

## COVID-19 Readiness Assessment for Continuity of Farm Businesses

This is an **open-source** resource created by Pasa Sustainable Agriculture, in collaboration with Penn State Extension, for developing a continuity of business plan during the coronavirus pandemic. Farmers, market managers, and related businesses are permitted to use, modify, and distribute this resource as needed.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Create a document that includes general information about your farm if someone would need to step into your place in case of injury or illness.</b> This might include your farm's physical and mailing addresses, email address, and phone number; a list of phone numbers and email addresses for important contacts (family, employees, etc.) and suppliers; and important inventory and equipment notes.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Record your standard operating procedures if someone would need to step into your place in case of injury or illness.</b> This might include procedures for tending to crops, livestock, health and safety, recording keeping, financial procedures, human resources, etc.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Develop a protocol for everyone involved with your business to practice social distancing—on the farm, at markets, and during deliveries.</b> This includes your family, your customers, your employees, visitors, workers, etc.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Develop a protocol to ensure that everyone involved with your business is practicing proper hand washing and sanitizing procedures—on the farm, at markets, and during deliveries.</b> This includes your family, your customers, your employees, visitors, workers, delivery workers, etc. Develop more hand washing and sanitizing stations if needed along with signage on proper hand washing technique. Consider protocols for sanitizing surfaces in common areas, displays, tables, packing areas, and pick-up areas, as well as commonly handled items.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Create a plan for managing disruptions to your supply chain, if they were to occur.</b> What alternative suppliers could you use? Could you borrow equipment or supplies from another farm if needed? Do you have alternative processors should yours close?</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Create a plan for adapting to temporary or long-term disruptions to your income.</b> Do you have a line of credit for a buffer? Are you aware of available small business and personal loan availability? Are you in touch with your FSA loan officer regarding any available federal relief? Have you checked your utility, mortgage, and other payee websites for new policies and procedures for delayed or deferred payment options? How will income disruptions impact your ability to pay employees and/or offer them paid sick leave?</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Create a plan for distributing your products if your primary market outlets were to close.</b> Could you start a CSA, or expand your existing one? Have you considered an online ordering system for the general public in your local community? Do any local co-ops or groceries need more suppliers? Might your farmers market consider opening for an extra day each week? Can you open an on-site farm stand? Can you join a local food hub? What are your options for</p>

	collective marketing opportunities with other farms? Are there retail farm markets that need more product than you can supply?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Develop a plan for managing sick employees, and filling in labor gaps.</b> If an employee is sick, they should not be working. How will you handle disruptions to your workforce if one or more employees cannot work? Can you develop a list of contacts who can fill in temporarily?</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Practice good communication and stay connected.</b> As part of your daily routine, communicate any business updates in response to COVID-19 with your family, your employees, and your customers. Share relevant updates publicly on your website, through social media, or elsewhere as appropriate so that your customers know how to order from you and how to adhere to your safety procedures. Find a way to maintain contact with other farmers in your area, such as through Facebook groups, Google groups, listservs, etc.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>Document and practice a strategy for “pre-order, pre-pay, pre-pack—then delivery or grab-and-go” for any sales or bartering.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Pre-order:</i> If you do not currently accept pre-orders, figure out a way to accept them: by phone, by email, or through online ordering. If you still cannot accept pre-orders, consider how customers can select items without handling them—you or your employees should pack items, then customers grab their bag and go.</li> <li>● <i>Pre-pay:</i> Set yourself up for pre-payment, if at all possible. This can be mailing a check, accepting a credit card over the phone or online, or using cash apps such as PayPal or Venmo. If this is not possible, offer customers a cash box with a slit for accepting cash and checks. Try to avoid direct, in-person payment from customers to farmers/employees. Try to ensure a different person is handling products than is handling payments.</li> <li>● <i>Pre-pack:</i> Whenever possible, pre-pack customers’ items.</li> <li>● <i>Delivery or grab-and-go:</i> Deliver pre-packaged items directly to customers, or create a system where they can quickly grab their pre-packed bags or boxes and go. Consider alternatives such as a drive-through or delivery options. Consider offering early pickup for high-risk customers such as seniors. If customers are picking up pre-packed bags or boxes, develop procedures for social distancing and sanitizing at pick-up locations.</li> </ul>

**Have other ideas or questions?** Contact Hannah Smith-Brubaker at [hannah@pasafarming.org](mailto:hannah@pasafarming.org) with ideas or questions regarding farm businesses, or Brian Moyer at [bfm3@psu.edu](mailto:bfm3@psu.edu) with ideas or questions regarding farmers markets.