

Dear Farmers' Market Community,

While New York State's efforts to mitigate the impacts of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) continue, it is more important now than ever that New Yorkers know that the State and agricultural community are working together to keep our agricultural products moving and ensure access to food for our communities, families, and animals.

New York State has not restricted grocery stores, retail food stores, farmers' markets or farm stands (CSAs included) from being open. These industries are essential to the food supply chain and are not restricted by the State's guidance for mass gatherings and workforce reductions. Please see the guidance highlighting the importance of our food supply chain:

<https://agriculture.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2020/03/essentialservicesexception.pdf>

Please continue to practice social distancing and proper hand washing and sanitizing. Additional information and guidance about this and the COVID-19 outbreak may be found on the NYS Department of Health's website: <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home>.

If you are a farmers' market who typically operates during the winter or spring, please provide your current operating details. You can email this information directly to farmersmarkets@agriculture.ny.gov.

The situation remains dynamic and we will continue to share new information that may impact direct retail operations. What you do is so critically important to our communities. Thank you for your continued commitment to agriculture.

Sincerely,

Richard A. Ball

Commissioner

Department of Agriculture and Markets

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