



SOKY Floral Exchange Grower Membership Agreement for the 2026 Season

Purpose and Vision

The Southern Kentucky Floral Exchange (SKFE) is a community of dedicated local flower growers who collaborate to support each other's success and elevate Southern Kentucky's locally grown flowers in the wholesale and retail markets. This agreement is designed to establish mutual expectations, promote teamwork, and ensure we're working together to grow our businesses and our community.

Our mission is to increase access to locally grown, high quality, equitably priced flowers and foliage by creating a streamlined sales channel for farmers and designers. We strive to promote flower farming as a sustainable profession by increasing sales, saving time and decreasing redundancies while building relationships within the flower farming community.

Our Values (CARE)

- **Community over competition.**
 - We are a collective of over 20 small farms and businesses, working together to provide a great selection of locally grown floral products to designers and flower enthusiasts.
- Flowers for **All.**
 - We DO NOT tolerate discrimination and enjoy sharing our flowers with ALL!
- Our team is our most valuable **Resource.**
 - Farming is hard. There are no better words to describe it. We strive to promote health and happiness, profits and prosperity and we know the value of the hard work that is put in to grow, harvest and sell our crops. By building this community, we strive to be a resource and to provide a safe and welcoming space for our growers to communicate and feel supported.
- **Exceptional quality, every stem.**
 - Our goal is 110%+ customer satisfaction with every stem.

1. Sales Arrangement

- SKFE will handle sales to SKFE customers on behalf of all members.
- SKFE will take a commission of 25% on all sales to help cover operational costs, marketing efforts, and outreach to new customer bases.
- Members will receive payouts bi-monthly, based on their sales after the 25% commission.

2. Membership Commitment

As a member of SKFE, you are part of a team working toward shared goals. By signing this agreement, you commit to:

- Growing high-quality, locally cultivated flowers that meet SKFE's quality standards.
- Abiding by SKFE's policies and procedures as outlined in this document.
- Supporting the community's growth and success through active participation.
- Paying a \$300 membership fee to join for the 2026 growing season (due by February 7, 2026).
- Signing up for and paying for a Rooted Farmers membership for your farm for the 2026 season.
 - Visit www.RootedFarmers.com to join as a farmer
 - Essentials plan = \$165/year or Pro Plan = \$360/year
 - Use coupon code **SOKY26** to receive \$100 off of the membership of your choice

3. Community Support Shifts

In the spirit of teamwork, members are asked to volunteer for a minimum of three shifts at the SKFE store located at 348 College Street, Bowling Green, KY during the growing season (March - October). These shifts are essential for:

- Building community among members.
- Gaining first hand experience in customer service and product presentation.
- Supporting the success of SKFE's operations during high-demand periods.

Shift Expectations: Each shift will last approximately 4 hours. Responsibilities may include assisting customers, restocking displays, and helping with basic store upkeep. Shift schedules will be coordinated at the start of the season to allow for flexible planning. If a member is unable to volunteer time at the SKFE store, members will be expected to donate products or other services during the season.

4. Member Benefits

As a valued member of SKFE, you gain access to:

- Marketing and Promotion: Inclusion in SKFE's marketing efforts, social media, newsletters, and seasonal promotions.
- Retail Opportunities: Access to our retail and wholesale channels, which increase visibility and sales opportunities.
- New Customer Access: Exposure to a diverse customer base of florists, event planners, and individual buyers.
- Professional Development: Opportunities for skill-building and networking through our workshops and events.
- The Rooted Farmers platform where you can keep your sales and inventory organized.
- A community of local flower growers with seasonal member meetings.
- A SKFE Buyer Membership.

5. Accountability & participation requirements

Membership in the Southern Kentucky Floral Exchange requires active participation, clear and effective communication, and dependability throughout the growing season. **Members are expected to regularly check emails, messages, and other communication channels used by SKFE staff to ensure timely coordination, especially during peak operations periods.**

Prompt and responsive communication is critical for successful transactions with buyers. Members are expected to respond to inquiries, requests, and updates in a timely manner to support smooth operations and maximize sales opportunities for all farms in the collective. Consistent participation and attentiveness to communication help maintain trust, efficiency, and shared success across the Floral Exchange.

