



Franklin County Public Health
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Franklin County Public Health Farmers Market Guidance During COVID-19

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Franklin County Public Health (FCPH) is the local health department that serves all jurisdictions in Franklin County with the exception of the city of Columbus and Worthington. The purpose of this document is to serve as guidance for coordinating a farmers market in your community during the COVID-19 pandemic. This guidance may be modified at any time, as orders from the Ohio Department of Health and Governor DeWine change. FCPH has reviewed information from the Director's Stay Safe Ohio Order, Ohio Department of Agriculture and other sources to determine best practices for our farmers markets.

Consumers depend on farmers markets for fresh, local foods, and vendors depend on them as an outlet to sell their products. Keeping these markets open while maintaining public safety during the COVID-19 pandemic is a priority. Markets must implement proper precautions and amend their social practices. Farmers markets have traditionally allowed farmers to socially engage with consumers. During this pandemic, farmers markets must shift solely to providing essential spaces for people to purchase fresh, local food.

In order to adhere to physical distancing requirements and to stop the spread of COVID-19, FCPH encourages our farmers markets to reduce as much in person shopping and interaction as possible. FCPH's recommendations are as follows:

1. Drive-thru/order ahead markets are the preferred method.

- Several farmers markets in Franklin County have switched to drive-thru models. This model allows customers the chance to order items in advance and pick them up in a drive-thru fashion on the date of the market.
- Here's how a market could work:
 - The market manager creates a menu tab on the farmers market website or on social media
 - Customers view products, place orders and pre-pay via an online form
 - Pickup times are designated for customers, who stay in their vehicles during pickup
 - Volunteers pass out pre-boxed/bagged orders to customers while following all CDC handwashing guidelines. Handwashing guidelines can be found at: <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html>
- Hand sanitizer must be available for both vendors and customers.
- This is the preferred method as it minimizes contact with others, allows markets to control traffic flow and allows for the enforcement of physical distancing.

2. If a drive-thru market is not possible, in person/walk up markets are permitted, and the following requirements must be met to operate:

- Markets must be held outside.
- Vendors must be spaced approximately 6-10 feet from one another.
- Mobile hand washing stations and/or hand sanitizer must be available and everyone entering the market is required to wash their hands.
 - An example of an acceptable do-it-yourself hand washing station is provided on the next page.
- All vendors must have hand sanitizer at their tables.
- Regulate the number of individuals at the market [1 person per 36 sq. ft].
- An entry and exit point must be identified and clearly marked for customers to see.
- Physical distancing of six feet must be enforced if a line of customers forms while waiting to enter the market.
- Ensure physical distancing of a minimum of 6 feet for non-family members throughout the market. Use markers to delineate six feet between customers.(i.e. tape or signs on the ground spaced 6 feet apart).
- Shoppers should not touch any product at the market. Vendors should pick and hand products to the customer.
- Volunteers are strongly encouraged to help with distributing hand sanitizer to customers at market entrances, throughout the market, and to assist with monitoring the number of customers at your market. If you have any concerns about staffing volunteers at your market, please reach out to FCPH.

All farmers markets, no matter the style of operation, should follow these guidelines:

1. Flow of traffic should be in one direction and clearly marked (designated entrance and exit).
2. Vendors must wear face coverings/masks.
3. Customers are strongly encouraged to wear a face covering/mask.
4. Reusable bags should not be used.

Like any other business, operating a farmers market during this time opens your market up to complaints. It is essential to follow all guidance provided here to reduce the spread of COVID-19. As the market manager it is your responsibility to assure both customers and vendors follow all safety guidelines.

NOTE: If you have food vendors that need to obtain a temporary license, the request must be made to FCPH at least five days in advance to allow for processing during this time. Information is available at <https://myfcph.org/temporary-food-license>.

If you have additional questions or concerns, contact Niki Lemin at 614-525-3852 or by email ndlemin@franklincountyohio.gov.

Acceptable Do-It-Yourself Hand Washing Station

