



# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OPERATING MICHIGAN FARMERS MARKETS

Farmers markets are critical infrastructure because of the role they play in our food system.

Whatever role you serve at your farmers market, we know that not only are you dedicated to ensuring shoppers have access to healthy, locally grown food and other high-quality products – **but you're also deeply committed to the safety of shoppers and the products they purchase.** Michigan farmers markets have demonstrated this commitment during the COVID-19 pandemic and the accompanying period of heightened public safety.

## UPDATED EXECUTIVE ORDER:

As of June 22, 2021, the Michigan Department of Health and Human services has rescinded the order placing our state in an epidemic response period.

## WHAT THIS MEANS:

The State of Michigan no longer has orders governing farmers market operations, some adaptations and considerations are still recommended to maintain safe and inclusive market spaces.

Farmers market managers should still consult their [local health departments](#) and the [State of Michigan](#) for information pertinent to COVID-19 and current conditions in their community. You can regularly read the updates and recommendations available on their websites and sign up for any alerts offered by state or county-level health officials to stay the most up-to-date with what is being recommended or required.

**Remember that each individual is reacting this pandemic and the response in a different way.** While some customers may be eager to “return to normal,” others remain vigilant in protecting their personal safety and are looking for precautions to be in place in order to feel comfortable in a public setting. As market operators, it’s important that we acknowledge and respect these varying approaches during this market season in order to be inclusive and welcoming and to create thriving marketplaces for Michigan food and farm products.

# FARMERS MARKET RECOMMENDATIONS

The list below outlines modifications to farmers market operations that are recommended at this time. As a market manager, you know your market and community best. MIFMA's goal is to support market managers in making the decisions that are best for your market. **New and/or updated information is shown in blue text.**

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MARKET OPERATIONS

### COMMUNICATION

- **Communicate proactively with both vendors and consumers about the safety measures in place at your market.**
  - **Make sure they know which channels you will use to communicate any changes (emails, website, social media, etc.).**
  - **Post signs with your precautions and procedures, and communicate this information on your website and through social media.**

### MAINTAIN SIX FEET AND MASK

- **Ensure that any market staff, volunteers, and vendors, except fully vaccinated individuals, remain at least 6 feet from one another to the maximum extent feasible while working at the market.**
- **Require that all market staff, volunteers, and vendors who are not fully vaccinated wear a face covering** when they cannot consistently maintain 6 feet of separation from all other individuals indoors. Fully vaccinated means “persons for whom at least two weeks has passed after receiving the final dose of an FDA-approved or authorized COVID-19 vaccine.”
- **The state no longer mandates that any consumers wear a mask at a farmers market. Mask wearing may still be required** by some local authorities and/or the farmers market operating organization and should be clearly posted when being implemented.



## SAMPLING

- **Ensure that product sampling is conducted according to [all applicable guidelines](#)** and is done in a way that minimizes person-to-person contact to the greatest extent possible.
- **The best practice for sampling at this time is to prepare samples in advance** of arriving at the market by prepackaging individual samples into covered containers. At the market, prepackaged individual samples should be spaced out for consumers to pick up in a way that allows the consumer to touch only the sample they will consume. Spacing should allow for the vendor and all consumers to maintain social distancing while waiting for, selecting, and consuming the sample, and while disposing of the sample container.
- **Dispensing a sample from a large container of product at the market directly into the hand of the consumer and/or transferring a sample from the hand of the vendor to the hand of the consumer is not recommended at this time.**

## SEATING AND GATHERING SPACES

- **Ensure that safety measures are applied to both the retail operations of your farmers market and any non-essential areas and activities incorporated in your market space** such as music, special events, cooking demonstrations, and children's activities.
- **If provided, seating areas should allow groups to maintain a 6 foot distance** from other groups and the area should be sanitized after each use.

## VENDOR SPACING

- **Ensure market stall spacing and aisle widths allow customers and vendors to distance themselves** at least 6 feet away from others.
- **Mark the ground around booths** with items such as tape, chalk, driveway markers, or traffic cones to instruct customers to distance themselves at least 6 feet apart while they are waiting in line.
- **Have vendors set up in a way that minimizes/eliminates** a customer's ability to touch the products.

## SANITIZATION AND CLEANLINESS

- **Place visible signage throughout the market with [safety and behavior guidelines recommended by the CDC](#).**
- **Provide handwashing and sanitizing at entrances and throughout the market.** Ensure someone's job at the market is to make sure stations are continuously stocked with soap, paper towels, waste receptacles, and hand sanitizer.
- **Regularly clean and disinfect** frequently touched surfaces, like point-of-sale devices, tokens, etc.



## MARKETS AS EMPLOYERS

MIOSHA has aligned their COVID rules with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) which has separated their recommendations (1) for fully vaccinated people and (2) for unvaccinated and otherwise at-risk populations.

**For Fully Vaccinated Employees:** As stated by the [Interim Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People](#), “Unless otherwise required by federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules, and regulations, most employers no longer need to take steps to protect their fully vaccinated workers who are not otherwise at-risk from COVID-19 exposure.”

**To Protect Unvaccinated or Otherwise At-risk Workers,** employers must follow existing mandatory OSHA standards. For a complete list of these standards and how they apply to COVID, visit <https://www.osha.gov/coronavirus/safework>.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- State of [Michigan Coronavirus Website](#).
- Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Food and Dairy Division Call Center: 1-800-292-3939.
- Farmers Market Coalition [COVID-19 Best Practices, Examples, and Resources](#).
- Michigan State University Extension [Coronavirus FAQ Series](#).
- Michigan Agritourism Association (MATA) – [Guidance & Best Practices for Michigan Farm Markets & Agritourism Operations](#).
- Resources compiled by [Taste the Local Difference](#) and [Michigan Food and Farming Systems](#).
- [Getting Your Mass Gatherings or Large Community Events Ready](#), CDC.

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