



**Audience** Media Group

**AGRITOURISM  
COVID-19  
OPERATION  
RESTART  
BEST PRACTICES**

# INTRODUCTION

During the COVID-19 pandemic, we encourage all agritourism establishments to commit to adopting preventative measures to help protect the health and safety of employees and guests, as well as your local community. We encourage you to follow these guidelines to offer a smooth, safe, and tightened up establishment. Make your promises between farm and guests on how we all plan to keep each other safe as we reopen farms across the country, and earn your Healthy Farm certification badge.

The following is a list of recommended guidelines to allow your business to operate as safely as possible for the benefit of all who work on or visit the farm. These are Farm Fest's projected recommendations based off what we know now. We encourage you to stay up to date with any changes that may come about by regularly checking in with state, city, and county guidelines.



These are sample recommendations ONLY.

Follow your individual state's guidelines when making decisions about your farm.

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# ADMISSIONS & TICKETING

# ENTRANCES, EXITS, & ADMISSIONS

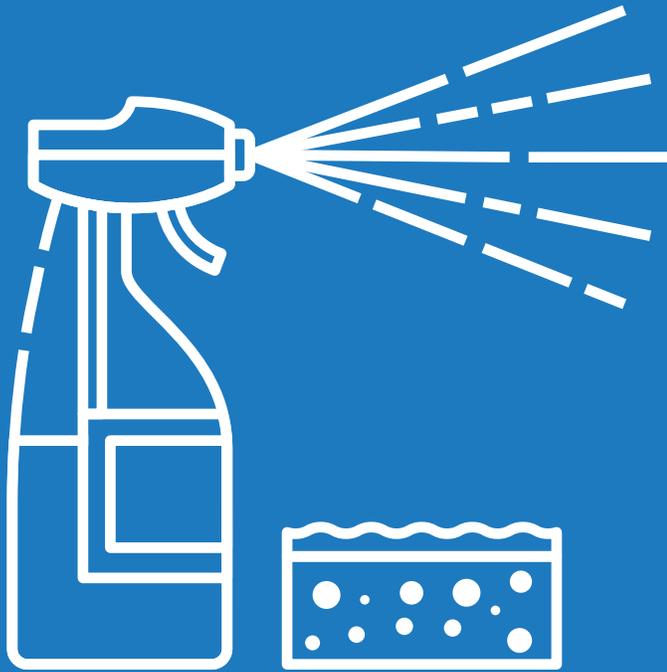
Admission booths are, by design, created to handle large crowds. Naturally, these areas will require extra procedures to adhere to social distancing guidelines. Implement these measures to provide your guests with the personal space they need to feel comfortable.

- Create a physical indicator for your guests to keep distance from one another. Mark the ground with a visible indicator (such as tape, or stakes) and use signage to encourage people to practice social distancing.
- Consider ordering additional POS systems so you can process your guests through multiple admission windows to decrease wait time in crowded lines.
- Consider traffic flow and occupancy limits. Some walking patterns could be changed to one-way for entrances and exits.
- Hand sanitizer must be offered at high-touch areas across the farm; most importantly at the entrance, all admission booth windows, and farm exit.
- Partitions can be installed when face to face interactions are necessary, especially when accepting tickets from guests at the admission booth.
- Encourage your guests to display their ticket on their phone. Decreasing hand to hand contact will provide reassurance for your employee and guest.
- Instruct your guest to attach their own wristband or by people within their own party to minimize contact between your staff and customer.
- If you've been considering going cashless, this is the ideal time. Cutting out cash transactions improves the safety of all parties involved. If you plan to continue cash transactions, separate payment options into two clearly labeled admission lines, so that your guests can make an informed choice. Staff members processing guests in the cash line can interchange the gloves they're wearing between transactions.

# CROWD MANAGEMENT

Adhering to your state and local mandates on social distancing may require you to closely monitor the number of guests on your farm at one time. Consider introducing these measures to practice safe social distancing and to allow your guests to have a worry-free visit to your farm.

