

**Cooper County Public Health Center**  
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## Farmers Market Guidelines During the COVID-19 Pandemic

To help prevent the spread of COVID 19, the following guidelines are provided for Farmers Markets operating in Cooper County, MO. We recognize that farmers, vendors and customers rely on the market for basic needs. Over the years, Farmers Markets have grown into a diverse, heavily attended, social event in which consumers can take their time, enjoy the people and surroundings, and purchase readily available food and wares. Once the pandemic has passed, we expect the markets to return to normal. In the meantime, we must make every effort to slow the spread of this virus. This year, the markets may change in the way they look and the way they are utilized.

To make markets as safe as possible for vendors and customers, the following precautions are recommended:

1. Market managers will be responsible for ensuring that precautions are put in place and enforced in accordance with social distancing orders. This may be accomplished by:
  - a. Restricting the number of people in the market area at one time based on square footage or occupancy.
  - b. Discouraging congregating in front of stands or other areas.
  - c. Eliminating tables, chairs and music.
  - d. Designating customer waiting areas using tape or other markers.
2. Signs should be posted throughout reminding people to stay home when sick, wash hands often for 20 seconds, and practice social distancing.
3. Hand washing stations and hand sanitizer should be conveniently located throughout the market.
4. Masks should be worn by vendors and encouraged for customers.
5. Prohibit the sale of non-food or non-essential items.
6. In general, food items prepared on site should be avoided as this tends to promote crowds and social gathering while people eat or drink. If allowing foods prepared on site, consult with the Cooper County Public Health Center for additional guidance.
7. Clean and disinfect frequently touched items in common areas and in vendor booths.
8. Suspend demos and samples to help avoid cross contamination.
9. Discourage customers touching items they will not be purchasing. Consider having the vendor select items with sanitary gloves and bag them for the customer.
10. Consider redesigning the market to allow for drive through or pre-ordering with set pickup times.

These guidelines are based on the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) Guidelines issued on March 31, 2020. <https://health.mo.gov/living/healthcondiseases/communicable/novel-coronavirus/pdf/farmers-markets.pdf>