

WNYC News Blog

Chinatown Street Vendors Say They're Unfairly Targeted for Tickets

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By [Julia Longoria](#)



Street vendors at Chinatown's largest fruit and vegetable market spoke out against the city's police practices today at Forsyth Street Market. (Julia Longoria/WNYC)

"Excessive fines and unfair enforcement are not only putting our vendors out of business they are also making this neighborhood unhealthier." Sean Basinski, director of the project

Vendors at the largest fruit and vegetable market in Chinatown railed against the city's ticketing practices Wednesday, claiming they are the targeted more than any other market.

A report by the Street Vendor Project at the Urban Justice Center released Wednesday states 949 tickets were issued at Forsyth Street Market, compared to the combined 795 issued at the city's four wholesale markets.

"Excessive fines and unfair enforcement are not only putting our vendors out of business they are also making this neighborhood unhealthier," said Sean Basinski, director of the project.

Half the violations involved a law forbidding vendors to place items on the ground.

"This is unfair," said Ali Mohammed, who has worked at the market for more than a year. "How am I supposed to put stuff on a pushcart if I don't put boxes on the floor? I have only two hands."

Catherine Herron, who traveled from Bay Ridge, Brooklyn, to the market to take advantage of the low prices,

said she witnessed an officer throw away a vendor's fruit.

"I couldn't believe it," she said. "Because, I mean, that's all good food that's being — they'd rather see it go in the garbage than people that need it buy it."

The NYPD said in an email to WNYC that the enforcement came as a result of complaints from residents in the area of unsanitary conditions left by the vendors.