- Consider attendance caps to manage crowd control. This allows you to message to guests that they need to purchase tickets online, in advance, and will also ease their mind that a limited amount of guests are permitted at one time.
- Allow your guests to choose the time slot they would like to visit. This can be enforced by implementing a color-coded wristband system. Different colors can be assigned to the time slots of your choice, allowing you to be able to monitor the number of guests on the farm.
- A hassle free way to monitor the crowds are by selling tickets online for various time slots. You will be able to consult the number of tickets sold per time slot to help you make decisions on the ground.
- Consider requiring all tickets to be purchased online and in advance to control crowds and minimize the number of cash/interactive transactions at the admissions booth between your guests and employees.



# FARM CLEANLINESS

# OVERALL CLEANLINESS

Farm cleanliness takes on a different meaning in the COVID-19 era. The cleanliness of a farm no longer takes dirt into consideration, but now centers around high touch surfaces and intimate person to person interactions. Help set a higher standard of safety and cleanliness to help your guests feel safer than ever while getting out into nature. Consult our chart to see where you can make a high impact change over one or many dimensions of your farm.

<p><b>STAFF</b></p>	<p>Have staff regularly clean their stations.</p> <p>Offer wash stations accessible to staff and have them wash their hands regularly.</p> <p>If recommended by your local officials, have staff wear masks.</p>
<p><b>TRANSACTIONS</b></p>	<p>Consider adding a clear divider between staff and customers at all cashiers stations.</p> <p>Consider minimizing cash touchpoints, and/or transitioning to cashless transactions.</p>
<p><b>RESTROOMS</b></p>	<p>Should be disinfected frequently. Maintain a cleaning schedule.</p> <p>Bathroom counters, sinks, and paper towel holders disinfected.</p> <p>Stalls and toilets cleaned and wiped down several times a day.</p> <p>Port-a-potties cleaned often.</p> <p>All facilities should be fully stocked with hand sanitizer and toilet paper as often as possible.</p>
<p><b>TRASH</b></p>	<p>No paper towels or trash on counters nor floors.</p> <p>Keep trash cans emptied regularly and the area around them tidy.</p> <p>Have trash cans with no lid to reduce surfaces that guests would touch.</p> <p>Keep hand sanitizer nearby trash cans for easy access.</p>

# ATTRACTIONS

Consider your customers' perspective on attractions with inevitable close social interactions. While available actions differ for various types of attractions, it's important to always view the activity under the shared lens of your customer. There are, however, many broad actions that can be taken to maximize the safety of interacting with all attractions.

- Make hand sanitizer readily available for guests to use before and after interacting with the attractions. Also consider supplying your staff, who are manning attractions or otherwise, with their own personal hand sanitizer for quick access.
- For attractions with inevitable close social interactions, consider taking extra precautions to ensure that close social interaction does not occur. For example, dividing off areas so that guests may individually utilize the attraction.
- Consider limiting occupancy for certain attractions so that guests can spread out.
- Dedicate staff to monitoring the proper use of these attractions, as well as ensuring that customers are appropriately practicing social distancing.
- In order to create the safest environment for your guests, you may need to remove some attractions from the rotation.
- Establish hand washing stations or hand sanitizing stations in any of your open-air fields.
- Promote social distancing by highlighting the opportunity to enjoy a picnic lunch in one of your farm fields.
- Consider spreading out and adding picnic tables in more remote areas on the farm.

Staff must also regularly disinfect all attractions and high-touch points such as:

- Seats
- Handles
- Attraction entrance gates
- Fence rails enclosing attractions

# FOOD & DRINK STATIONS

This environment places more pressure than ever on proper food safety management. The preparation, handling, and distribution of food should be refreshed so that your customers feel safe eating any food or drinks that they purchase.

- Create a physical indicator for your guests to keep distance from one another. Mark the ground with a visible indicator (such as tape, or stakes) and use signage to encourage people to practice social distancing.
- Allow your customers to choose from a number of POS systems to prevent a congested crowd from forming.
- All staff must use proper protective gear, such as masks, hairnets, and gloves when handling food.
- Make a hand sanitizing station available upon entry to each food location.

Require that staff rigorously adhere to the following food guidelines:

## FOOD PRESENTATION

Consider shifting to serving food items that can be:

- Handled or eaten with little to no touching
- Consumed on a stick
- Wrapped in foil or plastic
- Eaten out of a bowl with a utensil
- Made portable

This eliminates the need for common dining space, mitigating your more crowded areas. Any common dining space must be disinfected at regular intervals.

# FOOD & DRINK STATIONS CONT.

## TABLES

Even if they are not in common dining spaces, it is still very important to keep any surface where people are eating as clean as possible.

