

COVID-19 Social Distancing Signage for Use at Farmers Markets

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Introduction

The purpose of this extension bulletin is to provide interested extension agents, farmers market staff and vendors with lighthearted and effective examples of social distancing signage for potential utilization at farmers markets in Virginia operating during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

In Virginia, farmers markets are considered an essential retail business and are permitted to operate during the COVID-19 state of emergency declared by the State of Virginia Governor's office with the issuance of Executive Order 53 effective March 24, 2020 until rescinded (Office of the Governor, 2020).

Operational guidance from the Virginia Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services advises farmers markets to adhere to social distancing practices recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (VDACS, 2020). Social distancing is the physical practice of keeping a six-foot distance between you and other people (CDC, 2020).

An important key to implementing social distancing measures recommended by governmental officials is the utilization of easy to understand and informative signage. Conspicuously displaying effective signage throughout a farmers market environment to prompt, remind and encourage both vendors and visitors of the importance of social distancing to prevent person-to-person spread of the COVID-19 virus assists in safe market operation during the pandemic.

Market Stand Signage

In this section, different examples of effective and friendly social distancing signage are depicted for the following situations: 1) Wearing a facemask; 2) No touching of produce; 3) Keeping a safe distance

from others; 4) Shopping quickly; 5) One customer at a time in booth; and 6) Washing hands and produce.

Signage to wear a facemask

Many farmers markets operating during the pandemic are requiring both vendors and customers to wear a facemask during market events. Encouraging customers, as well as vendors, to wear a facemask to prevent the person-to-person spread of the virus can be a sensitive request. However, the posting of a sign reminding people to wear a facemask is beneficial for the health of the entire market (Figure 1).



Figure 1. Mind your "maters" wear your facemask sign example. (Theresa J. Nartea, Virginia Cooperative Extension)

Signage to Prevent Product Touching

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, farmers market customers could touch and hold their selected products prior to purchase. Now, customer handling of products is no longer considered a safe practice. To prevent customer handling of products, consider the following signage example (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Lettuce help you point, don't touch sign example. (Theresa J. Nartea, Virginia Cooperative Extension)

Signage to Keep Six Feet Distance

To prevent person-to-person spread of the COVID-19 virus, display signage to remind customers to keep a physical distance of six feet between themselves and other people (Figure 3).



Figure 3. Please keep 6 feet beet-ween you and others sign example. (Theresa J. Nartea, Virginia Cooperative Extension)

Signage to shop quickly and to permit only one customer at a time in vendor booth

To avoid the potential for customers to congregate around a vendor booth or create a bottleneck while waiting for service, appropriate signage for notifying customers to shop quickly and that only one customer can be at the booth at one time may be helpful (Figure 4, Figure 5).

Signage to wash hands and produce

One of the most important signs to post is one that reminds customers to protect themselves by washing their hands and purchased produce (Figure 6).



Figure 4. Carrot about others, shop quickly sign example. (Theresa J. Nartea, Virginia Cooperative Extension)



Figure 5. Wait your turnip, one person at a time in booth sign example. (Theresa J. Nartea, Virginia Cooperative Extension)



Figure 6. Be sure to wash berry well, wash hands and produce sign example. (Theresa J. Nartea, Virginia Cooperative Extension)

To Access Signage Files

The signage examples discussed in this extension bulletin can be accessed by going to this weblink: https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/author/n/nartea_theresa_j_resource.html and searching the list of publications for this bulletin title: *COVID-19 Social Distancing Signage for Use at Farmers Markets*. Once you arrive at the specific publication webpage for this bulletin, you can download and print the signage as Adobe Acrobat files (*.PDF). The full-size signs are in portrait orientation with printed dimensions of 8.5” wide x 11” high. For further information or to receive additional assistance contact the author directly at mnartea@vsu.edu

References

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