Membership in the Southern Kentucky Floral Exchange is most successful when farms actively participate and engage throughout the season. Each farm's experience and results within the collective are closely connected to the effort, consistency, and care they bring to their participation. Member farms are responsible for uploading and managing accurate weekly availability so the collective can best serve our buyers and highlight seasonal offerings. Ongoing participation helps strengthen trust, visibility, and sales opportunities for everyone. Membership engagement is reviewed annually to ensure alignment with the collective's mission and to support continued growth and success for all. In this collaborative model, **what you put in truly helps shape what you get out of it.**

6. Quality expectation policy

For the Southern Kentucky Floral Exchange to be successful, it is imperative that high quality flowers and foliage be available to our clients. We require that our growers have at least **two seasons of professional cut flower growing experience** to help maintain our quality standards. Our growers must have an active business license/EIN/Tax ID.

To set standards for our growers and have an equal understanding of these standards, we require that all growers attend our mandatory pre-season grower meeting and sign our grower's contract before the first market date. We also reserve the right to visit any member farms at a scheduled time to view your growing area and learn more about your growing practices.

See a list of basic quality standards below, as well as Section 6 - Stage of Harvest Resource. Specific harvest tips will be listed on the pricing guide that will be provided to members.

- All products must be delivered in clean buckets with fresh water- with or without holding solution. We will provide a holding solution at the market if needed
- Flowers must be stripped of at least 1/3 of their foliage prior to delivery to market and delivered with no foliage below the water line.
- Flowers must be bunched in 5 stem bunches or 10 stem bunches with rubber bands.
- Stem length must meet the expected standards to be sold with SOKY at full price. If the stem length is less expected, document that on your Rooted Farmers listing and use a lower price point. (20% is the usual discount for shorter stems).

- Sprays vs. Single Stem - We will accept both. If selling sprays, each spray needs to be consistent in the bundle and not include a mix of single stems and sprays. **Grower should be really detailed in their description of the product on Rooted.**
- Harvest as close to the market date as possible and no earlier than 2 days prior to delivery date. Some flowers are exceptions to this general rule, including tulips, peonies and daffodils.
- Tulips- tulips transported to SKFE for sale the next day should arrive at SKFE or designated drop off location in water and hydrated. (Unless requested otherwise by the buyer or if providing bulk tulips for "bonus" sales, they can be transported dry for SKFE staff to hydrate when they are purchased.)
- Peonies - peonies transported to SKFE for sale the next day should arrive at SKFE or designated drop off location in water and hydrated. (Unless requested otherwise by the buyer or if providing bulk peonies for "bonus" sales, they can be transported dry for SKFE staff to hydrate when they are purchased.)
- Wrapping/sleeving bunches by order is required. We would like all flowers to be wrapped / sleeved during transport with the farm labeled and the buyer labeled. It is helpful to the SKFE team when prepping orders and decreases the handling of product and the possibility of breakage. At times we may ask to label with specific variety (tulips, peonies, dahlias, etc.)
- SOKY reserves the right to reject any stems that do not meet quality standards.
- The market manager will assess flower quality at time of receipt and will immediately let the grower know if their flower(s) do not meet the expected quality standards. If a grower sends low quality products to market three times within a season, SKFE has the right to restrict the grower from selling that product or all products for a period of time that could extend the rest of the season. Removing a grower from SKFE will be the last resort. SKFE will help to provide quality training and/or educational materials as we can to help decrease the chances of poor quality products being delivered to the market.

7. Flower Packaging & Handling Standards

In the past, multiple varieties sold to the same buyer from a single farm could be organized and wrapped together to streamline order processing for the farms. However, this method has caused issues due to differences in stem length, variety uniformity, and fragility between flower types, which can result in messy packaging and damage during transport.