- Have staff clean tables after each use.
- Have staff make sure no trash, trays, nor food is left on empty tables.
- Table spacing must be made to follow social distancing guidelines.

## CONDIMENTS

- Remove any self serve condiment supplies
- Instruct your staff to provide any items to the guest from behind the counter.
- Remove containers of forks, spoons, knives, straws, toothpicks, napkins. Have your staff distribute these items when they are requested.

## TRASH

- Empty/check trash every 30 minutes.
- Make sure there is no lid on trash can that customer has to touch.
- If you must use trays, have staff accept them regularly, so they do not stack up.
- Have hand sanitizer available near trash can area.

# FARMER'S MARKETS

As traditional outlets for purchasing our fresh produce have become overly complicated, more consumers are turning away from their traditional grocery stores in favor of an option with more local flair. Farmers markets are answering the call and providing more farm fresh produce to keep up with demand. Help customers feel comfortable taking advantage of this often under-utilized resource by considering the following adaptations.

- Any staff members interacting with farm produce or merchandise, that is to be purchased by the customer, must be wearing gloves.
- Consider offering your customers curbside pick-up options so that they don't have to leave their vehicles.
- Establish hand washing stations or hand sanitizing stations throughout the market.
- Create a physical indicator for your guests to keep distance from one another. Mark the ground with a visible indicator (such as tape, or stakes) and use signage to encourage people to practice social distancing.
- Allow your customers to choose from a number of POS systems to prevent a congested crowd from forming.
- Offer produce bags for customers to take their product home in order to minimize contact between your staff and the public.
- Offer gentle reminders to your customer by establishing some best practice signs throughout the market. Encouraging your customer to practice good habits will help them feel as though you take the situation and their health seriously. Signage may include:
  - Encouragement to social distance.
  - Encouragement to only touch produce they are purchasing.
  - Encouragement to clean and wash their produce at home.

# YOU-PICK FIELDS

Your farm may provide the option for your guests to pick and take home their own produce. By following the guidelines below, you can ensure your guests' safety.

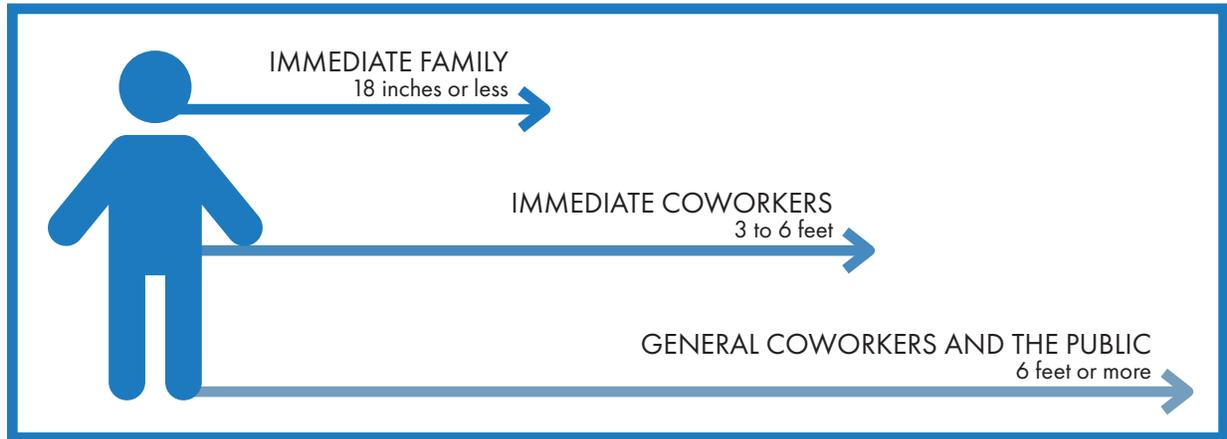
- Have staff wipe down and disinfect any containers used by customers to collect their produce. Make sure this process is visible to the customer and that they are able to receive the container directly after the thorough cleaning process is completed.
- Use signage to encourage your customer to clean and wash their produce at home.
- Establish hand washing stations or hand sanitizing stations when people have finished picking.



# PREVENTION PROCEDURES

# SOCIAL DISTANCING

Social distancing is a proven and effective method to prevent potential infection that relies on simple distance to avoid infection.



