

Sweet Leaf History

Combined information from: Management, Food Committee, Booth Registration, and others.

Purpose: *The purpose of this letter is to convey the long history of working with Sweet Leaf to try and get adherence to the Oregon Country Fair guidelines. Additionally, to present a narrative explaining how the food committee came to make the recommendation for removal of the Sweet Leaf booth from the Oregon Country Fair. This letter is intended to be a response with the facts as understood by the parties involved in the removal of Sweet Leaf Café.*

It is the ongoing goal of the food committee and booth registration to have all the booths that participate in our event to be successful, safe, and compliant with the guidelines. It is the job of each booth to understand these expectations and put forth good faith to comply. When violations occur, it is the job of the food committee, and booth registration, to make note of the issues and make recommendations to management for corrective action notices.

Typically, when issues arise to this level of concern, they are met with action on part of the booth representative and usually corrected. It is not common that multiple warnings must be issued to the same booth. Very rarely, does the food committee make recommendations for removals to be carried out.

In the situation with Sweet Leaf's booth, contrary to the narrative of the Booth Rep. (David Sullivan), it has been notified in writing 4 different times since 2008 to correct violations. In addition to written agreements, there has been numerous verbal conversations in a casual and committee setting over the course of the last 10 years.

- 2008 – Notice of Probation Letter – Leslie Scott
- 2012 – Agreement Letter – Charlie Ruff
- 2015 – Last Chance Agreement – Charlie Ruff
- 2017 – Probation Letter – Shane
- 2017 - Termination Letter – Shane

Violations Summary – in no order of events.

- Booth Sprawl
- Unauthorized removal of Vegetation
- Not opening on Time
- Various issues related to Booth Registration.
- Not serving items listed.
- Having vehicles in event after opening
- Not vacating the property in a timely manner
- Violations of having un-credentialed booth workers on site after approved hours. 2008, 2011.

Food Committee – opinion for the committee – Sweet Leaf Café has been a challenge for years. It seems to be something different every year. The committee believes their warnings, were not being listened too. Over the course of the last 10 years they have continued to discuss the violations and how to address them. They recommended to Charlie Ruff for removal of Sweet Leaf Café', in 2015. Charlie decided with the committee to give the booth one more chance. Violations of opening late, and not having full menu ready at time of openings continued in 2015 and 2016. However due to the transition of Charlie to Tom, then to Shane and Crystalyn, follow up on these violations did not take place.

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The Food committee in 2016, presented to Shane and Crystalyn, the history and ongoing issues with Sweet Leaf Café. It was decided to roll over the last agreement for another year. With the intent to have a clear agreement with conversations and in person meetings to review the Blue Sheet. (Document for all food booths that outline menu that are approved and must be served.) This was done prior to 2017 fair. This document is used to add and discontinue menu items.

During the event it was noticed that Sweet Leaf Café was not serving all entrée on their menu, during public hours. Following the fair, during food committees' review of 2017 event, the violation was discussed and determined to be a clear violation of the agreement. In light of the continued violations of agreements, the Food Committee voted unanimously to recommend to management to remove Sweet Leaf Café' from the Oregon Country Fair. A termination letter was drafted by Management and reviewed by Food Committee, for input, prior to mailing to David Sullivan as the Booth Representative for Sweet Leaf Café'.

Booth Registration. - Booth registration has been affected for many years due to the actions of Sweet Leaf Café'. Booth Reg. experience with Sweet Leaf Café, has rarely been easy. Sweet Leaf regularly does not pay on time. When they have not paid, it has resulted in yearly conversations for pricing deals after the deadline. This conversation usually happens to me the Coordinator. However, it also affects the Booth Reg. Crew out at sticker booth. If Sweet leaf has not paid by the time the event has started, then our crew has had to endure various booth members, coming out and trying to get deals at the sticker booth. It is a story that has repeated itself amongst our crew almost every year for the last 10 or more.

