

Herbal Marketplace: Frequently Asked Questions



Our **Herbal Marketplace** lets you grow your own herbs, then package and sell them through our website. We will provide community, take care of sales tax, shipping and ecommerce logistics. You'll take care of growing, drying, packaging and taking photos of your herbs. You set the price and provide the proper packaging for bulk dried & fresh herbs.

We are currently in BETA testing, which means it is not perfect yet, but you'll get to provide input on how we build and improve AND you will get early access to our customers.

Can we set up an informational interview to discuss getting started, potential challenges etc. before I apply?

Please apply if you are interested – it's free! The answers to the application questions will help guide us in our answers.

Once we've reviewed your application, we will set up a free discovery call to determine if the Herbal Marketplace is a great fit for your farm.

When do you accept new farms?

Anytime! We can add up to 100 farms/growers to our beta test of the Herbal Marketplace (and 1,000 farms after that).

Sometimes we put out a "waitlist" application while we deploy new functionality, but enrollment is always happening.

We are experienced farmers/gardeners, but our business is in its infancy. How much should I budget for this program?

When you join us, we suggest choosing the monthly basis (instead of paying for a full year upfront). The cost is \$55 per month which comes out of proceeds from selling herbs – so there is no out of pocket cost.

Special offer: If you pay monthly, during the first 3 months after opening your store, your fee is based on what you sell (and the remaining portion of your subscription payment will be waived!)

Once you have a feel for your Herbal Marketplace budget, you can either continue paying a monthly fee or, in January, pay the annual \$600 rate upfront and save \$60.

Whichever membership fee method you choose, we also keep 6% of each transaction to cover credit card fees and some additional overhead costs.

What quantities or herbs should I be growing/drying before I start selling on the Herbal Marketplace?

You need to be able to sell at least \$100 per month. This equates to ten 1 oz bags at \$10/bag.

How much we can expect to sell through the marketplace each month?

Herbal Marketplace Growers have been selling between \$300-\$800 per month.

If I join the Herbal Marketplace, can I leave if it isn't the right fit for me?

The yearly membership fee is non-refundable.

If you join us on a monthly basis, you can cancel at any time, but your monthly membership fees will continue until you have removed your products from public view.

Do I need to be Certified Organic before joining the Herbal Marketplace?

No, you do not need to be certified organic, but we do require that you meet organic standards and grow regeneratively.

Do I need to grow herbs regeneratively to join the Herbal Marketplace?

Yes, and you need to grow according to organic standards.

Only a couple of items we currently grow appear on your website. Can we sell herbs that you are not currently offering?

Absolutely! Our website only shows herbs that are in stock, but we usually offer many more herbs.

Please send farmers@meetinghouse.farm a list of the herbs and roots you would like to sell, and we will let you know if we think they will sell well.

What are the most popular herbs/roots?

Nettle, Raspberry, Burdock, Astragalus, Elecampane, Chamomile, Lavender are our most popular herbs/roots, but our customer base is always growing.

Do you have any restrictions on the types of herbs I can offer?

Yes, there are restrictions. Hemp, cannabis or any plant considered by the federal government to be “illegal” are not allowed to be listed on the Herbal Marketplace.

Can I sell my tinctures, oils, salves, syrups, tea blends, etc. on the Herbal Marketplace?

At this time, due to FDA regulation, we are not able to support selling extracts or tinctures from other growers. Meeting House Farm sells the only extracts/oils offered on our website.

We WILL be allowing farms to sell salves, syrups, tea blends, soaps etc. starting near the end of the beta period.

Thus, at this time, our Herbal Marketplace growers ONLY sell bulk dried & fresh herbs.

We have fresh herbs; can I sell these in the marketplace?

Yes, farms participating in the Herbal Marketplace can sell fresh herbs as long as they can ship them overnight via Priority Mail to maintain optimum freshness.

I would like to offer both ground and whole options. Is this allowed?

