

MOSCOW FARMERS MARKET COMMISSION



JT Manning
Commission Chair
fmc@ci.moscow.id.us

Regular Meeting
~Minutes~

Amanda Argona
Staff Liaison
208-883-7132

<https://www.ci.moscow.id.us/362/Farmers-MarketCommission>

Tuesday
May 5, 2026

4:00 PM

Council Chambers
206 E. 3rd St.

Manning called the meeting to order at 4:13 PM.

MEMBERS PRESENT: JT Manning, Chair; Kassie Smith, Jodi McClory, Josh Larson, Phil Blankenship, Colette DePhelps
MEMBERS ABSENT: Phil Blankenship, Gerardo Alvarez
OTHERS: Drew Davis
STAFF: Amanda Argona, Amanda Reyes

REGULAR AGENDA

1. Mission of the Moscow Farmers Market

The Moscow Farmers Market celebrates life on the Palouse by providing the community with the opportunity to buy and sell local and regional agricultural products (e.g., crops, meat, cheese, wine, etc.), distinctive handmade goods, artisan pieces, and original recipe cuisine. This venue is meant to encourage and support sustainable economic, social and environmental practices.

McClory read the mission statement aloud.

2. Approval of Farmers Market Commission April 7, 2026 Minutes (ACTION ITEM)

Larson moved for approval of the minutes as presented, seconded by Smith. Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Unanimous (6). Nays: None. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.

3. Public Comment and Response to Previous Comments (limited to 10 minutes)

Members of the public may speak to the Commission regarding matters NOT on the agenda or currently pending before the Commission. Please state your name and city of residence for the record and limit your remarks to three (3) minutes.

None.

4. 50th Anniversary graphic suite (ACTION ITEM)

The Branding Subcommittee has reviewed proposed graphics commemorating the Market's 50th anniversary milestone. A final draft is being presented for approval.

Previously discussed, no action needed; See Minutes from April 7, 2026.

5. Craft & Food Jury evaluation (ACTION ITEM)

Staff have fielded various feedback on the Craft & Food Jury process this year from both prospective and returning Vendors and is recommending an evaluation and refinement of the process in the following scope:

- Updating and aligning scorecard with criteria selection like Poster Artwork
- Piloting at-Market jury process in 2026 for returning Vendors, with particular

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attention to Agricultural Vendors

- *Assessment on adopting a single judging scorecard evaluation and scribe model*

Previously significant evaluation to the Craft & Food Jury process was in 2019, with 2020 being the first year the current model was in practice.

Previously discussed, no action needed; See Minutes from April 7, 2026.

6. Site Visits 2026

Each year, staff closes the recruitment period for new Agricultural Vendors prior to the opening of the Marketspread application (typically before and/or around St. Patrick's Day and/or Spring Equinox). This year, the recruitment period closed on Fri., Mar. 13, with the Marketspread application opening on Mon., Mar. 16. This allows staff time to screen Vendors for eligibility, qualifications, and approval. The tentative Site Visit schedule is as follows:

- *Thu., Apr. 16 – Chesed Farms, Walla Walla, WA (6+ hours)*
- *Thu., Apr. 23*
 - *M+M Funny Farms, Moscow, ID*
 - *Long Table Farm, Pullman, WA*
 - *Runner Bean Ranch, Palouse, WA*
 - *Kerr Microgreens, Hayden, ID*
- *Thu., May 7*
 - *Wheeler Gardens, Pullman, WA (2 locations)*
 - *Palouse Blooms, Palouse, WA*
 - *Green Valley Produce, Fernwood, ID*
- *Tue., Jun. 9*
 - *Koenig Family Farm, Troy, ID*
 - *R. Ensley, Colfax, WA*
- *Thu., Jun. 11 OR Tue., Jun. 16*
 - *Alvarez Family Farm, Sunnyside, WA (7+ hours)*
- *TBD Fall '26 – Mike & Michelle Carpenter, Princeton, ID*

Previously discussed, no action needed; See Minutes from April 7, 2026.

