

Medford Farmers Markets Operations During COVID-19

Markets are a primary source of income for many farms in Massachusetts. Maintaining and increasing access to local food is particularly important in times of uncertainty. Our market serves as an opportunity to both support local farmers and distribute fresh, healthy affordable food to our community--especially to community members who may be struggling with the effects of COVID-19.

These operations practices meet the *Order of the Commissioner of Public Health for Farmers Markets, Farm stands and CSA's*, found [here](#); The guidelines from MDAR, [Bulletin 2020-05](#); and the Medford, MA local orders found [here](#)

These operations will be in effect until state and local orders change, and will be reduced or changed in coordination with the Board of Health. Market opening date is June 4th.

Limited Numbers -

- Limited number of total people in the market space, including vendors, staff, volunteers, and customers to allow for proper "social distancing." Shoppers are encouraged to only have one person per household attend the market, and only essential vendors, staff, and volunteers will attend.
- We will remind customers of "social distancing", maintaining a space of at least six (6) feet from one another while shopping, through signage at prominent locations, vendor tables, and access points, and through verbal reinforcement from staff and volunteers.
- We ask that DPW provide ways to cordon off market perimeters to allow for clear entry and egress points - see attached map.
- The number of customers allowed within farmers' market areas will be limited to 40 (no more than 10-15 customers per 1,000 square feet at any one time). At market staff discretion, we may reduce this number further in order to ensure proper distancing.
- Local law enforcement will be notified and consulted if any issues arise concerning distancing or other physical security concerns at the market.

Entering the Market

- The line to enter the market ([see map](#)) will be monitored to ensure that customers maintain recommended distances between each other while waiting.
- Six foot markers (including cones, stakes with a sign, or field paint for any markers on grass) will be set up 30 minutes before the opening of the market, to direct customers to maintain spacing requirements. Customers may not form a line prior to that time.
- Signs will be posted to:
 - remind staff and customers that they should not visit the market when they are sick.
 - leave reusable bags outside the market space.
 - wear face coverings
 - Only have one person per household attend the market, when possible.

- All attendees are encouraged to wash their hands at a station near the market entrance. This station will be sanitized with a bleach spray between each customer.

Vendors and Staff in a Safe Market Space

- Everyone participating in the market will wear face coverings. A training video will be made available.
- Only essential vendors will participate in the market.
- Staff, volunteers, and vendors are asked, in person, whether they are exhibiting any symptoms such as fever, cough, or shortness of breath, upon arrival to the market. If they have any symptoms, they will not be able to participate that day.
- Separate hand-washing is available for vendors.
- Market managers, staff, and vendors will clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- When possible with vendors, we will encourage and employ strategies such as pre-bagging of food, online-orders and other methods that limit public interaction and minimize the time customers spend at vendor tables to enable customer flow and the maintenance of distancing guidelines.
- No samples or products for on-site consumption.
- No open food in vendor tents.
- Market managers and vendors will minimize the handling of products by both staff and customers, and prohibit the touching of produce by customers at vendor tables and sales points. Products will be displayed behind the vendor table.
- We shall not perform bagging of produce or other items if reusable bags are utilized until further notice.
- Vendors should not use cloth tablecloths in order to make it easier to clean and sanitize table surfaces. Vendors must clean and sanitize their displays, including their tables and items used to display produce at the end of every market during market operation. Markets are recommended to discontinue the use of display items that cannot be cleaned and sanitized.
- We will minimize cash transactions. If more than one person is working the table, vendors should designate one person to handle money and another to handle produce/product.
- Vendors will have 6 feet between them
- Gloves may be used, but are not a substitute for proper hand washing and disinfecting.

Customers in a Safe Market Space

- Everyone participating in the market will wear face coverings.
- Staff will mark clearly designated waiting areas for individual vendors, ensuring 6ft spacing. Chalk, cones, stakes, or other signage may be used.
- A one-way “traffic” flow ([See map](#)) will be utilized to ensure 6ft spacing.
- We will work to ensure accessibility for all. If customers experience accessibility challenges due to limitations in the refined market space, they are invited to let us know

and we will support them to ensure their access to the market, while maintaining a safe environment for all.

Market/SNAP bucks

- EBT customers can still use their card at the manager's table.
- The transaction protocols will include:
 - Staff will place machine on table, disinfect, and step back.
 - Customer will swipe card and enter PIN, and step back.
 - Staff will disinfect terminal and complete transaction.
 - Staff will place Market Bucks and receipt on table for customer to retrieve.
- Vendors are encouraged to accept Bucks in a container on their table, or to treat it like cash.
- Bucks will be sanitized at the completion of every market.

.Portable Bathroom

- In the absence of other facilities, a portable bathroom is available to farmer, vendor, and market staff use only. It will not be for customer use
- The bathroom will be kept locked at all times and the code to enter will only be shared with farmers, vendors, market staff, and volunteers..
- The market will provide disinfecting wipes inside for users to wipe down anything that has been touched, hand sanitizer in the stall, and a hand washing station next to it.
- Signage will be provided inside the door reminding users to wipe down touched surfaces before leaving and to wash their hands prior to returning to their tent.
- Door handles will be disinfected frequently by market staff, wearing proper PPE (gloves, goggles, face covering)
- The contracted portable bathroom company will come once a week to service and clean the bathroom.
- Farmers/vendors, market staff, and volunteers **MUST** wash their hands using the hand washing station provided after use or cleaning.