COVID-19 Best Practices for Food Handling & Customer Communication

Best Practices for Farms

The following are best practices to help farmers keep their workforce healthy, their food products safe, and to protect their businesses as much as possible during this COVID-19 outbreak. Farmers are encouraged to continue these best practices and integrate them into their farm hygiene and sanitation systems to ensure their on-farm health and hygiene standards remain at a high level into the future.

KEY TAKE-AWAYS FOR FARMERS:

1. Inform customers about:
   - visitor policies and any requirements you have for visiting your farm including physical distancing, wearing face coverings or other strategies you implement.
   - your farm hygiene practices with updates on your website and at point of sale areas such as your farm stand and CSA pickup site(s). For example, communicate how frequently you are cleaning and disinfecting sanitizing high touch surfaces like door knobs, handles, and payment devices to help protect them during their visit.

2. Do not allow consumers to contact food products:
   - Pre-bag produce and pre-box CSA shares.
   - Prevent customers from accessing coolers or other containers used to hold product.
   - Only have product out for display purposes or keep product a minimum of 3 feet away from customers.

3. Reduce crowding at your point of sale areas by:
   - Clearly designating browsing and sales areas that maintain a physical distance of 6 feet between farm staff and each customer.
   - Providing the option for customers to pre-order food using an online platform or by email/phone.
   - Extending sales hours to accommodate more customers without crowding.

4. Increase frequency of cleaning and sanitizing around areas that customers access. Ensure that all food contact surfaces have been cleaned and sanitized at least daily.

5. Have signage (not handouts) for customers at your points of sale including: 1) stay home if you feel sick; 2) send one shopper (try to leave children and vulnerable individuals at home); 3) wear your face covering; and 4) only bring service animals, no pets.