Your Farmers Markets and Responsible RestartOhio

Farmers market operators, farmers and food producers care deeply about one another and the communities they serve. With added precautions, new procedures and proactive steps to protect market customers, vendors, and staff, a farmers market is permitted to operate under the essential category identified by Governor DeWine. The rigorous regulations that normally govern farmers markets exist to prevent the spread of infectious diseases, meaning that you, farmers market managers and vendors, are well versed and prepared to enact additional precautions.

In line with Responsible RestartOhio and guidelines set forth by the State of Ohio, farmers markets must enforce the following regulations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mandatory</th>
<th>Recommended Best Practice</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● Designate six-foot distances between people</td>
<td>● Use tape or chalk to indicate 6 foot distances in and throughout the market space.  ○ Example - spray paint  ○ Example - vendor lines  ○ Example - vendor lines  ○ Example - vendor tents</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Hand sanitizer and sanitizing products are to be readily available for employees and customers</td>
<td>● Provide handwashing stations for customers and vendors where possible. At a minimum, provide alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol for customers to use prior to entering the market space and throughout.  ○ Mobile hand washing station  ○ Inexpensive, non-mechanical hand wash station  ○ How to Build a Low-Cost Hand Washing Station from University of Minnesota</td>
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| • Separate operating hours for vulnerable populations | • Establish a period of time (30 minutes or 1 hour) at the beginning of market for vulnerable populations, and communicate those hours on the market’s website, social media outlets and with on-site signage. |
| • Online and remote access; post online whether a facility is open and how best to reach the facility and continue services by phone or remotely | • Promote alternative sales outlets and methods such as online ordering and delivery, pre-order for pick up, etc. |
| | • Invest in online sales platforms such as Local Line, Local Food Marketplace or similar. |
| | • Organize vendor websites and purchasing suggestions through Google Sheets or similar. |
| | o Example - Worthington Farmers Market |
| | o Example - Ballard Farmers Market |
| | o Example - Nashville Farmers Market |
| • Discontinue self-service food stations, product samples | |

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| Require vendors, employees and volunteers to wear a cloth face covering | CDC Face Covering Guidance |

In addition to mandatory regulations, the Ohio Farmers Market Network, together with the Ohio Department of Agriculture and other state partners, recommends modifying operational conditions including, but not limited to:

- Limit the sale of food to whole, uncut produce and packaged food items. No on-site food preparation will be allowed.
- All ready-to-eat foods must be pre-packaged before arriving at market.
- Limit crowds by staggering entry to provide for social distancing of customers.
- Require space between vendor stands of at least 6 feet.
  - [Example - Holly Springs Farmers Market](#)
- Cancel all extracurricular activities including music, children’s activities, cooking demos, etc.
- Group like items together (i.e. all produce, all bread and baked goods, etc.) to reduce the amount of time searching the market for particular products.
- Ensure that aisles are at least 12 feet wide to provide for ample distancing around vendor spaces.
- Promote alternative sales outlets and methods such as online ordering and delivery, pre-order for pick up, etc.
- Consider using tape or chalk to indicate 6 foot distances in and throughout the market space.
- Consider making the market one directional, combined with one entry and one exit.
  - [Example - Granville Farmers Market](#)
  - [Example - Columbia Farmers Market](#)

Employees, volunteers and vendors:

- Sick employees, volunteers and vendors must stay home and not return until they are free of fever for at least 72 hours without fever-reducing medication and improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) and, at least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.
- Those who appear to be ill upon arrival to market or become sick during the day should be sent home immediately.

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Ohio Farmers Market Network

- Clean your hands frequently, ideally between each customer transaction. Follow [CDC recommendations](https://www.cdc.gov) for cleaning your hands.
- Designate one person to handle food and another person to handle payment transactions when possible.
- Take the temperature of all employees, volunteers and vendors upon arrival, confirming that no person has a temperature of more than 100.4°F [38°C]. If an employee, volunteer or vendor should register a temperature of 100.4°F [38°C], he/she/they will be sent home immediately.

Vendor policies:

- All vendors must sanitize their stands regularly, primarily wiping down tables, terminals, cash boxes, etc. Familiarize yourself with the [CDC Guidelines](https://www.cdc.gov) to clean and disinfect surfaces.
  - [CFSA’s Guide to When to Clean, Sanitize, or Disinfect](https://www.cfss.org)
- Discontinue use of tablecloths and other porous materials such as baskets.
- Add an empty table to the front of vendor’s tent to assist with 6 foot distancing.
  - [Example - Minnesota Farmers’ Market Association](https://www.minnesotafarmersmarketassociation.org)
  - [Example - Columbia Farmers’ Market](https://www.columbiafarmersmarket.com)
  - [Example - Holly Springs Farmers Market](https://www.hollyspringsfarmersmarket.com)
- Recommend using only materials that can be immediately washed and sanitized after use.
- Clean your hands frequently, ideally between each customer transaction. Follow [CDC recommendations](https://www.cdc.gov) for cleaning your hands.
- Use only new bags (plastic, paper, etc.) for the packaging and sale of goods.
- Promote alternative sales outlets and methods such as online ordering and delivery, pre-order for pick up, etc.
- Consider purchasing a contactless chip reader to process customer sales.
- If accepting cash, consider selling items at whole dollar amounts to reduce the exchange of currency and use of coins.

Customers:

- Encourage customers to stay home and not return until they are free of fever for at least 72 hours without fever-reducing medication and improvement in respiratory symptoms.

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(e.g., cough, shortness of breath) and, at least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

- Encourage shoppers to prioritize only essential food purchasing and discontinue social gatherings.
- If space is limited, encourage shoppers to send only one adult per household to the market in order to curtail crowds.
- Discourage shoppers from touching products they do not intend to purchase.
- Discontinue use of reusable bags and materials at this time. Accept only new bags from your farmers and food producers.
- When possible, order directly from farmers and food producers for delivery or pick-up.
- Wear a cloth face covering as recommended by CDC guidelines.

For additional photo examples of the suggested modifications, click here.

The content herein has been reviewed and supported by the Ohio Department of Agriculture, and has been provided to all local health departments. However, it has not been approved by any single public health authority, and markets should consult with their local health department prior to opening.

Recommendations in this document have been collected from farmers markets across the state and the country who are adapting operations to comply with public health officials’ guidance and requirements. Methods and tools contained herein are being used by those actively managing and selling at farmers markets. As recommendations change in response to the current situation, this document will be updated and informed by public health guidance for grocery and farmers markets, as well as by those market managers implementing the guidance through operational changes.

The Ohio Farmers Market Network is here to support you while also accepting an obligation to be part of the solution. While we hope that your farmers market is open and meeting the needs of its community, it is not “business as usual” and modified operations must be implemented. **Without the ability to modify operations as defined by State of Ohio regulations, it is strongly recommended that you do not open** your market for the safety and wellbeing of yourself, your vendors and customers, and your community in general.
We continue to connect with our community through a series of forums, including our private Facebook group and our bi-weekly “COVID Convo” on Mondays at 12 PM. Follow the Ohio Farmers Market Network online for all the latest information.

Sincerely,

Ohio Farmers Market Network

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**History**
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