



Ohio Farmers Market Network

## COVID-19 and Your Farmers Market

2021 Updates

Farmers market operators, farmers and food producers care deeply about one another and the communities they serve. 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 precautions necessary to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

2020 was challenging, to say the least. But thanks to your commitment to safety, Ohio farmers markets rose to the challenge and remained open as essential businesses and key food access points. In fact, Ohio farmers markets facilitated \$416,622 in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) dollars and redeemed \$304,570 in Produce Perks, Ohio's nutrition incentive program.

While our customer counts and vendor participation may have dwindled a bit, you successfully implemented strategies and procedures that ensured safe, responsible and respected places of business. You learned to be flexible, expanding your audience and skillset in the process, and likely developed a back-up plan for last-minute changes. Together, we built a support network where you could share your thoughts, feelings, and new skills with fellow managers, vendors and community leaders.

With vaccinations underway and now available to all Ohioans, state guidance is less stringent compared to 2020. Like other businesses, farmers markets need only maintain a few standard procedures in 2021. In line with the [Ohio Department of Health Director's Order](#) dated April 5, 2021, farmers markets should maintain the following procedures:

Director's Order	Recommended Best Practice
<p><b>Facial Coverings (Masks)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>All individuals in the State of Ohio shall wear facial coverings at all times when outdoors and unable to consistently maintain a distance of six feet or more from individuals who are not members of their family or household.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><a href="#">CDC Face Covering Guidance</a></li></ul>



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<p><b>Facial Coverings (Masks) (continued)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where possible, post clearly visible signage at all entrances requiring all persons entering to wear a facial covering and engage in social distancing at all times in or on the grounds or premises.</li> <li>• Review Director's Order for exemptions to facial coverings.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Social Distancing Requirements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where possible, designate with signage, tape or by other means six-foot spacing for employees and customers in line to maintain appropriate distance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use tape or chalk to indicate 6 foot distances in and throughout the market space.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <a href="#">Example - spray paint</a></li> <li>○ <a href="#">Example - vendor lines</a></li> <li>○ <a href="#">Example - vendor lines</a></li> <li>○ <a href="#">Example - vendor tents</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Sanitation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have hand sanitizer and sanitizing products readily available for employees and customers.</li> <li>• Hand washing or sanitization upon entry.</li> <li>• Routine disinfection of high-contact surfaces, desk workstations, restrooms and equipment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <a href="#">Mobile hand washing station</a></li> <li>○ <a href="#">Inexpensive, non-mechanical hand wash station</a></li> <li>○ <a href="#">How to Build a Low-Cost Hand Washing Station from University of Minnesota</a></li> <li>○ <a href="#">Foot pedal activated hand washing station</a></li> <li>○ <a href="#">Ohio manufacturers website for PPE</a></li> <li>○ <a href="#">Example - Columbia Farmers Market</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>



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<p><b>Sanitation (continued)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <a href="#">How to Build a Hand Washing Station for Under \$20</a></li> <li>○ <a href="#">Hand Washing Units by NC State University</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>Food and Beverages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● It is recommended that areas be designated for table and seating for food and drink consumption. Tables should be six feet apart and seat no more than 10 persons per table. Food and drink should be consumed while seated.</li> <li>● Unpackaged foods and on-site food preparation and sales may resume so long as the vendor is properly licensed.</li> <li>● Sampling may resume.</li> </ul>	

In addition to the Director’s Orders, the Ohio Farmers Market Network, together with the Ohio Department of Agriculture and other state partners, recommends maintaining best practices including, but not limited to:

- 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. **if crowd size and/or social distancing can not be maintained.**
- Ensure that aisles are at least 12 feet wide to provide for ample distancing around vendor spaces.
- 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](#)



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### 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.
- Clean your hands frequently, ideally between each customer transaction. Follow [CDC recommendations](#) for cleaning your hands.
- Designate one person to handle food and another person to handle payment transactions when possible.

### Vendor policies:

- All vendors must sanitize their stands regularly, primarily wiping down tables, terminals, cash boxes, etc. Familiarize yourself with the [CDC Guidelines](#) to clean and disinfect surfaces.
  - [CFSA's Guide to When to Clean, Sanitize, or Disinfect](#)
- Add an empty table to the front of vendor's tent to assist with 6 foot distancing.
  - [Example - Minnesota Farmers' Market Association](#)
  - [Example - Columbia Farmers' Market](#)
  - [Example - Holly Springs Farmers Market](#)
- 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](#) for cleaning your hands.
- Consider purchasing a contactless chip reader to process customer sales.

### 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 (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) **and**, at least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.
- Encourage shoppers to prioritize food purchasing and discontinue social gatherings.



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- Discourage shoppers from touching products they do not intend to purchase.
- 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.

The Ohio Farmers Market Network is here to support you and we hope that your farmers market is open (or about to open) and ready to meet the needs of your community.

Sincerely,

Ohio Farmers Market Network

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