REPORTS

- 1. InTents Farmers Market Pros Conference report – DePhelps**
- 2. Community Events Manager report – Argona**

Argona reviewed the Manager Report as presented in the packet. Argona reviewed miscommunication involving Corson's Creations eligibility citing sales reporting requirements being met but not the Orientation requirements. There was consensus that 2026 will be considered

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a counted absence for Corson's Collections. Details regarding 2026 season opening day were reviewed. DePhelps brought forward a Vendor's concerns and perception about the number of vendors offering similar products at the Market, creating oversaturation and negatively impacting current vendor business. Argona indicated she could look at sales data, as well as attendance to ensure the conversation was rooted in data versus perception. Argona also referenced the ability to use sales data to determine threshold to entry or specific Tier status. There was general hesitation about using Vendor sales as a determining factor in decision-making. A pilot re-jury process scheduled for June 6 was also discussed, and a brief overview was provided regarding vendors likely to participate.

DePhelps provided a high level overview of the InTents Conference. She cited a session that focused on findings from a Green Market study conducted in New York, noting that local food accounts for 3% of retail food sales, with 8% of those sales occurring through Farmers Markets, therefore Markets primarily compete with retail grocery stores rather than other local markets. Shopper-related challenges identified included perceived inconvenience due to overcrowding, aging out of core shoppers, and a growing number of food-assistance program shoppers. Vendor-related challenges included aging vendors without successors, inflation causing customers to spend less, and increasing labor and transportation costs. The Conference session also cited concerns for Market operations and managers regarding potential ICE raids occurring in public spaces. The session focused on recommendations to consider creating protected spaces for vendors, employees, and shoppers.

DePhelps reviewed presented strategies for increasing shopper engagement, indicating an opportunity for the Moscow Farmers Market to align Market core values with shopper values, encouraging shoppers to purchase a greater percentage of their groceries at the Market, and promoting storytelling, price comparisons, and sustainability messaging to attract younger shoppers. Additional suggestions included emphasizing fun, togetherness, product variety, and price accessibility. The Conference session also recommended that markets share information about neighboring markets operating mid-week that may provide lower price points or alternative food access with DePhelps citing that Argona does a good job of this already. Based on Conference ideas, DePhelps suggested our Market gather more detailed information about our local shopper behavior and trends. Other suggestions from the InTents Conference that were deemed applicable to concerns and issues with the Moscow Farmers Market included having juries score products higher if they increase Market diversity, maintaining a straightforward and unbiased application and jurying process, clearly communicating which vendor types the Market is and is not seeking, and referring vendors to other markets when appropriate. It was also recommended that vendors should be able to locate all necessary Market information within 10 minutes, including through improved FAQs. DePhelps cited one item that indicated if a question is asked

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more than twice, Market communications may need further clarification. Lastly, the importance of maintaining a strong and consistent social media presence was emphasized as an important strategy for shopper engagement. The group thanked DePhelps for the report, which will be continued at a future meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Proposed Items for Future Agendas

Commission members may email Amanda Argona (aargona@ci.moscow.id.us) to propose future agenda items for discussion.

- RMA details, including volunteer training
- Market data on Vendor representation and attendance

2. Upcoming events and deadlines

- Thu., May 7 – Site Visit 3: Wheeler Gardens, Pullman, WA (2 locations); Palouse Blooms (Palouse, WA); Green Valley Produce (Fernwood, ID)
- Sat., May 9, 9 am to 12 pm – Commission hosting 2026 Poster Artist
- Tue., Jun. 9 – Site Visit 4: Koenig Family Farm (Troy, ID); Dew & Bloom Flower Farm (Colfax, WA)
- Thu., Jun. 11 OR Tue., Jun. 16 – Site Visit 5: Alvarez Family Farm (Sunnyside, WA)
- Sat., Jul. 25 – RMA 1
- Sat., Aug. 8
 - 9 am to 12 pm – National Farmers Market Week Celebration
 - RMA 2
- Thu., Aug. 13, 5 to 8 pm – Market Through the Years event hosted at and by MCOC+VC
- TBD Fall '26 – Site Visit 6: Mike & Michelle Carpenter (Princeton, ID)
- Sat., Sep. 12 – RMA 3
- Mon., Sep. 21, 7 pm – Annual Citizen Commission report to Council
- Sat., Oct. 31 – Costume Contest
- TBD Nov., 7 pm – Costume Contest awards presentation at Council

3. Farmers Market Commission regular meeting June 2, 2026 at Moscow City Hall in Council Chambers

The meeting was adjourned at 5:32 PM.


JT Manning, Chair


Date

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ADJOURN

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