

June 19, 2020

## FARMERS MARKET GUIDANCE

This updated guidance is intended to help farmers markets serve communities and provide direct access to healthy, nutritious foods and other locally produced items typically available at farmers markets. To operate during this public health state of emergency, farmers markets must follow: 1) all health and safety requirements enumerated in the Phased Restart Work Safe Guidance published on the Agency of Commerce and Community Development's (ACCD) website (<https://accd.vermont.gov/content/stay-home-stay-safe-sector-specific-guidance>), 2) ACCD's restaurant guidance for outdoor dining (when applicable and as indicated below), 3) and the below guidance.

### *General Guidance Applicable to all Business, Nonprofit and Government Operations*

- Employees shall not report to, or be allowed to remain at work or a job site if sick or symptomatic (with fever, cough, and/or shortness of breath). Please also be aware of the updated symptoms published by the Vermont Department of Health at the following link: <https://www.healthvermont.gov/response/coronavirus-covid-19>
- All employees must observe strict social distancing of 6 feet while on the job, unless noted, and should refrain from touching their faces.
- Employees must wear face coverings over their nose and mouth when in the presence of others. In the case of retail cashiers, a translucent shield or "sneeze guard" is acceptable in lieu of a mask. A translucent shield is an acceptable alternative to a face covering for retailers who remain behind the shield while interacting with customers and who maintain a distance of at least 6 feet from all customers and co-workers. The shield shall be of adequate size and location to serve as a physical barrier between retailers and customers and must be cleaned and sanitized regularly. Even with a translucent shield, the use of masks is encouraged and preferred.
- Employees must have easy and frequent access to soap and water or hand sanitizer during the duration of their work, and handwashing or hand sanitization is required frequently including before entering and leaving job sites and workstations. All common spaces and equipment, including bathrooms, frequently touched surfaces and doors, tools and equipment, and vehicles must be cleaned and disinfected at the beginning, middle and end of each shift *and*, when possible, prior to transfer from one person to another.
- When working inside, doors and windows should be opened to promote air flow to the greatest extent possible and the number of people occupying a single indoor space should be limited.
- No more than 3 people shall occupy one vehicle when conducting work.
- All businesses continue to be urged to use remote work whenever possible.

### *Customer & General Public Mask Use*

- Customers, and the public in general, are encouraged to wear cloth face coverings any time they are interacting with others from outside their household. Markets and/or municipalities may require customers to wear face masks.

## *General Farmers Market Operations*

- Markets need to comply with all local permits and regulations and obtain all appropriate licensing from state agencies.
- Markets shall designate a health and safety officer to ensure compliance with all health and safety requirements.
- All indoor markets must be moved outside.
- Entertainment activities, children’s activities, and all associated components that encourage people to congregate (e.g. music, cooking demos, etc.) shall be suspended. Non-participatory entertainment may be provided, but only if 1) performers are cordoned off from the rest of the Market, 2) customers do not congregate to listen or observe, and 3) all entertainers maintain a distance of at least 15 feet from customers.
- Permissible vendors include all vendors of agricultural products (food, beverage, and non-edible items, including beeswax, fiber, cut flowers, plants, soaps, body care products, etc.) and non-agricultural products (i.e. crafts, jewelry, wood products, etc.).
- All food and beverage available at the market shall be prepared and packaged for take away and consumption off-site.
- The on-premise consumption of food or drink, including all types of sampling (food and all other products) is prohibited, except Markets may offer a distinct outdoor dining area that complies with the requirements further described below. Food and drink consumption are only permitted in such a dining area and Markets and/or vendors shall only offer takeout.
- Vendors are strongly encouraged to offer online or phone ordering options for community members to pre-order and pre-pay for pick-up.

### For pick-up orders:

- The market should develop pick-up locations for customers and establish a “runner” to help facilitate pick-up orders between customers and vendors.
- Encourage customers to remain in their car or in a safe location while waiting for their orders. Customers shall not be allowed to congregate. Pre-payment should be required whenever possible. Vendors shall require online/electronic/touchless/cashless payment whenever possible (e.g. Venmo or PayPal) and make every effort to eliminate the need for change to be made. EBT transactions must be allowed by markets equipped to accept EBT.

