



Ontario Farm Fresh Marketing Association

Box 250 Gormley, ON L0H 1G0 905-506-0371

info@ontariofarmfresh.com www.ontariofarmfresh.com

Re: Opening of Agri-tainment Farms in Ontario

September 3, 2020

Ontario Farm Fresh Marketing Association (OFFMA) was established in 1973 as a not-for-profit, educational and promotional organization to work with farmers who market directly to the consumer. Our members are made up of on-farm markets, pick-your-own operations and agri-tainment businesses. OFFMA has close to 300 members across the province. A recent study estimated that the **direct farm marketing industry contributed approximately \$1.26 billion** to Ontario's provincial economy in 2015. OFFMA members are significant employers in rural Ontario and have welcomed millions of people onto their farms to share their experiences and knowledge of Ontario agriculture.

Ontario's fall agri-tainment farms have been overlooked in the safe reopening of Ontario. They offer 'low impact', family fun and educational activities on their farms and can easily physically distance their guests given the size of their rural operations on several acres and similar in many ways to outdoor recreational facilities, attractions and heritage institutions. These farms provide 'low impact' adjacent outdoor activities on vast rural properties in addition to farming. They provide an important outdoor family experience and are responsible for educating our communities about agriculture.

OFFMA is asking that agri-tainment farms to be listed on the provincial Reopening Ontario in Stages website, under Attractions and Heritage Institutions, to allow farms with ample acreage, outdoor 'low impact' activities to be included on this site. Gathering rules should not apply to these rural farms, but rather adhere to the guidelines that have been developed by OFFMA members. Attached are the guidelines that have been developed by in consultation with experts from Ontario and around the world, to minimize exposure to the COVID virus. OFFMA recommends that agri-tainment farms be required to adhere to these guidelines, instead of the maximum of 100 guests per farm. Clarification needs to happen for the public and public health departments who have given members all over Ontario, varying classifications. **We respectfully request that this happen as soon as possible, as these businesses are primed to open and a large percentage of their business happens during the fall season.**

If you have any further questions, please reach out to Cathy Bartolic, OFFMA's Executive Director at 905-506-0371 or cathy@ontariofarmfresh.com. She will be able to assist you.

Sincerely,

Erin

Erin McLean
OFFMA's President

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Safe Operating Guidelines for Agri-tainment Educational Farms

Capacity Reduction

Farms will reduce capacity to at or below 20% capacity. Farm properties range in size and offerings, this capacity will ensure ample space for guests regardless of acreage.

Timed Ticketing

Tickets will be pre-booked and purchased online, timed throughout the day. Entrance to farms will be contactless.

Online tickets will allow us to keep contact information for guest to trace guests if needed; information will be kept on hand for minimum 30 days, as currently required by Public Health Ontario.



Social Distancing

Reminders located throughout farm to socially distance, through both ground markings and signage

Signage

Social distancing requirements will be online, as well as large signage distributed and posted at entrance and around the farm.



Cleaning & Sanitizing

Increased frequency of cleaning & sanitizing all touch points & additional sanitization stations for guests & staff

Cleaning and Sanitization

Hand sanitizer stations & signage will be located at all attractions for guest use before entering and while exiting each attraction at farms

Cleaning staff will be moving throughout the farm to clean high-use areas including handles, railings picnic tables during times when guests are here.

Farm Activities

Any activities that would not allow for social distance measures will be removed for 2020.

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Wagon rides, will be loaded at 50% capacity and masks will be required

Corn Maze: socially distanced paths will be cut to maintain ample space and, in some cases, one directional paths.

Staff



Enhanced Team Member Training

Each team member is required to complete COVID-19 training, including emergency drills and non-contact service

Screening, Monitoring and Procedures

Staff will receive guidance on self-monitoring before arriving to work. Staff will be asked each morning how they are feeling and asked if they have any symptoms that may include a fever, sore throat, cough, runny nose, or difficulty breathing.

Anyone who arrives with symptoms will be sent home. Any staff who came in contact with that person will also have to self-distance and be sent home. Anyone who develops symptoms while at work will be immediately isolated and sent home. Follow-ups will be completed with staff who show symptoms to ensure they had completed a COVID-19 test with negative results, or isolated 14 days without symptoms before returning to work.

Staff attendance is logged each day, and if one staff were to have symptoms, we would be able to track who was on shift with them retroactive 14 days and take appropriate precautionary actions.

Staff PPE



Face Coverings

Masks provided and required to wear by all staff at all times

All Staff will be receiving orientation regarding COVID-19 procedures, following guidelines set out by Ontario Public Health.

- Training will include information on the care, use and limitations of sanitizer and masks, including how to put on and take off; and when to perform hand hygiene.

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- Staff will be given masks as part of their uniform and required to wear them during work hours.
- Staff will be given access to personal hand sanitizer and provided with staff-only washrooms.
- Staff will be given 6ft of distance from guests in all areas outdoors and separated from guests in food areas by glass or plexi-glass.

Washrooms

- Indoor washrooms will be equipped with touchless sanitizer outside the facility
- Cleaning staff will be cleaning washroom high touch surfaces hourly
- Portable washrooms with hand sinks will be added to the farm to allow for an appropriate guest count to ensure no lines will be created
- No-touch lined waste cans located in washrooms