



## Norton Farmers Market 2020 Season Plan

As concerns regarding COVID-19 continue, we have decided to modify operations for the Norton Friends and Farmers Market to begin the season. We do hope we will be able to return to some type of normalcy as the season progresses.

The plan detailed below will be in effect through at least the end of June. We will then reevaluate whether we need to continue the measures outlined below or return to a more regular market schedule that still implements measures to keep vendors, volunteers, and customers safe during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Please feel free to contact market managers Katie Dunn or Shelly Knox with feedback and questions about the information outlined below. We understand this might not be ideal but we want to ensure everyone involved with the market stays safe.

We look forward to seeing you this season!

**Market Start Date: The Norton Friends and Farmers Market will start the week of June 15, 2020.** We have decided to delay the opening of the market this year to align with the ongoing “Stay at Home” order issued by Governor Ralph Northam on March 24.

**Market Structure: At least through June, we will not have all vendors gather on Tuesdays. Instead, we will have “Mini Markets” that will take place each week on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.** We will allow a maximum of four vendors at each of these mini markets. Mini-markets will be held during regular market hours, 4-6 p.m. We will try to work with vendors to find the best day for them to attend. We are asking that each of you send us your top two choices for days to attend. The Mini Market dates for June will be the following: Tuesdays (June 16, 23, & 30) and Wednesdays (June 17, 24, and July 1). This should allow each vendor to sell at least once a week. If vendors are interested in selling two days each week, we will allow them to do so if space is available.

**Advertising Market Structure Change: We will begin advertising the market’s—hopefully—temporary structural change to Mini Markets on social media and through local news outlets.** We will also work with Mountain Empire Older Citizens and other community and regional groups to better advertise the change in the market’s structure. We understand this is an experimental move, and we will adjust as needed and as possible to make it a smooth transition to the new structure. There is a lot of uncertainty right now locally and nationally, and we hope customers will be more willing and open to adapt to changes being implemented to ensure everyone’s safety.

**Vendor Fees: Rather than collect pre-season market fees from vendors, we ask that you pay the \$5 (single space) or \$10 (double space) vending fee at each market.** We’re not sure how this season will progress or

what the long-term structure for the 2020 season will be so we believe it will be easier to have vendors pay at each market rather than a pre-season lump sum.

Vendor Booths: **Attached to this email is a PDF containing vendor guidelines for the 2020 season in light of COVID-19.** See the document titled “2020 Norton Friends and Farmers Market COVID-19 Vendor Guidelines”. We ask that you follow these guidelines for your own safety and for the safety of customers and volunteers. We have also amended the seasonal “Grow Sheet” that you normally receive along with the 2020 market rules. Both the 2020 Market Rules and amended Grow Sheet are also attached to this email. Feel free to email rules and grow sheets back or mail them to us at the following address: Norton Friends and Farmers Market, C/O Katie Dunn, P.O. Box 618, Norton, VA 24273. The primary change to the Grow Sheet is the addition of a “Price” category. If you are able, we encourage vendors to include the price for products to help streamline sales at the market and to help reduce potential crowding. We are also asking that you display a board at your booth each market that lists the products you have for sale, as well as the cost of each product. We are also asking that all products be pre-packaged, if possible.

Tokens: **We will not start distributing Kids Bucks tokens at the beginning of the market this season. We do hope to possibly start offering these again as the market season progresses.** We will be providing Debit and EBT tokens, however. In addition, Mountain Empire Older Citizens will be providing area senior citizens with vouchers earlier this year, beginning in June. We will still wait until at least July to begin offering senior tokens. Our donation amounts for both the Kids Bucks and Senior Token programs are down this year due to factors related to COVID-19. We will also be using multi-colored tickets for tokens this season to avoid re-using wooden tokens each week.