Acceptable packaging practices include:

- Multiple bunches of the same variety and color going to the same buyer may be packaged together, provided the label clearly indicates the quantity (e.g., "3 x bunches"). **Each bunch should be individually rubberbanded-** but can be wrapped together in a sleeve.
- Different colors of the same variety should be packaged separately to support efficient check-in and distribution.
- Following these packaging standards ensures product quality, reduces damage during transport, and helps maintain a consistent and professional experience for buyers.

8. Preorder Labeling Requirements

All preordered flower bunches must be clearly labeled to ensure accurate distribution and operational efficiency. A correct preorder label should include:

- Buyer name or business
- Specific flower variety, cultivar (required for flowers with multiple colors or varieties such as dahlias, peonies, tulips, zinnias, narcissus, mint, etc.)
- Your farm name or farm label
- Quantity of bunches, if multiple (# of bu)

Members are expected to maintain consistency and quality in all flower bunches provided to buyers. If you do not have enough stems of a specific variety to complete a full bunch, **do not substitute stems from a different variety/color/etc.** In such cases, please notify SKFE staff immediately so they can inform the buyer and arrange for proper replacements or adjustments. This ensures consecutive, uniform flower bunches and aligns with buyer expectations.

Each bunch is expected to remain **uniform**, and **free or tester products should never be included in the same wrapping as preordered buyer products.** If sending complimentary or test flowers, they must be **separately wrapped and clearly labeled** as “free,” “tester,” or “complimentary”.

9. Stage of Harvest Resource

Harvesting flowers and foliage at the right time is very important when it comes to ensuring the longest vase life. For the majority of flowers, the goal is to harvest when $\frac{1}{3}$ of the blooms are showing and to cut the longest stem possible. However, there are many exceptions to this rule. The SKFE has a basic “Stage of Harvest” resource for you. It will be provided to SKFE members at the beginning of the 2026 season. Feedback and improvements to this guide are welcomed.

Some designers may make specific requests regarding the stage of harvest and the SKFE will ask them to note this when they order. For instance, some designers might want their Iceland poppies fully opened, not in cracked bud, or some might not have time to wait for a daffodil to open for an event.

When providing extra flowers and foliage for impulse buys, the stage of harvest is not as pivotal because designers can see what they are buying and can be educated on vase life prior to purchase. For an event, flowers in bloom might be perfect for an impulse purchase.

10. Pricing

The Southern Kentucky Floral Exchange will provide a suggested price list with minimum pricing standards at the beginning of the 2026 season to all approved and paid members. The pricing list is based on the ASCFG price list resource, traditional wholesale pricing, comparison with the pricing of other collectives, and pricing information received from local growers in the Kentucky area. The goal is to set a price range that is fair for both growers and designers. Farmers will have the ability to adjust pricing based on their own margins and assessment of the product that they are listing. If listing a product that is a “second cut” or has shorter than expected stems, those can be listed at a lower price. If you find a product is not listed on the Master Price List, reach out to the SKFE to add it.

The Master Price List will be updated as needed when products are added or if it becomes clear that pricing should be adjusted. For instance, if the market is flooded with sunflowers or zinnias, the SKFE has the option of running a “sale” to move the product. As always, your feedback is very important! Contact the SKFE if you have questions or concerns about pricing. SKFE reserves the right to modify pricing based on our pricing guide standards without notifying the grower if needed.

11. Payment

The majority of sales will be processed through the Rooted Farmers platform using a company called Stripe. Once a sale is finalized, that money will be transferred to the SKFE bank account. Every two weeks (likely near the 15th and 30th of each month) the SKFE will write checks to growers for the product they have sold, less the 25% fee to cover market costs, credit card processing, and platform fees. Our growers are responsible for obtaining and maintaining their own Rooted Farmers account in order to participate in SKFE. The fees associated with the Rooted Farmers account are set by the Rooted Farmers team and are subject to change.

