COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

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Guidance for Pick-Your-Own Farms and Individual Farm Stands

On March 23, 2020, Governor Northam issued Executive Order 53 with guidance to specific types of businesses regarding temporary restrictions to operations during the declared state of emergency. Pick-your-own (PYO) farm operations and individual farm stands are not specifically addressed, however, consistent with other retail business not listed in paragraph 5 of the Order, these businesses may continue to operate but should limit all in-person shopping to no more than 10 patrons per establishment (or field or outdoor sectioned-off area) at a time.

All businesses have a responsibility to take measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19. It is critical that PYO operations and individual farm stands take steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19 among their staff and patrons. All businesses shall, to the extent possible, adhere to social distancing recommendations, enhanced sanitizing practices on common surfaces, and other appropriate workplace guidance from state and federal authorities while in operation.

The Virginia Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services recommends pick-your-own farms and individual farm stands take the following precautions:

- Post conspicuous signage reminding all patrons and employees to practice social distancing, cover coughs and sneezes, and wash hands or use hand sanitizer often.
- Print out and post the latest COVID-19 information sheets from the CDC and VDH in your restrooms and other appropriate places.
- Update your website and social media with detailed instructions for patrons so they understand the expectations while at your farm.
- Operators should visually screen patrons visiting the premise for signs of fever, coughing or sneezing and ban those patrons with symptoms from the premise.
- Encourage patrons to call ahead and to visit during off-peak hours.
- Offer pre-boxed or pre-bagged items for grab-and-go purchases.
- Provide hand sanitizer stations or hand washing stations for all employees and patrons.
- Managers should require patrons to sanitize their hands prior to picking and purchasing
- Provide single-use baskets or bags for patron to use while picking produce.
- Any re-usable bins or buckets should be sanitized between each use.
- Configure operations to avoid congestion or congregation points. Customers waiting in any area should maintain a minimum of 6 foot spacing.
- Eliminate on-site food service or limit service to food intended for off-premise consumption only. Eliminate seating of patrons on the premises (indoors or outdoors).