

CANOPY SAFETY

Canopies are very useful at farmers' markets not only to protect from the rain and the sun, but as a visual attraction for customers. They also can be a major safety hazard, especially on days when strong winds occur. Most local farmers' markets have reported incidents involving airborne canopies causing injury to humans and vehicles.

Safety is a major concern of market managers and proper weights on canopies is essential for safe operations. There are no set rules on canopy weights, but laws of nature indicate - the bigger the canopy - the more weight required. The canopy top size (the sail area) will indicate the weight requirements. An 8 x 8 canopy is 64 square feet, while a 12 x 12 is 144 square feet – more than **double** the smaller one.

History has shown that a 10-pound weight on each corner of even a small canopy is NOT adequate with Western NY winds.

The Webster's Joe Obbie Farmers' Market is recommending that as a minimum – the weights should be one pound for every square foot of canopy.

8 x 8 = 64 sq ft	requires 64 pounds	or 16 pounds per corner
10 x 10 = 100 sq ft	requires 100 pounds	or 25 pounds per corner
12 x 12 = 144 sq ft	requires 144 pounds	or 36 pounds per corner

Even properly weighted canopies can self-destruct with high winds, most of us can share a horror story! This is especially true with the 12 x 12 size. So, if you are considering buying a new canopy – remember not only the size of the umbrella – but think of it as the “size of the sail!”

We realize that carting these extra weights to the market is an extra burden, especially for those vendors with small vehicles. However, it is essential in order to maintain a safe environment for everyone. It should be considered the cost of doing business!

Thank you,
Your Webster's Joe Obbie Farmers' Market, Inc. Committee

4/23