12. Pre-Orders/Events through the SKFE

While most of the sales will take place through the Rooted Farmers platform, SKFE may receive large pre orders in advance of the standard market schedule or contract to do certain events. In this situation, the SKFE will “broker” the order outside of the Rooted Farmers platform at the same percentage rate (25%). Participating growers will be paid by check from the SKFE during the regular scheduled payment plan.

13. Selling Outside of the Market

The SKFE exists to provide a streamlined wholesale opportunity for growers. It is understood that each farm may have multiple sales avenues and the SKFE wants growers to have the ability to sell their product in a way that is sustainable for them.

The Southern Kentucky Floral Exchange operates as a collaborative marketplace built on principles of fairness, trust, transparency, and shared success. The collective does not seek to police or interfere with business relationships that member farms established **prior to joining** the Southern Kentucky Floral Exchange. Members may continue to operate and maintain those existing relationships independently outside of the collective.

However, the Floral Exchange has invested significant time, effort, and resources into building buyer relationships, sales channels, and market trust for the benefit of **all** member farms. Any buyers, connections, or relationships developed through the Southern Kentucky Floral Exchange are considered *collective buyers* and are not to be approached, solicited, or secured for direct farm-to-buyer sales outside of the collective, as doing so undermines the integrity of the organization and harms shared success.

The Southern Kentucky Floral Exchange is founded on ethical business practices and mutual respect. Just as the collective honors and respects the relationships growers established prior to membership, the same courtesy and respect are expected from member farms toward relationships cultivated through the Floral Exchange.

By signing this agreement, members acknowledge and agree that buyer poaching or solicitation of collective buyers for individual gain is unacceptable. Violations of this policy may result in corrective action, including membership review, suspension, or termination, at the discretion of the Southern Kentucky Floral Exchange leadership.

Growers who are contacted directly by SKFE *collective* buyers are required to direct all special requests, custom orders, or product inquiries to members of the SKFE leadership team. Any buyer, connection, or relationship established through SKFE who contacts a member farm directly to request product, negotiate pricing, or seek reduced rates must be respectfully and promptly redirected back to SKFE for handling. Such direct transactions outside of SKFE are **not permitted** unless explicit written authorization has been provided by SKFE leadership in advance.

This policy ensures pricing consistency, protects buyer relationships, and maintains fairness and trust across all member farms and florists/buyers. By adhering to this procedure, growers help uphold the integrity of the collective and support a transparent and equitable marketplace for all participants.

If your farm has current relationships with designers/clients, you agree that SKFE may reach out to these designers/clients to offer them to become buyers through our collective. It will be up to your farm to determine if you want to continue sales to these clients through your own communications or through SKFE. We do not aim to harm any current relationships that have been built between farms and buyers.

14. Online Pre-Orders vs. Storefront Inventory

Growers can elect to send additional products to the storefront to be used as inventory at any given time Monday - Friday during business hours. Store hours may change throughout the season based on operational needs, customer traffic patterns, and market demand. Members are responsible for staying informed of any updates to store hours, which will be communicated via email and regularly reflected on the SKFE website.

Growers who want to harvest guaranteed sales will need to participate in posting their items online for our online shoppers to choose from for weekly pre-orders. The pre-order schedule is listed below and is subject to change at any time. Growers will be notified of any changes as early as possible by the SKFE team.

Members are highly encouraged to upload all of their availability to Rooted Farmers by Sunday evening at midnight for the following week. Members may continue to upload items or change available quantities through Friday at 8 pm (when ordering closes.)

