

# OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR FARMERS MARKETS



Updated April 27, 2020 (originally published April 17, 2020)

Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, the Snohomish Health District is directing farmers markets to implement the following control measures to reduce the spread of illness. Many of these items are intended to discourage crowds and loitering.

## Overview

- Vendors may only sell food or items deemed to provide “essential services.” To determine if goods are essential, visit <https://coronavirus.wa.gov/whats-open-and-closed/essential-business> or submit a request through <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/d4c155fa930f4b848f95774d610c9708>.
- Sampling is prohibited.
- No open, ready-to-eat food. Food must either be prepackaged or placed in to-go containers before being offered to the customer.
- Entertainment such as live music is not allowed.
- No seating or on-site dining.
- Vendor booths should be 10 feet apart, and the market must encourage 6 feet social distancing while in line and in between vendor booths.
- Post signs and/or information that inform customers to stay a minimum of 6 feet apart, to not enter the market if exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, and to encourage the use of hand sanitizer or handwashing before and after shopping. The Snohomish Health District has signage available for download online at [www.snohd.org/501/Posters-for-Download](http://www.snohd.org/501/Posters-for-Download).

## Written Plan of Operations

To ensure that farmers markets are fully addressing the above items, the Snohomish Health District is requiring that coordinators submit a written plan to [foodsafety@snohd.org](mailto:foodsafety@snohd.org) that addresses the following issues:

### Health Screening

- Market staff - Describe how you will ensure all market staff are screened for COVID-19 before beginning work.
  - Include what you plan to do with market staff who either have symptoms or have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 or symptoms.
  - Identify market staff that will be charged with the responsibilities of health screening staff, vendors and customers.
  - Please follow CDC [Guidelines](#) on quarantine and isolation when staff or vendors have COVID-19 symptoms or are exposed to someone who is sick.
- Vendors - Describe how you will ensure that all vendors are screened for COVID-19 symptoms before beginning work.
  - Recommendation: Identify ways to check on vendors before they arrive at the market.
- Customers - Describe how you will ensure customers who exhibit symptoms are excluded.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT: [WWW.SNOHD.ORG/FARMERS-MARKETS](http://WWW.SNOHD.ORG/FARMERS-MARKETS)**

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- Describe how you plan to discourage/communicate with customers, staff, vendors who are at a higher risk of illness.
- Describe how you plan to communicate with customers, staff, vendors discouraging those who are at a [higher risk](#) of illness from attending. People at higher risk include those:
  - Over 60 years of age,
  - With underlying health conditions including heart disease, lung disease or diabetes,
  - With weakened immune systems, or
  - Who are pregnant.

## Social Distancing

- Describe how you plan to ensure adherence to social distancing requirements at all times (vendors, customers, market staff).
- Describe how you are ensuring market vendors are keeping adequate social distancing during set up and tear down.
- Describe your plan to ensure multiple customers aren't crowding a booth.
  - Recommendations: Limit the number of customers at each booth to one household at a time. Other customers must follow social distancing requirements while in line.
- Describe how you plan to limit customer numbers to reduce indoor/outdoor crowding.
- Describe your plan to ensure customers that are waiting to get into the market or inside the market aren't congregating.
- Describe how you plan to space booths, customers in line, and customers walking through the market so six foot social distancing is followed.
- Describe the signage you will use to notify customers about social distancing expectations, not to gather in groups, staying home if sick/market guidelines and where you will have these posted.
  - Consider utilizing posters found at the following sites:
    - [Snohomish Health District posters](#)
    - [CDC Face Covering poster](#)
    - [DOH COVID-19 Educational Materials - 26+ Languages](#)
- Identify market staff that will be charged with the responsibility of ensuring social distancing plan is followed.
- Describe how you will intervene with customers, vendors and staff that aren't complying with the social distancing requirements.
- Recommendations:
  - Have specific market entry and exit points so the number of customers coming in and going out of the market can be counted and controlled.

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- Allowing no more than three customers per number of vendor booths, and encouraging no more than one member of the household shopping.
- Number of customers in the market at any given time kept at or below the maximum capacity to allow adequate space for the required social distancing. Consider expanding market hours to prevent overcrowding by spacing out the number of customers at the market.
- Consider choosing an alternative location than normal if you anticipate social distancing to be a challenge.

## Sanitation

- Describe your overall sanitation plan, including sanitizing high touch surfaces, and disinfection of restrooms.
- Describe how you plan to provide adequate handwashing stations for customers and staff, noting that additional handwashing sinks may be required. Identify how you will keep them supplied with hot water, soap and paper towels throughout the day.
- Describe how you will provide adequate restroom access with adequate handwashing stations to the vendors, customers, and market staff.
- Identify market staff that will be charged with the responsibility of ensuring sanitation plans are met.
- Provide hand sanitizer or hand wash stations at market entry points.

## Vendors

- Provide a list of food vendors who will be participating at the market. Include a description of what each vendor will be offering.
- A temporary handwashing station will be required in every vendor booth. An example set-up is shown below.



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- Except for produce, all food and bakery products must be prepackaged or placed in to-go containers. Vendors should only be selling items that are considered part of an essential business as defined by the Governor's order. If there are questions about essential service status, please submit a request through the link on page 1.
- Recommendation:
  - The Snohomish Health District strongly recommends that vendors offer prepaid delivery and/or pre-order options to customers to further reduce social interactions at the market.

## Summary Report

- So that we can learn what is working and what is not, the Snohomish Health District requests that you prepare a summary report after each market day.
- Please describe what went well, what didn't, and needs for improvement. The report should be sent to [foodsafety@snohd.org](mailto:foodsafety@snohd.org) on a weekly basis.

## Important Notices:

Farmers market plans, once approved, will be considered approved only on a contingency basis, allowing for weekly review.

Under the following circumstances, the Snohomish Health District can require the market to discontinue:

- The Snohomish Health District receives a number of legitimate complaints regarding a lack of compliance;
- There is a lack of follow-up with identified issues; or
- There are reports of exposures to COVID-19, or of illnesses resulting from exposure and failure to manage the situation.

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