**Colorado Farmers Market Association Recommendations and Toolkit for Farmers Markets - COVID-19** Updated 4-30-20, new updates in blue

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| **Guideline** | **Rationale** | **Tools to do this** |
| 1. Design and manage market layout to permit social distancing at all times | Markets need to ensure that customers, vendors and market staff maintain a physical distance of at least 6 feet from each other at all times [CDC: COVID-19 spreads mainly among people who are in close contact **(within about 6 feet)** for a prolonged period. Spread happens when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks, and droplets from their mouth or nose are launched into the air and land in the mouths or noses of people nearby. The droplets can also be inhaled into the lungs.] | 1. Allow spacing for vendor load-in and loadout such that vendors and staff can maintain a distance of 6 feet from each other as much as possible. 2. Add space between booths to equal 6 feet total. 3. Create a single line of booths instead of double rows. If this is not possible, create at least a 16 feet thoroughfare between the two sides allowing for a single file, one-way path down the middle. 4. Require vendors to have market booth layouts that promote social distancing. Provide them with the space to do this. A good [booth layout strategy](https://drive.google.com/file/d/16XcjsmDI6J_sLwWy9L06SCSbyelmigdn/view?usp=sharing) is to put an empty table at the front of the booth, with the table with products behind it, then the vendors behind that table, enforcing social distance and putting products out of reach of customers. (Strategy and drawing from Oregon Farmers Market Association). Alternatively, use a sneeze guard between customers and staff/products. 5. If possible, create one-way traffic flow through the market. 6. Use ropes, cones or tape to define the market entrance, exit and flow. 7. Limit the number of people in the market at a time. Have staff monitor customer congregating at all times to avoid crowding. 8. Place market information booth at the front of the market or in another easily accessible and visible location. 9. Discontinue market activities that encourage people to stay longer at the market - children's activities, demonstrations, music and other events 10. Create an area adjacent to the market where customers can pick up their orders without leaving their cars and further congesting the market space. This will also assist with transporting heavy product orders out of the market. See guideline #8 at the bottom of this document for more details on pickup at markets. 11. Provide portable restrooms, or inform vendors of nearest restroom locations. Vendors can help communicate restroom location to customers if needed. Have a handwashing station near the portalet/restroom. |
| 1. Select vendors to focus on supporting critical agricultural businesses for the community | State of Colorado Public Health Order (PHO) 20-24 lists food and plant cultivation, including farming crops, livestock, food processing and manufacturing, animal feed and feed products, rendering, commodity sales, retail sales including produce stands and farmers markets, ag supply businesses (among others) as critical to the operation of any component of the food supply chain. | 1. Prioritize vendors of raw and processed agricultural products that sell food to humans (or pets). 2. Limit or prohibit the presence of artisan vendors since they may encourage customers to linger at their booths and, at this time and until further notice, the market is set up for brief commercial transactions only. 3. Do not allow vendors that offer services where social distancing cannot be maintained at all times (i.e., massage, acupuncture, face painting) While these businesses are operating in private spaces, operating these services in a farmers market means that customers would be staying for an extended time in a public space. |
| 1. Improve hand and surface hygiene and sanitation throughout the market | The CDC states that, based on what is currently known about the virus and about similar coronaviruses that cause SARS and MERS, spread from person-to-person happens most frequently among close contacts (within about 6 feet). This type of transmission occurs via respiratory droplets, but disease transmission via infectious aerosols is currently uncertain. Transmission of SARS-CoV-2 to persons from surfaces contaminated with the virus has not been documented. Transmission of coronavirus in general occurs much more commonly through respiratory droplets than through fomites. Current evidence suggests that SARS-CoV-2 may remain viable for hours to days on surfaces made from a variety of materials. Cleaning of visibly dirty surfaces followed by disinfection is a best practice measure for prevention of COVID-19 and other viral respiratory illnesses in community settings. | 1. Position handwashing stations (fully stocked with running water, soap, paper towels, and trash can) for easy customer access. 2. Provide disinfecting wipes or sprays for disinfecting high-touch surfaces such as touchscreens, cash boxes, tables, crates). 3. Have market staff, volunteers and vendors wear masks while at market, and gloves unless they have immediate access to a fully-stocked handwashing sink or hand sanitizer (at least 60% isopropyl alcohol). 4. Have hand sanitizer available at vendor booths for customer use at payment. 5. Regularly disinfect payment devices with disinfecting wipes containing at least 70% alcohol. Dry surface thoroughly. Consider adding a wipeable surface onto a touchscreen. |
| 1. Manage how food is handled at market to minimize both vendor and customer contact during handling and sales of all food products (raw, processed and ready-to-eat) | CDC states that there is no evidence to support transmission of COVID-19 associated with food. However, it may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads. CDC recommends: 1) putting distance between yourself and other people; and 2) remembering that some people without symptoms may be able to spread virus. | 1. No seating or tables available for eating or socializing. 2. No food sampling at the market. 3. Prepared foods should be to-go items only. 4. Pre-package/pre-bag foods, and/or pre-weigh produce. 5. Keep all food products at a minimum of 3 feet away from customers (except for a limited amount of product for display – for customers to see but not touch), and/or use a sneeze guard across the front of the booth. 6. Encourage customers to pre-order food, using an online platform or by e-mail/phone as determined by each vendor. |
