

Phase II Guidelines for Farmer's Markets and On-Farm Markets

Under Phase II of Rhode Island's reopening plan, the following protocols and guidance will apply to all outdoor Farmer's Markets and On-Farm Markets beginning on the date of issuance until further notice.

In accordance with Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) [emergency regulations](#), Farmer's Markets must prepare and implement a [COVID-19 Control Plan](#). The State prepared a [guidance document](#) to assist businesses in meeting the requirements outlined in these RIDOH regulations. Farmer's Markets must comply with RIDOH regulations and active [executive orders](#).

The guidelines below summarize **additional** protocols Rhode Island is asking Farmer's Markets to take. The following guidance and protocols must be in place and followed in order to operate. The Rhode Island Division of Environmental Management (RIDEM) Division of Agriculture staff will work closely with all Farmer's Markets and On-Farm Markets to inform, educate, and enforce these protocols. RIDEM will collaborate with RIDOH and local law enforcement to make random inspections and adjust or shut down any operation that does not comply.

If you have any questions about this guidance, please contact Ananda Fraser, Produce Safety Program Coordinator, at the Division of Agriculture, RIDEM, 401.222.2781, or via email at Ananda.Fraser@dem.ri.gov.

Phase II operations

The sale of food and drinks at Farmer's Markets is permitted only if you have any applicable State and local food license. All vendors that sell food and drinks must be in compliance with the Rhode Island Food Code and any additional RIDOH guidance for outdoor food retailers. No indoor operations of this type are allowed at this time.

Market activity plans

Farmer's Markets are required to have an activity plan that identifies market rules developed to support State COVID-19 guidance in force, as well as rules that are established by the market. The plan must be in place prior to the start of any activity. Plans must be kept on site and made available in the case of a complaint or site visit by local or State officials. The activity plan must include the following information:

- Location of parking areas and spacing/number of spaces available.
- Number of vendors.
- Number of customers and staff allowed in the market at any one time.
- Number and location(s) of hand washing/hand sanitizing stations.
- Cleaning and sanitation procedures.

Prepare markets and individual stands/booths

- **Physical distancing:** To maintain proper distance, stands/booths should be separated to keep vendors at least six feet apart. If needed to ensure physical distancing, markets should limit the number of customers within the market area at one time and provide one-way aisles, and staff

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should be assigned to guide customers and monitor physical distancing. Customers may be instructed to wait (if necessary) until called to enter the market area in order to limit the number of customers. This will allow staff to regulate the flow of customer traffic into the designated market/shopping area. If needed, physical markings or barriers should be used to promote physical distancing of six feet in areas where lines may form.

- **Screening:** COVID-19 screening signage should be posted at the entrances and high-traffic areas. Anyone who is sick, whether staff, employee, or customer, is prohibited from any activity.
- **Sanitizing:** Handwashing stations with soap and water and/or sanitizer must be made available; this includes having a sufficient quantity to facilitate and encourage regular hand sanitation of all vendors, staff, and customers alike.
- **Face coverings:** Staff, employees, and customers are required to wear face coverings in accordance with RIDOH regulations and [Executive Order 20-30](#). Face coverings shall not be required of those who are developmentally unable to comply, including young children who may not be able to effectively wear a mask. Nothing in this guidance shall require a place of business to refuse entry to a customer not wearing a face covering.
- **Cleaning procedures:** Frequently disinfect any common gathering places (e.g., restrooms), and high-touch points, such as door handles or knobs, shopping baskets, credit card machines, etc. Vendors should be reminded to do the same for surfaces and objects within their booths that may be touched by customers.
- **Money handling:** To facilitate minimal exchange of currency, if possible, vendors should consider using credit card machines, online payment application platforms such as Apple Pay, PayPal, Square, etc., allowing pre-order and pre-payment of products, or rounding up product prices to the nearest dollar. Additionally, prior to and after handling currency, hands should be properly washed or sanitized.
- **Food handling:** All food handling must occur according to RIDOH Food Safety regulations. Have vendors consider pre-packaging items, where applicable, to limit shoppers' handling of items and to keep customers moving along. No self-serve foods or product sampling is allowed.

Prepare market staff

- Provide guidance for handwashing (like time intervals) and handling materials.
- Provide all staff with cloth face coverings.
- Stagger breaks or lunch times or provide additional space to increase distancing of staff.
- All sick staff must stay at home.
- Inform staff where they can find sanitizing materials throughout market contact points.
- Encourage staff to practice physical distancing and avoid large gatherings to avoid risks for potential exposure.