



## Communications Resources for Farm Businesses During the COVID-19 Pandemic

On behalf of all of us here at Future Harvest, we hope you are staying safe and healthy during these trying times. Please use this document to help you create clear communications with customers about your COVID-19 safety protocols.

This document contains guidelines/info on:

- General COVID-19 Resources
- Considerations on WHAT to communicate to your customers
- Considerations on HOW to communicate to your customers
- EXAMPLES of website pages and messages farmers have sent to customers

*Disclaimer: this guide is a reference; it is not a fully comprehensive formal list. Each individual is responsible for what level of risk they are willing to take and how they communicate it to their customers.*

### GENERAL COVID-19 RESOURCES

- [COVID-19 Resources for Farmers \(Website\)](#): includes information on food safety, emerging state and local policy, guidelines for farmers and farmers markets, and more.
- [COVID-19 Safety Protocols for Food Distribution & Purchases \(Document\)](#): lists protocols for farmers markets, CSAs & on-farm pickups, and employee best practices.
- [Recorded Farmer-to-Farmer COVID-19 Discussion \(March 25\) \(Webinar Recording\)](#)
- [Find-a-farmer Map \(Interactive Map\)](#)

### COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS: PART 1 “WHAT”

#### What to communicate to your customers

1. **Past and current safety precautions your farm takes**
  - Handwashing
  - Sanitation
  - Employee Sick Leave Policies
  - Employee Distancing Policies
  - Packaging Methods and other COVID-19 Specific SOPs
2. **Be sure to specify how & when you want your customers to interact with you and your farm for your own safety**

- Is there a designated time/location/method for customers to pick up items?
- Are their specific guidelines they should follow?
- 3. How to access your products**
  - Online Ordering
  - Delivery
  - Farmers' Markets
  - Farm Stand
  - On-Farm Store
- 4. Any temporary restrictions placed on your farm by authorities**
  - Local Laws impacting your operation?
  - Delivery only restrictions?
- 5. Other considerations**
  - Your story / personal experience
  - What else do you want customers to know?

## **COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS - PART 2 “HOW”**

### **How to best communicate the above info to your customers**

- Is there an easy way to include some or all of the above information on your website? On your Facebook Page?
- What is the most common way you communicate with your customers?
  - If it's via email, have you sent out an email specifically addressing your COVID-19 safety protocols?
  - If it's via Instagram, blog, newsletter - have you found a way to communicate your safety protocols?
- What about prospective vs. new vs. regular customers?
  - Are you communicating the right messages to the right people? Without overdoing it? :)

## **COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS - PART 3 “EXAMPLES”**

### **Examples of great communications to customers**

- [Little Pond Farm](#) - see [COVID-19 Response](#) tab on the left
- [Potomac Vegetable Farm](#) - see COVID-19 info on the main page
- [Perennial Roots Farm](#) - see COVID-19 info on the main page
- Template email to send out to customers copied and pasted below ([see page 3](#))

## TEMPLATE

### [YOUR FARM NAME]'s Response to COVID-19

Here at [YOUR FARM NAME], we take health seriously. While we have always been mindful of food safety and best handling practices, we feel it is extra important to be transparent about our approach and the ways in which we are committed to everyone's wellbeing.

#### **We have always:**

- [list your food safety practices here, including but not limited to: 1) food safety certifications including GAP; 2) sanitation practices; 3) sick leave policies 4)

#### **During this time, we are implementing the following additional practices:**

- [are you practicing social distancing in the packshed? sanitizing phones? wearing disposable gloves?]
- [are you washing and sanitizing all equipment between uses?]
- [For reference on practices farms can implement, consider those listed in this document: [Safety Protocols for Food Distribution and Purchases](#)]

#### **In the meantime, you can access our products:**

- [do you have an online store? Are you offering new delivery options? Pickup options?]

#### **When accessing our products, please keep the following practices in mind:**

- Please keep an eye out for signage and directions. Best practices are changing rapidly as our knowledge about this virus evolves and we work to keep everyone safe and healthy.
- Minimize face-to-face encounters with individuals and, when interaction is necessary, stand at least six feet apart per CDC guidance.
- Do not touch anything other than what you are handed or what you are directed to pick up.
- [Pre-pay when possible and minimize the use of cash].
- [Are there handwashing stations available?]

Stay safe!

- The farmers at [your farm name]