

2021 Project GROWS Farmer's Market COVID-19 Safety Procedures



In an effort to keep shoppers, vendors, and market managers as safe as possible while continuing to provide the essential service of providing fresh food to our communities, and to adhere to social distancing requirements in Virginia, Project GROWS is implementing the following safety protocols at all of our farmer's markets. Market management will remind all market participants to follow these expectations.

Mask Policy

All customers are expected to comply with Project GROWS' safety rules in order to enter the market space, including mandatory mask requirements. In accordance with [CDC guidance](#) to ensure public safety at farmers markets and in accordance with section II of [Executive Order 72](#) all market patrons are required to wear a mask or cloth face covering when at the Project GROWS Farmer's Market without exception. Face shields are not an acceptable alternative to masks. Those with medical conditions will be offered alternative accommodations whenever feasible. Children under the age of two are exempt from wearing a mask. As a private nonprofit organization, Project GROWS has the right to implement additional safety measures beyond the regulations required by any local or state rulings

Under the [Americans with Disabilities Act](#), a private business must consider reasonable modifications to their face mask policy in order to accommodate individuals with a disability. However, the business is not required to allow an individual with a disability to enter if it poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others. As such, we reserve the right to deny entry to any individual refusing to wear a face mask for any reason. We will, however, do our best to provide you with reasonable accommodations such as personal shopping, or pre-order from participating vendors. Our ability to offer reasonable accommodations may vary by market location depending on a variety of factors including customer volume, vendor participation, and staff availability.

Farmer's Market Customer Safety Rules

- If you are sick, or a member of your family is sick, STAY HOME.
- **All customers must wear a mask** or cloth face covering before entering the market space, in accordance with the CDC recommendation regarding the use of cloth face coverings. That means fully covering your nose and mouth.
- **Maintain a distance of at least 6 feet** from other people, especially when in line. Market management will be reminding shoppers to keep their distance.
- **Do not eat or drink any food within the market space**, including food that you purchased at the market.
- **No pets are permitted** in the market. Service animals are okay but should be clearly identifiable.
- Keep your market visit simple and short; buy what you need and do not linger, socialize, or congregate in the market space.
- Check in with each vendor on their policy for handling products. Please remember **if you touch it you buy it!**
- Wash your produce and wipe down any packaging with a disinfectant when you get home.
- We ask that you wash your hands (for 20 seconds) or sanitize them before you enter the market space. We have handwashing stations and sanitizer available at the markets available!

****Market patrons who do not follow these guidelines outlined above put our market at risk for permanent closure. Please be aware and respectful of our market policies so we can continue to serve you for the foreseeable future.***

Farmers & Producers Safety Rules

- No one with a fever or symptoms of COVID- 19, a positive diagnostic test for the virus that causes COVID-19 in the prior 10 days, or known exposure to a COVID-19 case in the prior 14 days, is permitted at the Farmers Market. Please notify market management markets@projectgrows.org if you are unable to make it to the market.
- **No sampling allowed at the market.**
- **Vending of food prepared on site is contingent upon approval** from Market Management.
- **All prepared foods must be packaged and ready to take away to eat off-site.** If shoppers purchase ready-to-eat food from you, ask them to eat it outside of the market space. Access to condiments, silverware, cup lips, etc. should be restricted and available only on request.

- **All vendors must use gloves if they are interacting with prepared food.** Additionally, people that are regularly exchanging money and products with customers are strongly encouraged to wear gloves, and change and sanitize them regularly.
- **Where possible please have staff members dedicated to exchanging money, and staff members dedicated to exchanging product.**
- Please **regularly sanitize or wash your hands at least once per hour.** We have a limited supply of hand sanitizer at the info tent and markets will have hand washing stations available. We encourage you to bring a portable handwashing station and/or hand sanitizer. If you are preparing food on site you are required to have a handwashing station.
- **All vendors must wear masks** or cloth face coverings throughout the day, in accordance with the CDC recommendation regarding the use of cloth face coverings. That means fully covering the nose and mouth. Face Shields without masks are not allowed at the market. Staff can briefly remove their mask to drink or eat as needed throughout the day. They cannot interact with customers, market staff, or fellow vendors without a mask on.
- Please set up your stand to **prevent customers from entering your tent space/ touching your products.** Vendors are encouraged to place barriers (partitions, cones and rope, caution tape, extra tables) in front of their booth in order to limit contact with food and to maintain social distancing between vendors and customers.
- Implement contactless pay, pre-order/pickup, and other **low-touch or no-touch options** as much as possible.

Project GROWS Market Management Safety Commitments

- We will post **signage to provide public health reminders** regarding social distancing, mask requirements, and staying home if sick
- We have **hand washing stations and/or hand sanitizer available at all markets.** Market Management will ensure that these are stocked and ready for use. All frequently touched surfaces at the market will be frequently sanitized using a cleaner from the EPA's list of approved products for use against COVID 19, or a diluted household bleach solution
- We will **configure operations to avoid congestion** or congregation points.
- Market management will **enforce social distancing** to help with line management at vendor tents, and will remind shoppers to social distance as they enter the market, and throughout the market space.

- Market Management will **restrict the number of shoppers in the market when necessary** and will limit the number of entry points to the market as needed. Please check specific market details on the Project GROWS webpage.
- We allow **sponsor tables at certain markets where it is deemed safe**, but are requiring that any sponsors who table at our markets follow specific covid safety rules and guidelines.
- Point of Sale terminals and keypads, tablets and other operating systems that require frequent interaction will be **sanitized between uses**.
- Project GROWS will **continue to offer SNAP processing and matching**. Please bring your SNAP-EBT or P-EBT card as usual to the information tent.
- Used SNAP/EBT Wooden tokens will be quarantined in a container for at least 1 week before reintroducing them back into the general token system.