OUR VIEW: Dogs don't belong at the Farmers Market

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Posted on: Thursday, May 06, 2010

Moscow dog owners love their animals and seem to enjoy showing them off any chance they get.

Some owners take their dogs, no matter how small or large, to public gatherings. This has become a bone of contention - no pun intended - with some attendees of the Moscow Farmers Market.

Arguments against dogs at the market make sense, as did the banning of dogs at the recently held Moscow Renaissance Fair.

There is little demonstrable benefit to taking dogs to an event attended by hundreds of people.

Some people don't like dogs and some are downright afraid of them. Those folks are entitled to the same market access as others and should reasonably expect not to be scared by an animal.

Dogs are not people, and they don't interact the same way as humans. Territory is important to a dog and defense of the territory is a strong instinct in some.

A dog being walked near another dog could come too close and be perceived as a threat and challenged. This easily can occur near children who could inadvertently be involved and hurt.

Crowds are large at the market and negotiating a leashed dog through the throngs can be a logistics nightmare. And let's not forget the sanitary issues.

Also, owners need to consider the effects the market has on their dogs. Crowds, other animals, the smell of cooked food and curious children who may lunge at a dog to pet it are distractions for any animal that wouldn't happen if they were left at home for a few hours.

There are plenty of other opportunities to enjoy the outdoors with a pet that don't involve crowds.

We have nothing against dogs or dog ownership. But we have a problem when pets interfere with people who don't want to interact.

The Moscow City Council has asked city staff to explore how residents feel about the option of the regulation of dogs at the Farmers Market.

That's a great idea, and we encourage any resident with an opinion to sound off on the subject.