As the Booth Registration Coordinator, I have annual requests for passes that go beyond approved passes for the booth. While some years based on communication with Food Committee, we approved a couple extra, most years it was just another year with very emotional pleas to get extra passes. I have tried to be empathetic and professional and try to work with David, in the hopes it would get better like most other booths.

It seemed every year that David never got enough passes to get all his workers in from the farm. We discussed annually how he needed my help, because, of all the donations he did not get enough passes from Charlie, combined with his packet approvals. This yearly conversation of trying to get more passes for donations was a big part of the reason that the fair decided to no longer take donations/trade for produce from Sweet Leaf Farm. It felt like the trade/donation was never good enough.

If David did not get enough overnight passes he would buy worker days, to cover. It became regular enough dialogue from year to year, that Sweet Leaf Café' became part of our crew training on shifts. It was necessary to explain that on some years the probation letter was in the packet mandating terms that our crew needed to understand to work with this booth. The message to most of the crew was very simple, *"if you are doing a transaction, and are feeling bullied or intimidated, by someone from Sweet Leaf Café trying to get something outside of standard transaction, escalate to shift leader or Coordinator."* In 2012 we had to train our crew to read the probation letter and ensure that the terms laid forth in that agreement were followed.

Lastly from Booth Registration, we feel like the food committee. We have made accommodations, discussed it in annual debriefs over the last 10 years between Booth Reg., Food Committee, and Management. As Coordinator of Booth Registration, I also concur with the recommendation by food committee to Management to remove Sweet Leaf Café' From the Oregon Country Fair.

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Management - The Food Committee, and Booth Registration are thankful, that Shane and Crystalyn, took the recommendation, and acted on our request. It has not been easy, as all have been strongly affected by the backlash of this decision.

Current Situation -

Currently we are in a campaign for the facts, as well as assertions of nefarious intent from Food Committee and Management to remove Sweet Leaf Café' due to conspiracy theories, mostly of Management and Security issues. In addition to the recent narrative from David and family, that the Fair Committees, and Management are out of control.

These assertions are without basis. From our perspective nothing could be further from the truth. We believe that we have collectively been very patient, and compassionate, to give Sweet Leaf Café', many chances to figure it out and get it together. As we sit in meetings and discuss, situations and ways to correct booths that violate guidelines. Removal of a booth does not happen that often and is the last resort. Furthermore, at no time has anything beyond the actions of Sweet Leaf Café' been discussed as reasons for removal at Food Committee meetings. Food Committee was not even aware of any incident surrounding the 2011 Security issue involving Sweet Leaf, created by David having day workers on site after 7:00. FC became aware at the last committee meeting when the subject came up because of David talking about it amongst family, and it came up in discussions.

Moving Forward –

The Food Committee has moved on to filling the (former Sweet Leaf Café) booth space for the 2018 fair. The Food Committee, did a call out for new food vendors to jury to become a booth at the Oregon Country Fair. It has been decided by a vote of the committee, that two new food booths will fill the space formerly holding Sweet Leaf Café, as well as two new food cart vendors. We are in the process of working with the applicants chosen, with Booth Reg., Construction, and Food Committee, to get them ready to go for his years fair. The process was good, food was highly rated, and I hope that you will all come and welcome them to the fair.

Closing-

It is our hope that after receiving this information you will be able to make an informed decision as to the process and assertions made by David Sullivan. All committees and staff could use refinement of the documentation as events and conversations occur, by developing better process for situations like these. It is well within the rights of committees, crews and management to make recommendations for removal based on violations. Other crews that have been negatively impacted, including but not limited to, De-con, Construction, Security, and Main Camp Kitchen. Many offered statements if needed.

The removal of the Sweet Leaf Café, is intended only for the business entity. David Sullivan and any of his crew are welcome to be a part of the fair in another capacity. The individuals of the booth are not having their rights to attend, or membership revoked. This even includes the opportunity to re-apply as a food booth in future open application call outs from Food Committee.

I hope you understand better why the ultimate decision in this situation was made

Sincerely, Oregon Country Fair Food Committee, Booth Registration, and Management