| 1. Reduce the number of touches required for monetary transactions between vendors and customers | CDC recommends the following as a prevention strategy: 1) putting distance between yourself and other people; and 2) remembering that some people without symptoms may be able to spread virus. Remember that all high touch surfaces must be cleaned AND disinfected frequently. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks. If surfaces are dirty, clean them: Use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection. | 1. Use dry erase boards, large signs or large font product labels so that customers can quickly see the prices of products for sale with prices (make signs visible from a distance of six feet). 2. Price products so that handling coins is not required to make change. 3. Dedicate a separate person (if possible) to take payments and make change. It is recommended this person wear gloves. 4. Remove gloves and wash hands after handling any non-food products and before handling food. 5. Consider establishing digital payment methods to reduce cash payments. If possible, eliminate signatures with those payment methods to reduce customer contact with payment devices. 6. Have a container that customers can place cash in (no-touch for vendor). |
| 1. Communicate more frequently with vendors and customers before and during each market event | There is a lot of information emerging every day about how coronaviruses are transmitted (in particular, the novel coronavirus, COVID-19), how much they persist on surfaces and how communities may prevent transmission. Frequent reminders and updates are essential to make sure everyone involved in a farmers market event has the most recent information from credible sources such as the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the Centers for Disease Control and the USDA. | 1. Communicate new market protocols to customers via e-mail and social media so customers are informed before they come to the market. 2. Put up signs reminding customers about social distancing, enhanced hygiene practices, and any face cover requirements for customers. 3. Post signage stating that customers, vendors and others who are sick or displaying symptoms of COVID-19 may not attend the market. 4. Use tape and/or chalk lines to designate customer spacing and communicate traffic flow patterns. 5. Do not hand out flyers or documents at market; instead rely on posters or sheets that either adhere to the packaging or are inserted into a box prior to market. 6. Communicate to customers that, although markets are usually a social gathering place, at this time the goal is to buy or pick up what they need and leave as quickly as possible. 7. Encourage customers to make a shopping list before they come to the market 8. If customers bring reusable bags, communicate to vendors and customers that vendors will not bag product for customers; rather customers will pick up and bag their own products. Customers should wash cloth bags at home after each use. 9. Ask customers not to bring dogs to the market. Consider that the goal is to maintain social distancing at all times, in part by limiting the amount of time that customers spend at the market. Bringing dogs will by nature slow people down as dogs socialize with other dogs and with people. |
| 1. Encourage all community members to use the market to access food | Reports of crowding and excess demand at food distribution sites are rampant around the country as more people are in need of food. Farmers markets provide an excellent outlet for all community members to access fresh, healthy foods, but only if we can maintain both a safe and welcoming environment. | 1. Continue to accept SNAP and administer the Double-Up Food Bucks program at markets. 2. Create and maintain an inclusive and welcoming environment at the market, even within the context of social distancing – signage and clear pricing helps the market be more welcoming to those who might not be used to shopping at the market, and ensures that all customers will spend less time at the market to make their purchases 3. Develop standard practices for operating EBT machines and distributing Double-Up Food Bucks, as you develop these practices for other forms of payment. 4. Wipe down the SNAP machine between transactions (same as the credit card machine). Because SNAP transactions require a pin, customers must input their info. 5. Protect SNAP shoppers and do not take pin numbers over the phone. 6. Ask vendors to display signs that say, "We accept Double-Up Food Bucks," readable at a distance of 6 feet and in the appropriate language for your customer base (contact doubleup@livewellcolorado.org to order signs). 7. Keep redeemed SNAP bucks out of circulation for for the rest of that market day. Keep redeemed Double Up Food Bucks to return to Live Well Colorado at the end of the season. 8. If your market uses SNAP or other tokens, follow [Michigan Farmers’ Market’s cleaning token guide.](http://mifma.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/How-to-Clean-SNAP-Tokens-document.pdf) 9. Wear gloves when receiving currencies from vendors after the market. 10. Consider creating a priority hour where the first hour of shopping is open only to more vulnerable populations (including seniors over 55, those who are immunocompromised, and caregivers). |
| 9. For order-ahead and pickup at markets, ensure that protocols are in place to maintain social distancing for staff, volunteers, vendors and customers throughout the process. | Markets need to ensure that customers, vendors and market staff maintain a physical distance of at least 6 feet from each other at all times [CDC: COVID-19 spreads mainly among people who are in close contact **(within about 6 feet)** for a prolonged period. | 1. If you are setting up a separate location for pickup (during the market or at another time), work to create a smooth flow of traffic and reduce wait times. 2. Consider scheduling and communicating specific blocks of time for customers to pick up their products, i.e., by 10 minute intervals, by last name or another method. 3. Consider limiting products for pickup to the same essential farm and food products sold at the market. The logistics of organizing a pickup are significant and most markets are limiting these to farm and food products only. 4. Set up protocols that maintain social distancing for staff and volunteers that are packing boxes/bags of customer orders. |

Resources to help adhere to these guidelines:

1. Layout
2. Hand hygiene
3. [Handwashing stations](https://cofarmersmarkets.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/DIY-handwashing-stations.pdf)
4. Surface hygiene
5. Communication strategies