

Guidance for Minnesota Farmers' Markets and Vendors

This document provides suggestions for markets and vendors to implement in order to stay open under Governor Walz's Executive Order 20-04 that closed restaurants, bars and other businesses where people gather. Farmers' markets are exempt from this order as long as they do not offer onsite food consumption (including food sampling). Markets are also encouraged to do drive throughs, follow 6-foot social distancing, and promote handwashing.

Additionally, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Minnesota Department of Agriculture is waiving the requirement for markets to buy a food license on a discretionary basis if the reason is modifications made to the market structure and/or sales to comply with Executive Order 20-04. Once the COVID-19 crisis passes and a market chooses to continue operational activities in the same way that would require a license, the market will have to buy a license.

Guidance for Markets

Evaluate the current layout; see if it can be redesigned to build in six feet of separation and minimize the amount of time people spend mingling at the market. The following are suggestions gathered from farmers' markets across the U.S.:

- Consider alternate locations that could allow drive through or pick up
- Place stalls at least 6-feet apart
- Place an empty table in front of all vendors' display tables, using that table to place purchases; exchange money
- Widen the aisles between the rows of stalls
- Tape/chalk 6' markings in all aisles to show customers where they can stand to maintain 6' of separation with each other
- Place [handwashing stations](#) at entrances, requiring everyone to wash their hands upon entering
- Create a border around your market, limiting entrances and exits (Fencing, tape, rope are all options)
 - » Add signs to the border stating "Please enter through the entrances with the handwashing stations."
- If feasible, limit the number of customers in the market at one time
- Increase signage at the market, considering the following examples:
 - » Wash your hands >>> here is the handwashing station.
 - » Maintain 6' distance.

- » Sorry – no mingling! No handshaking!
- » Please no onsite consumption of food – take home only
- Increase market volunteers/staff to monitor handwashing and crowd control
- Consider controlling the flow of customer traffic.
 - » Can customers all go in the same direction in aisles, to limit people crossing in front of each other in less than six feet?
- To reduce crowds and yet maintain sales, have customers place pre-orders with vendors. This could include setting up a drive through to pick up these pre-orders.
 - » Enabling online prepayments when possible can reduce the amount of time people spend in face-to-face transactions
 - » Consider different days or locations for customers to pick up pre-ordered products

Guidance for Vendors

- Consider pre-packaging fruits, vegetables, and other items to limit handling of food and to keep customers moving quickly
- Encourage customers to pre-order and pre-pay online when possible. This will help customers move more quickly through the market
- Consider bringing a handwashing station for individual market stalls
- Place an empty table in front of display tables, using that table to place purchases and exchange money
 - » This maintains six feet of separation, and helps prevent customers from touching products
 - » Allows vendor to pack all items for a customer into a bag or container that only the customer touches
 - If customers bring their own bags, let them pack their bags
- Have at least two people in the stall: one person only handles payments; the other only handles products. If not possible, wash hands or sanitize in between these tasks.
- Food trucks and prepared food vendors can still operate if they sell take-out only. Pre-orders are encouraged.

Sanitation Guidance for Markets and Vendors

- Consider ways that market tokens can be washed or sanitized, or alternate ways to limit direct contact when cash or in person transactions are necessary (e.g. SNAP transactions). Consider sanitizing point-of-sale equipment between uses
- Follow CDC recommendations for cleaning and disinfecting: [CDC COVID-19 Clean & Disinfect](#)
- Set up a schedule to sanitize all surfaces that people touch: tables, handwashing stations, door handles, card machines, shopping baskets, etc.
- Set up a schedule to sanitize all surfaces of restrooms if available, and replenish soap, sanitizers, toilet paper regularly
- Set up a schedule to replenish handwashing stations with water, soap, paper towels, and also to remove waste paper and water.

- Use tables and table coverings that can be washed and sanitized (vinyl, plastic; not cloth or wood) and implement a schedule to sanitize during the market
- Bring a spray bottle with correct sanitation solution and hand wipes to wipe off equipment
- Use recommended products that have an EPA-approved emerging viral pathogen claims:
 - » EPA's Registered Antimicrobial Products for Use Against Novel Coronavirus SARS-CoV-2, the Cause of COVID-19 (<https://www.americanchemistry.com/Novel-Coronavirus-Fighting-Products-List.pdf>)
 - » American Chemistry Council Center for Biocide Chemistries - Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Fighting Products (<https://www.americanchemistry.com/Novel-Coronavirus-Fighting-Products-List.pdf>)
 - » Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., concentration, application method, contact time, and the use of personal protective equipment, and don't mix them together!)
 - » Not all products are appropriate for food contact surface sanitizing

Guidance for Market and Vendor Workforce

- Sick workers (including vendors) must not come to the market
- Encourage workers to practice social distancing and avoid large gatherings between market days, to decrease risk of potential exposure to the virus
- Set a schedule for workers to wash hands and sanitize materials during the market
- Stagger eating and break times or provide additional space to increase distancing of workers
- Consider establishing a designated area in which all market workforce should eat. This can simply be a large open space outside of the stall areas (Market workers can consume food onsite)
- Remind workers to wash hands before and after eating