outreach.

Food Policies

Determined by State of WI and Fond du Lac County Health Department Guidelines

Attached are the Transient Retail Food Establishment Operations Guidelines, including policies on handwashing, cleaning requirements and cooking temperatures.

Food Displays and Packaging

- All vendor products display and packaging must comply with all applicable federal, state, county and local laws and regulations.
- All produce shall be sold by legal weights and measures. Vendors are responsible for having their scales certified for compliance. (See WI State Food Code.) To contact the Madison DATCP weights and measures call 608-224-4942 or email DATCPWeightsandMeasures@Wisconsin.gov
- Vendors are responsible for obtaining all licenses or permits required for the sale of food products to the public. Copies of such licenses/permits shall be submitted to the DFP annually and be on site during Fondue Fest.
- Note: The county health inspector will make periodic checks to make sure you have these documents on hand and all food policies are in compliance.

Food Sampling Policy

- Food sampling must meet County Health Department code. Please contact the Fond du Lac County Health Department for details.
- Vendors giving free samples must provide a waste container in a prominent place and labeled for use by the public.
- Free food sampling will not require a permit as long as the following are met:
 - Samples are prepared in the operator's licensed facility or the operator purchases the foods from a commercial facility.
 - No cooking or food preparation onsite, only portioning and serving.
 - Samples do not exceed 2 ounces and are adequately sized to minimize handling using such items as toothpicks, portion cups, etc.
 - Samples are free – no samples are being sold.
 - Samples are safely dispensed under clean and sanitary conditions to the public.
 - No bare hand contact with the food is allowed. Gloves or utensils are required to be used.
 - Temporary hand washing station is set-up.

Canned or Baked Goods (Wisconsin Pickle Bill)

- Retail sales only (direct from producer to consumer)
- No more than \$5,000.00 in sales per year
- Vendor must display a sign at the point of sale stating, "These canned/baked goods are homemade and not subject to state inspection."
- Product labels must include:
 - Name and address of the person who did the canning/baking
 - Date of canning/baking
 - All ingredients in descending order of prominence, including the common name for any ingredient that originates from milk, eggs, fish, shellfish, tree nuts, peanuts, wheat or soybeans. These are ingredients that can cause severe allergic reactions in some people, who must be able to recognize when they are present.
- Record-keeping suggested - Written record of every batch of product made for sale including:
 - Recipe, including procedures and ingredients.
 - Amount canned/baked and sold
 - Canning/baking Date
 - Sale dates and locations
 - Gross sales receipts
- Sanitation: Inspection is not required, but customers expect good sanitation. Here are some factors you should consider:
 - Use clean equipment that has been effectively sanitized prior to use
 - Clean work surfaces and then sanitize with bleach water before and after use
 - Keep ingredients separate from other unprocessed foods
 - Keep household pets out of the work area
 - Keep walls and floors clean
 - Have adequate lighting
 - Keep window and door screens in good repair to keep insects out
 - Wash hands frequently while working
 - Consider annual testing of water if using a private well

CBD Policy

- CBD products are limited to hulled hemp seed, hemp seed oil, topical CBD, and smokable CBD flower. No viable seed, starts, or plants can be sold at a Market Event.
- CBD vendors need a Hemp Growers license.
- All CBD products must be below .3% THC tested by USDA.
- All hemp and CBD products must originate from hemp grown in Wisconsin.
- All CBD products must be labeled.
- CBD Policy is subject to change in accordance with local regulations at any time.

Egg Policy

- Vendor must have a current Mobile Retail license from the FDL Health Department or the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP).
- Vendor must have a DATCP food processing license on the farm for washing, packaging, and cold holding the eggs.

For more information, please contact DATCP, Division of Food Safety: (608) 224-4700, www.datcp.wi.gov

Exceptions to obtaining a Food Processing License for the purpose of selling eggs:

- 1.) The eggs are produced at a farm licensed as a DATCP-Wisconsin Dairy Plant per ATCP 70.03(7)©; or
 - 2.) The number of egg-laying birds in the egg producer's flock does not exceed 150; AND the egg producer packages the eggs in a carton that is labeled correctly per all labeling requirements listed below.
- Product labels must include:
 - Product name and quantity
 - Name and address of packer, distributor or processor
 - Date of packing
 - Grade and size or a statement indicating the package is "ungraded and uninspected".
 - A "Sell by" date no more than 30 days after the date the eggs were packed.
 - Safe handling statement to read: "To prevent illness from bacteria, keep eggs refrigerated, cook eggs until yolks are firm, and cook foods containing eggs thoroughly."
 - Storage and Display
 - Eggs must be stored in a unit that can maintain at 41 degrees Fahrenheit or below. Thermometer should be provided.
 - Foods for display (not for sale) must be labeled "Display Only"
 - Provide a canopy and cover unpackaged foods to protect from contamination
 - Transport foods in clean equipment and vehicles.
 - Store food 6 inches off the ground
 - Handle unpackaged foods with gloves, tissues or utensils

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