

**BURLINGTON COUNTY FARMERS MARKET
OPERATIONAL PROTOCOL
COVID -19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY
May 2020**

The Burlington County Agricultural Center is a preserved farm located at 500 Centerton Road in Moorestown is home to a seasonal Farmers Market on Saturdays between early May and October. 2020 will be the 14th season that the Market has operated, providing a place where local farmers, food purveyors and craft vendors can sell their products directly to consumers. Over the years, the Market has become a community gathering place where people come to shop, meet friends, listen to music, enjoy prepared foods, and attend weekly cooking demonstrations.

On March 9, 2020, Governor Murphy issued Executive Order No. 103 which declared both a Public Health Emergency and State of Emergency due to the spread of the COVID-19 within New Jersey. Executive Order No. 104, issued on March 16, 2020, instituted aggressive social distancing measures, including the closure of all non-essential, retail, recreational, and entertainment businesses. On March 21st, Governor Murphy issued Executive Order No. 107 which imposed a stay at home order for New Jersey residents unless, among other things, they are obtaining foods or services from essential retail businesses. In that order, farmers markets are designated as essential retail businesses.

During this Public Health Emergency and until the “stay at home” order and restrictions on social gatherings are relaxed, the Market will not be able to operate as it has in the past. At this time, the focus must be on the core mission of the Market - to give local farmers the opportunity to market their produce directly to the consumer and give the public access to fresh, locally grown produce and value-added products.

To protect the safety of vendors, staff, and customers and provide a safe and pleasant shopping experience for all, Burlington County has developed a protocol that will be implemented upon the opening of the Market and remain in place until such time that County Health officials determine that it is safe to relax the practices called for at this time. This protocol will supersede the Rules and Regulations of the Burlington County Farmers Market only to the extent that any provision conflicts with those rules.

Entertainment

To discourage gathering and undue social interaction, no musical entertainment or cooking demonstrations will be provided.

Page Break

Vendors

Only vendors selling agricultural products, value-added products and prepared food products will be permitted to participate at the start of the season. Agricultural

products include fruit, vegetables, plants, cut flowers, dairy products, farm-raised meat, seafood and eggs. Value added products include such items as jams, jellies, salsa, honey, soaps, herbal oils, etc. made from the agricultural products listed above.

Public Access/Traffic Control

- The term market grounds include the barn, market pad and tent, and all areas along the walkways where vendors are set up.
- Customers will enter at the main entrance and exit at the walkway leading from the Farmhouse to the parking lot. Customers waiting to enter the market grounds will form a line along the main entranceway and the walkway running parallel to the parking lot. Lines designating a 6 foot distance between customers while waiting in line will be marked on walkways.
- The additional parking lot on the opposite side of the Farmhouse will not be used and the gate from the lot will remain locked to prevent access to the Market grounds.
- Incoming and outgoing vehicle traffic will be monitored to alert market staff to moments of major customer influx.
- Customers will be encouraged to come alone, shop quickly and leave. This will be conveyed by postings on the County websites, social media, and signage posted at the entrance. Customers who are finished shopping will be asked to exit.
- Incoming and outgoing foot traffic will be monitored by County staff stationed at the main entranceway. No more than 75 customers will be allowed within the market grounds at one time. (The lot holds up to 125 vehicles. Assuming that there is one person per vehicle, the number of customers that will be allowed is 50% capacity.)

Physical Lay-out

- Tables and chairs will not be set up and all benches will be removed from the market grounds.
- Vendors will be spaced a minimum of six feet apart.
- Barriers will be in place to ensure all customers use the designated entrance and exit and follow the designated routes.
- Foot traffic will be one-way and guided by arrows on the floor of the Market Barn and Market Pad and signage along all walkways. See attached diagram.

Personal Protection/Sanitation

- All vendors and customers will be required to wear facial coverings pursuant to Executive Order 122. The facial covering should be a mask, but those who are unable to secure a mask will be permitted to use an alternative facial covering, such as a bandana, handkerchief, etc.
- Vendors are encouraged to bring sanitizing spray and sanitizing wipes to clean their areas before, during and after market.
- A handwashing station will be available for use by customers and vendors.
- Indoor restroom facilities will only be available to vendors.

- No dogs will be permitted at the Market.

Vendor Presentation of Products

- Vendors are encouraged to pre-package produce into containers (bags, boxes, pint and quart containers, clamshells, etc.).
- Tastings and product samples are not permitted.
- Vendors selling prepared food products must package products in “to-go” containers to be consumed off-site.

Vendor-Customer Interactions

- Vendors will be provided with information on sanitizing all surfaces on which produce and food will be displayed and are expected to frequently wash and/or sanitize hands. Vendors selling prepared foods will be required to wear gloves during all transactions.
- Customer foot traffic will be monitored by County staff to ensure adequate distancing from vendors and other customers while waiting to make a purchase.
- Vendors are encouraged to pick and bag for customers or pre-bag, if possible.
- Customers and vendors are encouraged to utilize mobile payment services (Venmo, PayPal, etc.), as well as credit, debit, or checks to reduce the handling of cash. If cash is preferred method of payment, it is recommended that vendors round up or down to reduce the handling of change.
- If feasible, one person should be designated to handle product and another payment.
- Vendors are encouraged to utilize pre-orders and market pickup options to facilitate quick transactions.
- Vendors and customers are encouraged to process transactions quickly and without excessive socialization.

Signage, Awareness & Customer Engagement

- Customers will be asked to read updated market protocols at the entrance before entering the market grounds. Signage will be placed throughout the market grounds to remind customers of appropriate behavior.
- Signage will be present in close proximity to vendors to remind customers to maintain distancing between themselves, vendors and fellow shoppers.

We have taken these steps to ensure the safety of our community, vendors and staff. We thank you for your patience as we try to navigate through these uncharted waters. Your compliance with these new procedures is greatly appreciated. We will update this policy as needed with the hope that the Farmers Market can return to normal operation in the near future.