### For in-person shopping:

- In-person shopping should be discouraged. When necessary, vendors shall require online/electronic/touchless/cashless payment when in-person shopping whenever possible (e.g. Venmo or PayPal) and make every effort to eliminate the need for change to be made. EBT transactions must be allowed by markets equipped to accept EBT.
- For customers who did not pre-order, the market shall ensure flow in a single direction from entry to exit (e.g. redesign the market so that vendor booths are in a single row, L shape, or U shape) and create 6 feet distancing lines/markers throughout the market area to ensure adequate social distancing and prevent congregation.

- Establish market pick-up times for customers at higher risk such as the elderly, or those with weakened immune systems or respiratory conditions.
- Mandate all vendors/staff wear masks/face coverings while packaging orders and serving customers, unless engaged in retail while behind a translucent shield as described above. Gloves are also encouraged. As an alternative, vendors may package food and serve customers without wearing gloves provided they wash or sanitize their hands before serving each new customer.
- Make hand sanitizer or hand washing stations available at entry and exit points.
- Prohibit staff/vendors/customers from attending if they are sick or if they have been exposed to someone who is.
- Prohibit on-premise consumption of food or drink, including all types of sampling and consumption of prepared food, except for in an outdoor dining area as described below.
- Pre-bag all loose produce to the extent possible and prohibit handling of product by anyone other than vendors. Loose produce may be packaged on site provided customers cannot touch or otherwise handle it prior to purchase.

#### *Implement Social Distancing Requirements*

- Vendors shall maintain at least a 6-foot buffer between booths to ensure adequate distancing between customers and other vendors at all times. If the 6-foot booth distance does not provide sufficient space for vendors and customers to always remain at least 6 feet apart, booths shall be spaced far enough apart to ensure that appropriate social distancing is constantly maintained.
- Physical barriers or markings are required to ensure spacing between vendor booths and customers.
- Rope off market premises and limit access to a single direction of travel with designated entry and exit point.
- Strongly encourage online/electronic/touchless payment whenever possible (e.g. Venmo or PayPal) and exact change for cash payments to eliminate the need for change to be made. EBT transactions must be allowed by markets equipped to accept EBT.
- Encourage shoppers to come to the market alone whenever possible to reduce the number of people in the market area, and strictly prohibit unleashed or unrestrained pets from the market area. Service animals are allowed. While all pets are discouraged, a pet may enter the market area if it is leashed or restrained and maintains at least 6 feet of separation from other customers and vendors.

#### *Utilize Proper Cleaning and Sanitary Protocols*

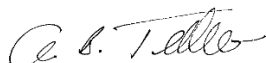
- Mandate masks/face coverings for all vendors/staff while packaging orders and serving customers. Gloves are also encouraged. As an alternative, vendors may package food and serve customers without wearing gloves provided they wash or sanitize their hands before serving each new customer.
- Ensure employees engage in good hygiene practices, including regular and thorough handwashing. If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.
- Limit the number of surfaces in the market area.
- Regularly clean AND disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces such as produce bins, tabletops, handles. Dirty surfaces can be cleaned with soap and water prior to disinfection.
- To disinfect, use products that meet EPA's criteria for use against SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, and are appropriate for the surface.

### *Outdoor Dining Area*

- Markets may permit food and/or drink consumption within a distinct and separately marked outdoor dining area provided they satisfy the following requirements.
- Markets and/or vendors shall exclusively offer takeout and cannot serve customers in an outdoor dining area.
- Markets must follow the ACCD sector guidance for restaurants and outdoor dining, which is available at the following link: <https://accd.vermont.gov/content/stay-home-stay-safe-sector-specific-guidance>
- The dining area must be monitored to ensure: 1) compliance with ACCD guidance, 2) that all customers are seated at tables and that dining parties remain at least 6 feet apart, 3) that all tables, chairs, and other surfaces are cleaned and disinfected between customers, and 4) that a handwashing station and/or hand sanitizer is available at the entry and exit point for all diners.
- The number of diners must be restricted in accordance with the occupancy standards established in ACCD guidance.

### *Prepare and Increase Clear Communication Strategy*

- Post signage instructing vendors and customers to frequently wash hands and provide hand washing instructions.
- Post signage prohibiting vendors and customers from congregating or lingering and reminding all to abide by 6-foot social distancing guidelines.
- Post signage indicating the occupancy limit and how it was determined for any outdoor dining area.
- Require vendors to encourage customers to pre-order and pre-pay whenever possible. Post signage encouraging customers to pre-order and pre-pay whenever possible.
- Prepare customers in advance to support new requirements by posting them on social media, websites and in newsletters.
- Post signage prohibiting people who are sick or those who have been exposed to people diagnosed with COVID-19 or who display any related symptoms.



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