

COVID-19 Preparedness Plan for St. Cloud Area Farmers Market

St. Cloud Area Farmers Market (SCAFM) is committed to providing a safe and healthy marketplace for all our vendors and customers. To ensure we have a safe and healthy marketplace, SCAFM has developed the following COVID-19 Preparedness Plan in response to the COVID-19 pandemic under Gov. Tim Walz's Executive Orders. Officers and Vendors are all responsible for implementing this plan. Our goal is to mitigate the potential for transmission of COVID-19 at our market and in the communities, and that requires full cooperation among our vendors. Only through this cooperative effort can we establish and maintain the safety and health of all persons at our market.

The COVID-19 Preparedness Plan is administered by the President SCAFM, (designated plan administrator) who maintains the overall authority and responsibility for the plan. However, officers and vendors are equally responsible for supporting, implementing, complying with and providing recommendations to further improve all aspects of this COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. SCAFM's Officers are in full support in enforcing the provisions of this plan.

SCAFM Vendors and Customers are our most important assets. SCAFM is serious about protecting the safety and health of its vendors and customers. Vendor involvement is essential in developing and implementing a successful COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. We have involved our officers in this process by soliciting feedback in an email sent on June 17, 2020 and attending MN Farmers Market Association webinars during the month of June 2020.

SCAFM's COVID-19 Preparedness Plan follows the industry guidance developed by the state of Minnesota, which is based upon Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) guidelines for COVID-19, Minnesota Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MNOSHA) statutes, rules and standards, and Minnesota's relevant and current executive orders. It addresses:

- ensuring sick vendors stay home and prompt identification and isolation of sick persons;
- social distancing – vendors and customer must be at least six-feet apart;
- vendor hygiene and source controls;
- marketplace cleaning and disinfection protocol;
- food sampling and Serving protocol; and
- communication and training practices and protocol.

Ensure sick vendors stay home and prompt identification and isolation of sick persons

Vendors have been informed of and encouraged to self-monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19. The following policies and procedures are being implemented to assess vendor's health status prior to the start of the market day and for vendors to report when they are sick or experiencing symptoms:

- Prior to the start of the market day, an officer will visit with each vendor. If a vendor is experiencing any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 while at the market, he/she will be asked to leave the market immediately.

- If a vendor experiences any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 at home, he/she will be requested to call an officer and report their illness and will not be allowed to vend at the market for 2 weeks.
- The results of each market day monitoring and notifications of health status will be documented.

SCAFM has implemented leave policies that promote vendors staying at home when they are sick, when household members are sick, or when required by a health care provider to isolate or quarantine themselves or a member of their household.

- The SCAFM Market Standard of Rules of Operation #2 will not be enforced if the vendor does not have 50% attendance due to COVID-19. (Rule #2: A vendor who does not have 50% attendance may be subject to the Board's discretion for membership in the following season.)

Accommodations for vendors with underlying medical conditions or who have household members with underlying health conditions have been implemented:

- The SCAFM officers encourage the vendor(s) with underlying health conditions to use their discretion when attending the market.
- The SCAFM Market Standard of Rules of Operation #2 will not be enforced if the vendor does not have 50% attendance due to COVID-19. (Rule #2: A vendor who does not have 50% attendance may be subject to the Board's discretion for membership in the following season.)

SCAFM has also implemented a policy for informing vendors if they have been exposed to a person with COVID-19 at the market and requiring them to quarantine for the required amount of time:

- If a vendor becomes ill with COVID-19 he/she will be asked to notify the officers and vendors he/she may have come in contact with the prior week.
- Vendors that have been exposed to COVID-19 will not be allowed to vend at the market for 2 weeks.

In addition, a policy has been implemented to protect the privacy of vendors' health status and health information:

- If a vendor becomes ill with COVID-19 and practiced social distancing while at the market he/she only needs to notify the President of the market.

