

COVID-19 OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES & TIPS FOR FARMERS MARKETS

As the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak continues to unfold, it's difficult to overstate the importance of local farmers markets remaining open wherever possible. In addition to a critical source of income for farmers, it's also an essential means of food access for many people who either can't get to a grocery store or get to a grocery store and find the shelves empty.

While there is no scientific difference in risk of contracting COVID-19 at a farmers market versus conventional food retail stores such as supermarkets, there are a number of important steps markets should undertake to ensure their continued operation and the safety of their customers.

Farmers Market Suggested Operational Conditions

- Limit the sale of food to whole, uncut produce and packaged food items; no food preparation booths should be allowed to operate.
- No sampling of unpackaged food should be permitted.
- Allow for space between booths to provide for social distancing of customers.
- Provide additional handwashing stations for vendors and customers, and make sanitary gloves required for market staff who handle money, tokens or vouchers.
- Ensure handwashing stations are provided adjacent to any restroom facilities and stocked with soap and paper towels at all times.
- Post signs reminding customers of the following:
 - Wash all produce before consumption.
 - Wash their hands.
 - Remain home if they are sick.

Farmers Market Employees

- Sick employees are advised to stay home and not return to work until they are free of fever for at least 72 hours without fever-reducing medication.
- Employees who appear to be ill upon arrival to work or become sick during the day should be sent home.

Many state and county governments have already issued similar guidance to their respective markets, and they continue to operate safely while providing a vital service to the public in these uncertain times.