Yes, you can choose how to best sell your roots and herbs.

I see you only offer herbs in 1 oz, 4 oz, and 16 oz size packages. Can I sell other quantities?

Yes. We’ve found these sizes to be the most popular and the most cost-effective for us, but you are certainly welcome to sell herbs in other package sizes.

Can I sell my dried herbs in glass spice jars and/or in my own *compostable* kraft barrier packages?

Yes, farms participating in the Herbal Marketplace can sell herbs in their own environmentally friendly packaging.

Could we advertise that our products come in compostable packaging?

Yes, farms participating in the Herbal Marketplace can put their own information on product listings, in their farm bio, and on their packing slips. There are some restrictions surrounding the use of the word “organic”, “medicinal”, “culinary”, etc. – we’ll fill you in when you join.

Who writes the product descriptions?

Farms in the Herbal Marketplace are responsible for providing their own product descriptions – this is your opportunity to make your herbs shine!

There are some restrictions surrounding the use of the word “organic”, “medicinal”, “culinary”, etc. – we’ll fill you in when you join.

Will you provide product photos?

Herbal Marketplace farms/growers are responsible for providing their own product photos – your customers want to see the herbs they are purchasing since other farms might garble/chip to different sizes.

We encourage you to create a consistent look and feel for your farm’s product photos, so they are easy to recognize.

Can I advertise sales on the Herbal Marketplace?

Yes, farms participating in the Herbal Marketplace can change their pricing and product descriptions to show sales prices, but we do not have a way to offer advertisements on our website.

I’ve don’t have a logo, marketing, social media, website, etc. Can I join the Herbal Marketplace without these in place?

Absolutely. All you really need is basic packaging and fabulous herbs!

We are new to farming/gardening and are very interested in joining the Herbal Marketplace. Would this be a good fit?

Do you think you can grow enough herbs to fill ten 1 oz bags once the herbs are dried? If not, consider selling fresh roots or look into joining one of our other programs while you increase your yield:

Community Grower – This is a standard wholesale/retail relationship – you grow the herbs and bring them to Meeting House Farm to sell. All herbs must be garbled to ¼ inch. Meeting House Farm only purchases herbs we need. We will pay ½ the current price of a retail pound. Payout

occurs in the next monthly payout following intake of your herbs (in summer, it might take us a bit longer to complete the intake of your herbs). You must bring in at least 2 pounds of each herb. If this option sounds great to you, please check with us before bringing in your herbs. We quality check at drop off.

Nurture Farm Grower – This option is for farms new to herb farming that want to grow at least 250 lbs of dried herbs per year. We take 2 new nurture farm growers each year. A grant from the USDA and the State of Maine covers our work as we guide and consult with the farm. We also offer packaging, labeling and social media assistance. The applications for Nurture Farms open on February 2 each year.

I'm not sure if we're ready to join the Herbal Marketplace. What should we do to prepare?

Consider signing up for one of Emily's personalized, on-farm consultations.

She offers consultations about stewarding your land; dry room set-up; and (if you desire) preparing for organic certification. Or use the same link to sign up for a 30-minute phone consultation.

Which is more important before joining the Herbal Marketplace -- improving our drying system (so we can produce more dried products) or getting certified organic?

Drying rooms are really where it happens for herb farms. You can grow the most beautiful certified organic herbs in the world but if you can't dry them really well, you won't be able to sell them. Invest in a good dry room. We are happy to provide a consultation.

Can I sell the herbs I have remaining from precious years?

We sell herbs from the current growing season and from last year's.

Then, in January, we sell any herbs from 2 seasons ago and donate those we don't sell. For example, in January 2024, we'll hold a January Sale to sell herbs from 2022 at 30% off. Our customers love it!

We hope to be able to include your herbs in the sale in a future Beta version.

Still not sure if the Herbal Marketplace is for you?

Schedule a free 10-minute discovery call with Emily to determine if this is a great fit for your farm.