



COVID-19 GUIDANCE: Farmers Markets & On-Farm Markets

Farmers markets and on-farm markets are encouraged to follow the COVID-19 guidance for farm and distribution preparedness, in addition to the following recommendations developed for farmers markets.

1. Prepare market and individual stands

- Consider delivery or pick up options and if possible, allow online or phone ordering
- Pre-packaging bags of fruits, vegetables, other items to limit shoppers' handling of food and to keep customers moving quickly along.
- Consider alternate locations that could allow drive through or pick up.
- Offer designated times for *high-risk and elderly persons to shop at least once every week if there is a continuing in-person customer-facing component*
- Consider putting up signs and information on websites and social media to explain any changes, delivery options, or extra precautions taken to limit exposure to COVID-19. Ex: Instruct customers not to handle food. Package cheese and eggs for customers, even if the cheese and eggs are individually packaged. Open egg cartons for customers to see the eggs they are getting instead of having them handle multiple cartons.
- Separate stands if possible, to limit crowds – try to separate stands at least six feet apart. Possibly consider limiting the number of customers within your market at one time in the case of “panic shopping”.
- If possible, have a different person handle products and handle money or wash hands or sanitize in between these tasks.
- Remove tablecloths and sanitize tables regularly.
- Eliminate samples.
- Eliminate eating areas and gently direct customers to take prepared foods home to avoid crowds.

2. Prepare workforce

- Provide guidance for handwashing (liked time intervals) and handling materials.

- Stagger lunch times or provide additional space to increase distancing of employees.
- All sick employees need to stay at home.
- Inform employees where they can find sanitizing materials throughout on-farm contact points.
- Encourage employees to practice social distancing and avoid large gatherings to avoid risks for potential exposure during off hours.
- Encourage employees not to handle customers' reusable bags and let customers pack their own bags.

3. Sanitation

- Require all customers to wear masks while on-premises. However, individuals who cannot wear a mask due to a medical condition (including children under the age of 2 years per CDC guidance) may enter the premises and are not required to provide documentation of such medical conditions.
- Frequently disinfect all door handles and knobs, credit card machines, shopping baskets, etc. at a regular pre-established time intervals.
- Frequently sanitize common gathering places – restrooms, etc.

If you are considering opening an on-farm stand, for raw produce, shelf stable packaged foods like jams and jellies or baked goods, or a farm's own eggs, you do not need a food safety license for an on-farm stand. Please visit the PDA website for more information about [retail food licenses](#).

If you are relocating a farmers market temporarily due to COVID-19, the PA Department of Agriculture will not need to issue a new food safety license. If it is a permanent relocation, the application is on our [website](#).

Operators of farmers markets should also adhere to Secretary Levine's [worker safety order](#) and also the Department of Agriculture's guidance for [Sanitization and Diagnosed Employees](#).