15. Step by Step Market Schedule (Subject to Change)

- Sunday: Post new inventory on Rooted Farmers by 8 pm for *next week's market*. Each grower is encouraged to use their own pictures for the most accurate product portrayal.
- Monday: Online shops open at 8:00 am. SKFE staff will email designers that morning reminding them to shop and highlighting special inventory.
- Sun/Mon: Primary harvest days for growers for pre-orders.
- Monday: Deliver product to market in Bowling Green (time TBD) or secondary drop-off location. Times and Locations TBD. **SKFE in-person storefront will be CLOSED- Farm pickup/drop off operations only.**
- Tuesday: SKFE delivers pre-orders to designers. **SKFE in-person storefront will be CLOSED - Wholesale delivery operations only.**
- Wednesday: SKFE delivers pre-orders to designers. **SKFE in-person storefront will be CLOSED - Wholesale delivery operations only.**
- **Thursday & Friday:** SKFE in-person storefront will be open to the public. **Hours TBD.**
- Friday: Online shop closes at 8 PM (CT). Growers will have received all order notifications at the time the market closes for the upcoming Tuesday-Wednesday.

16. Damaged Product

In the event that a designer is unsatisfied with the quality of their product, they must provide photo documentation of the product to SKFE. They will be given the option of replacing the product or receiving a refund of the product. The farm that supplied the damaged product will not receive payment for the damaged product unless they provide a replacement of equal value.

If a grower brings a pre-sold product to market and it does not meet quality standards, the SKFE reserves the right to reject that product from being sold at the market. This will result in SKFE communicating with the designer and potentially seeking a replacement product.

Members are expected to pay close attention to the seasonal window for prime products for each variety they grow. Second cuts may be acceptable for sale at reduced prices and may be listed if the product description clearly specifies details about the quality and condition. Third and fourth cuts, however, are generally not acceptable for wholesale or retail sales due to reduced longevity and quality. For example, third or fourth cuts of snapdragons in July are not acceptable for sale through the Floral Exchange. SKFE reserves the right to remove any listings or reject any product via SKFE store that does not meet these quality standards. SKFE will notify the grower to discuss any concerns related to problematic listings. If a farm continues to list a product after being asked to remove or correct it, the listing may result in a temporary suspension and the farm is subject to the loss of selling privileges.

In addition to that, specific variety regulations may include exceptions for products sold past their prime. In general, flowers or products that are past their peak quality are considered unacceptable. However, exceptions may be made by special buyer requests to fulfill a desired color palette or specific design technique. These requests will be communicated to member farms to source the requested product.

FOR EXAMPLE: aged, “antiqued”, or browned hydrangeas intended for a particular design purpose. Outside of these documented special requests, such product remains unsellable and should not be listed for wholesale, or retail sales. Approval for these exceptions is at the sole discretion of SKFE.

If a grower brings a product for a pre-order that does not meet quality standards established by the SKFE more than three times, the SKFE reserves the right to remove them from working with the market for the remainder of 2026, or 2027 season. Other consequences include (but are not limited to) a scheduled time to view your growing area and learn more about your growing practices, as stated in segment 6: Quality Expectation Policy.

Please know that this would be a “last resort”! It is the hope of the SKFE that all growers can work together to sell the best quality product available, and they will do whatever they can to provide the appropriate education and resources to ensure growers have the information needed to harvest premium cuts. We are always learning together!

17. General Photo Release

All SKFE growers agree to the release of any photos that are posted on the Rooted Farmers site. SKFE may use these photos in marketing efforts and will tag the farm / owner of the photo whenever possible. All growers also agree to the release of any photos that are taken of the grower, their growing space or their products while doing site visits, group outings, meetings, etc. These photos will be used at the discretion of the SKFE and we will tag the growers on social media whenever possible.

18. Nature of Relationship

The relationship between SKFE and the undersigned member is strictly limited to the contractual vendor relationship specified in this Agreement. The term “member” as used herein shall not be deemed to imply that the undersigned is an equity owner or member of SKFE. Further, the independent contractual relationship between the SKFE and the undersigned member shall in no event be deemed to be that of employer and employee.

☒ By signing below I agree to comply with the terms listed above.

Member’s Name: _____ **SKFE Rep. Name:** _____

Signature: _____ **Signature:** _____

Date: _____ **Date:** _____