

FARM STANDS & FARM STORES

✓ Checklist: logistical best practices

- Updated May 19, 2020 -

Below are all of the requirements and recommendations for farm stand and on-farm stores put out by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MADPH). This checklist also includes recommendations put out by the Massachusetts Department of Agriculture (MDAR) for farm stands and stores.



= Items mandated by the Department of Public Health.



= guidelines strongly suggested by the Department of Public Health and/or the Massachusetts Department of Agriculture.

Some recommendations might be required by your local board of health as they do have authority to add/lessen requirements. **Please check with your local board of health to determine what specific requirements you will need to do in order to operate safely.** We've also included some helpful tips and suggestions to comply with requirements and recommendations.

Social distancing



Limit the number of customers who can enter inside the store to no more than 40% of the building's maximum occupancy. *Stores with max occupancy <26 are exempt.

TIP: Have a crowd control and line management system in place once you exceed capacity.



Strategize protocols to maintain social distance guidelines.



Arrange the space to accommodate for 6' physical distancing.

TIP: Use tape, chalk lines, cones, stakes, or other markers that delineate 6' throughout the store.

TIP: Lines may form outside of entry points and where possible manage flow through signage, directions, and markers to enforce physical distancing and have staff available for line management.

TIP: Arrange store so that customers can flow in and out in one direction. Mark the flow through floor markings and signage.



Customers should be reminded by staff to maintain physical distance through verbal reinforcement.



No product sampling.



No reusable bags.

TIP: Provide containers and bags to customers such as recycled paper bags, compostable plastic bags, single use plastic bags, or new boxes.

NOTE: Local Boards of Health guidance varies on the allowance of thoroughly washed and sanitized containers and bags for customers. Contact your local BOH for more information.

Signage



Have signs for customers to remind them of social distancing practices.



These signs should be at (1) prominent locations, (2) entry points, and (3) other access points.



Have signs that remind customers to stay home when sick.



Have signs for customers about use of gloves, masks, and handwashing.

TIP: Make signage that gives product information and minimizes the need to touch products (for example, description of nursery plants, reminder to take what you touch, etc.)

www.buylocalfood.org/upload/temp/COVID19Poster-IfSickStayHome.pdf

www.buylocalfood.org/upload/temp/COVID19Poster-StaySixFeetApartWearAMask.pdf

www.buylocalfood.org/upload/temp/COVID19-FullListofRules.pdf

Gloves and Masks



Farm staff should use gloves and masks at all times while at the store/stand.



Gloves should be changed frequently, especially before and after breaks, coming in contact with customer belongings and frequently touched areas, or handling money.

- Wash hands before putting on gloves and between glove change-outs.
- CDC glove removal guidelines: <https://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/pdf/poster-how-to-remove-gloves.pdf>
- CISA is keeping a list of PPE suppliers on this Google Doc:
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1HXZ8OvQKRr5AZ9pywuc1ZCuIvsgphkewhm00rugjY/edit?usp=sharing>



Farm customers should wear masks at all times while at the store/stand.

*exceptions include children under the age of 2 and those unable to wear a mask or face covering due to a medical condition. More information on wearing masks: <https://www.mass.gov/news/wear-a-mask-in-public>.

Cleaning and Sanitizing



Have a sanitization plan in place with frequent wipe down of high-touch surfaces throughout the day. (For example: POS systems, door handles, cold cases, railings.)

TIP: purchase a cover for your ipad so you do not have to sanitize the actual screen.



Plan for routine deep cleaning and sanitizing when store/stand is not in operation or closed.

TIP: Cleaning products to use:

EPA's full list of products and how to use them are here:

<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>

TIP: consider discontinuing use of displays that cannot be sanitized in high-touch places.



Sanitize plastic or metal containers if re-using for customers. (For example, black nursery trays, wagons, harvest buckets, or shopping baskets.)

Money handling and transactions



Checkout: Practice physical distancing and sanitize during transactions.



Mark a 6' line for customers to follow physical distance at check out.



If possible, assign an employee to ONLY manage checkout.



For stores where physical distancing is not possible at check out, consider plexi glass solutions. (Check with local BOH guidance to see if this is required before implementing.)



If offering to bring products to customer vehicles, farm staff may NOT put products into the cab of vehicles but MAY put them in the trunk or truck bed.

Cash



Minimize cash transactions.

TIP: Round prices to the nearest dollar to reduce acceptance of coins and minimize the handling of change.

TIP: Encourage placing cash into jar or bucket.

TIP: Self-serve farm stands can look into accepting online payment apps like Venmo, Square, or CashApp for businesses.

Credit/Debit & EBT (SNAP/HIP)



Have physical distance protocols during transactions.

TIP: Consider paying online ahead of time or after the purchase. Farm stands can look into accepting online payment apps like Venmo, Paypal, ApplePay, Square, or CashApp for businesses.

TIP: Swipe the client's card, use gloves, and wipe down machine in between interactions if possible.



EBT (SNAP/HIP): By federal law, these payments cannot be "remote" and must be done in person with the client entering their own pin number.

Handwashing/hygiene



Make hand washing stations available to customers.

Type 1: Hand sanitizing stations that use gel hand sanitizer or spray bottles with isopropyl or ethyl alcohol.

Type 2: Hand washing stations with water, paper towels, and soap. These are generally a bit harder to set up.

- Resources for DIY handwashing stations:

- https://ncfreshproducesafety.ces.ncsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Hand-washing-unit-handout.pdf?fd=no_and or <https://tinyurl.com/ybj3eu5e>

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hZEFZEtxVP8&feature=youtu.be>

- Hand sanitizer stations can be useful, though should not be used as a replacement for handwashing.

Other things to reduce potential exposure and maximize customer and worker safety



Encourage online ordering, pre-orders, and curbside pick up.

If you would like help thinking through setting up an online ordering system, reach out to Stevie at stevie@buylocalfood.org.



Limit the number of adults per household who can shop.



Advise customers to leave their pets at home and to be mindful of children.

TIP: Consider expanding open hours.

TIP: Make appointments for shopping/specialized assistance (this works well for small stands or stores with specialized services or customize products).

TIP: Offer Senior/Compromised shopping hours for those more susceptible/at risk.

TIP: Minimize customer shopping time:

- Offer more grab and go products.
- Help people make decisions/select products.
- Other signage that helps with decision making.
- Put staff in charge of grabbing or handling products.

Have an emergency/back up plan



Plan for employee sick leave and/or exposure to COVID-19 and the need to reduce staff.

See CISA's COVID-19 Resource page for more information on worker safety:

<https://www.buylocalfood.org/resources-for-farmers/tipsheets/covid-19-resources/>



Plan for customer communication if stand/store must close.

Communication



All of the practices checked off above, communicate that you are doing them!!!

Tell customers and staff what you are doing to keep everyone safe while shopping at your farm store or farm stand.

Remember: you don't have to have all the answers. This pandemic is creating challenges for everyone and the situation is constantly evolving. Being an expert in all things COVID-19 is not as important as being transparent, accessible, and communicative.

Share what you are doing to figure things out, how you are adapting, and how the safety of your vendors, customers, and greater community is the highest priority. Not only does communicating help ensure that no one will spread the virus at your market, it is also makes for good public relations. Communicate often and the sooner you start, the better.



Communicate with **customers**: press release, email newsletter, social media posts

Include:

1. How health of farm store / farm stand staff, customers, and greater public is your main priority.
2. What practices the farm store / farm stand is doing to keep everyone safe.
3. Good practices for customers to use at the farm store / farm stand (social distancing, don't touch face, don't come to the market if sick).