



Covid-19 Strategies for Farmers Markets

Farmers markets in Wisconsin have been exempted from closing and from mass gathering restrictions instituted as the result of Covid-19. While farmers markets are permitted to stay open they must follow certain requirements per Emergency Order No. 28.

(1) they close all seating intended for consuming food;

(2) self-service operations of salad bars and buffets is ceased;

(3) customers are prohibited from self-dispensing all unpackaged food. (3/17/20)

Farmers markets, like grocery stores are considered an essential food resource. To fulfill this role successfully, each market must decide if it can provide a shopping environment at least of equal safety to local grocery stores. The following are best management practices collected from across the country for you to consider. Not all of the options will be suitable for all markets. They will help you to minimize the spread of Covid-19 at your market while maintaining this essential food resource for your community and your vendors.

What can the market do? The goal of the following practices is to minimize shopper time at the market and the spread of Covid-19. Although farmers markets are important community events, these actions will help the market to focus on it's role as an essential food resource and protect public safety.

- No sampling.
- Everything must be pre-packaged to consume off site including prepared foods.
- No non-food vendors with the exception of soap. Food plants may be sold (fruit, vegetable and herb).
- No music, tabling, activities, promotions or pets to discourage groups from gathering.
- Handwashing stations/hand sanitizers for both vendors and customers.
- Post social distancing messaging and signage.
- No customer contact with product (only vendors touch product until sold).
- Increase the spacing between vendors to 15 feet to allow for social distancing of vendors and customers.
- Market layouts usually have vendors facing each other across an aisle. This concentrates customers in the center. In order to provide more social distance, consider placing vendors on one side or having vendors face outward. Just be sure to give your vendors the space they need also.
- Consider alternative shopping methods like a one sided drive through market or online ordering with market pick up.
- Suspend fines for no shows to help prevent sick vendors from coming to the market out of obligation.
- Ensure all forms of payment including electronic benefits transfer (EBT) cards, tokens or checks can be used at the market and for any alternate shopping methods.

Regardless of how you choose to adapt your market, be certain to communicate with you vendors and customers so that everyone can feel safe and come prepared.



What can vendors do?

- No sick vendors or employees at the market. Vendors should prioritize the health of customers.
- Avoid touching your hands to your face.
- Wear a cloth face covering.
- Have a different person handling money than handling produce. Although there is little evidence that money or tokens can transmit Covid-19, having a one person take money and talk with customers helps limit the contact of the farm staff to possible transmission.
- Use single use bags packed by the vendor.
- Clean/sanitize/disinfect surfaces including tables and table cloths before the market.
- Clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces regularly.
- Consider selling pre-weighed packages to limit food handling and keep customers moving.
- Use barrier tables (an extra 3 foot wide table between the customer and the product) or put a check out table in front of the product. Only the staff at the booth should be handling the product. If customers can't see what is being sold use a chalk or dry erase board to list products.
- Wash hands regularly with soap and water. ([Build your own handwashing station for under \\$20.](#))
- Use hand sanitizer when necessary on visibly clean hands. Hand sanitizer is not effective on visibly dirty hands.
- Use single use gloves where needed. If clean gloves may be worn up to 4 hours.
- Maintain at least 6 feet of physical distance between customers and other vendors whenever possible.

What can customers do?

- Stay home if you are sick.
- Wear a cloth face covering.
- Cover any coughs or sneezes with your elbow.
- Avoid bringing children or any unnecessary people with you to the market.
- Use hand washing stations and hand sanitizer frequently at the market if available.
- Maintain at least 6 feet of physical distance from other customers and vendors whenever possible.
- Visit the market during off-peak hours.