Social distancing – Vendors and Customers must be at least six-feet apart

Based on what is currently known about COVID-19, spread from person-to-person of this virus happens most frequently among close contacts (within about 6 feet). This type of transmission occurs via respiratory droplets. Social distancing of at least six feet will be implemented and maintained between SCAFM vendors and customers, and between customers at the market through the following engineering and administrative controls:

- Information is posted at the entrance of the market informing customers of the importance of 6 foot social distancing
- Vendor stalls are 6 foot apart

- The perimeter of the market is roped off as well as the center section to prevent customers from commingling and a bottleneck of customer flow through the market
- Directional arrows are placed on the pavement to keep the flow of customers moving in one direction
- Squares with white “x” are placed 6 foot in front of each vendor’s booth

Vendor hygiene and source controls

- Basic infection prevention measures are being implemented at the market at all times. Vendors and customers are instructed to wash their hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water throughout the day and after using the restroom. Vendors are required to use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer (greater than 60% alcohol) after each sale and exchange of money. A hand washing station is available at the entrance of the market for vendors and customers to use. The hand washing station is equipped with a water cooler with a free flow water spigot, non-antibacterial soap, paper towels, garbage can, and instruction for good hand washing practices.
- Source controls are being implemented at the market at all times. Face masks are required to be worn by the vendors during the open market hours. Customer are strongly encouraged to wear face masks to the market. This is posted by the entrance of the market and on the SCAFM Facebook. Face masks are sold at the Information Booth.
- Vendors and customers are being instructed to cover their mouth and nose with their sleeve or a tissue when coughing or sneezing, and to avoid touching their face, particularly their mouth, nose and eyes, with their hands. Vendors, customers, and workers are expected to dispose of tissues in provided trash receptacles and wash or sanitize their hands immediately afterward. Respiratory etiquette will be demonstrated and/or written clearly and concisely on posters and supported by making tissues and trash receptacles available to all vendor stalls and at the entrance of the market.

Marketplace cleaning and disinfection protocol

To prevent the spread of the coronavirus from persons touching contaminated surfaces the following guidelines have been implemented:

- Vendors are instructed to frequently clean and disinfect high-touch areas
- Use a bleach solution to disinfect surfaces
 - 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of room temperature water
- Products should not be in arm length of customers
- Vendors should ask their customers to point to products they want to purchase instead of touching products

Food Sampling and Serving protocol

Samples: Vendors can offer food samples anywhere in the market as long as you continue to follow the “Safe Food Sampling at Farmers Market” law, [M.S. 28A.151](#) and the conditions listed in the “Stay Safe MN Guidelines for Grocery and Convenience Stores are followed:

- Samples are pre-portioned
- Sample area is monitored by the vendor to maintain social distancing and discourage congregating
- Vendor is protected by social distancing and/or the use of barriers
- Hand-washing station at vendor’s booth
- Adequate trash receptacles are provided to dispose of waste

There is no limit on the number of customers eating food samples in the market area.

On-site Food Consumption: If the Farmers Market is choosing to offer “entire market area” option for onsite food consumption, the market must follow the guidelines below:

- Fewer than 250 customers in the market area at any one time
- Must have an entrance and exit to monitor number of customers
- Customers can eat wherever in the market
- All vendors in the entire market must wear face coverings

Communications and training practices and protocol

- This SCAFM COVID-19 Preparedness Plan was communicated via email to all vendors on July 23, 2020.
- Vendors will be asked if additional training is needed prior to signing the Training Completion form
- Guest Vendors will be given a copy of this plan prior to or upon the first day at the market
- A copy of the SCAFM COVID-19 Preparedness Plan will be available at the Information Booth during the hours of operation
- The SCAFM COVID-19 Preparedness Plan will be posted on the SCAFM website under Vendor Forms

Officers of the market are expected to monitor how effective the plan has been implemented and notify the SCAFM President of any noncompliant activity. Documentation of compliance will be maintained and corrective action will be taken as needed. All officers and vendors are to take an active role and collaborate in carrying out the various aspects of this plan. The SCAFM COVID-19 Preparedness Plan has been approved by the SCAFM Officers and the plan will be available at the Information Booth for vendors and customers to review after July 23, 2020. It will be updated as necessary by the SCAFM President.

Prepared by:
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St. Cloud Area Farmers Market
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