As seen in the chart above, proper social distancing means:

- Staying 3 to 6 feet away from others as a normal practice.
- Eliminating contact with others, such as handshakes or embracing coworkers, visitors, or friends.
- Avoiding touching surfaces touched by others, as much as possible.
- Avoiding anyone who appears to be sick, or who is coughing or sneezing.

# PREVENTION PROCEDURES FOR STAFF

Help your staff members to feel comfortable and properly when interacting with others while at work. Be willing to make adjustments based on feedback from your employees to allow them to excel in their work.

- Train all employees on appropriate cleaning and disinfection, hand hygiene, and respiratory etiquette.
- Have employees wash or sanitize their hands upon arriving at work, after break periods, and at scheduled intervals.
- Staff should wear gloves and masks when possible.
- If any staff member is sick, do not allow them to come into work.
- Send home any employee who has symptoms - cough, shortness or breath, chills, headache, sore throat, loss of taste or smell, diarrhea, fever, known close contact with a person who is confirmed to have COVID-19.
- Policy guidelines for employees should be posted publicly.  
Ex. Entrances, high traffic area, etc.

# PREVENTION PROCEDURES FOR GUESTS

Implementing the following procedures will encourage guests to do their part in keeping themselves safe, as well as other visitors and staff at the farm.

- Mark proper social distancing on the ground in places where customers may be standing in line or frequently gathering.
- Have social distancing guidelines for guests posted publicly.  
Ex. Entrances, high traffic areas, etc.



# **PUBLIC RELATIONS & COMMUNICATION**

# QUESTIONS FROM THE MEDIA

Cut through the media clutter and social chatter by providing your audience with straightforward information. Media questioning surrounding your closure, reopening, and opening may lead to some of the following questions. These responses can be adapted to reflect your unique circumstances.

## **Are you opening for business?**

Yes! After carefully reviewing the guidance from our state and local government, we are so excited to welcome guests to the farm. We've implemented many new techniques around our farm to adhere to proper social distancing and safety guidelines to allow our guests peace of mind while getting back out into nature at our farm!

## **Is your farm safe to visit?**

Our farm's top priority has always been our guests' safety and enjoyment. We are committed to providing our guests a safe and worry-free way to enjoy nature. Our farm is following Centers for Disease Control and World Health Organization guidelines to see that we keep our facility clean and safe for all. We have enhanced our cleaning procedures, established social distancing procedures, made hand sanitizer or handwashing stations available throughout the farm, and more.

## **How are you keeping petting zoos sanitary and are they safe for families to visit?**

Our farm has always taken pride in the exceptional care and attention we provide our farm animals. Our animal care standards will remain exceptional and include regular sanitization of animal areas and surfaces.

# QUESTIONS FROM GUESTS

Guests will certainly have many questions surrounding your closure, reopening, and opening as well. These responses can be adapted to reflect your unique circumstances and farm.

## **Why are you charging so much given the circumstances?**

A ticket not only includes access to our farm attractions, but gives us the opportunity to support our community and staff. Admission includes covering wages for employees, farm upkeep, animal care, and maintenance, to provide you and our employees the best experience possible at our farm.

## **Is it crowded?**

There is always plenty of room to spread out across the farm and enjoy the wide open fun! Our farm is going to great lengths to ensure all guests feel safe and at ease during their visit. This includes the steps we've taken to lower the number of crowds and allow our guests to practice proper social distancing.

## **How do you plan to regulate food handling and dining areas?**

We're adopting many updated practices to help give you peace of mind while enjoying a meal out on the farm! Our staff is required to wear proper protective gear throughout the food handling process, condiments have all been switched to single use or are held behind the counter, and common dining areas are being disinfected regularly.

# CLOSING COMMENTS

This plan is intended to be part of an overall effort to limit the spread of COVID-19. This packet is a draft and needs to be customized by each farm to best fit their needs and local government requirements/recommendations.

It is by working together and adopting these and other safe practices that we will be able to help limit the transmission and spread of COVID-19. The world on the other side of all of this will be different than we remember. In that new normal, we will appreciate our community and the outdoors so much more. Farms have always been extremely important and they will be even more so as people begin to look for safe ways to have fun.

Thank you for everything you do as farmers and as people.



**Audience** Media Group

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