FINAL WINTER MARKET OF THE SEASON MOVED OUTDOORS WITH HEIGHTENED SOCIAL DISTANCING AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

CUDNTWN - The Winter Farmers Market scheduled for April is still on -- to provide access to locally produced, nutritious food products -- but with many changes to ensure patrons and vendors comply with national, state and local social distancing restrictions.

Illinois Farmers Markets have been deemed an Essential Business by the State of Illinois during the COVID-19 crisis because of their critical role in providing a link between local farms and citizens. According to Market Manager Kayla Graven, shoppers to the Market should consider it much like a grocery store experience: one shopper per household, do not shop if you are sick, and maintain at least six feet between yourself and other people.

“We have stripped away any of the more social aspects of the Market so that only the core function of providing local food products remains. We are also providing an online option for curbside pick-up for pre-orders that morning,” Graven said.

The in-person Market will have nine (9) food vendors on-site in the parking lot at 2nd and Washington Streets, on April 25th from 9 am - noon. The list of participating vendors is here. Many new procedures are in place. Shoppers must stay six feet apart and follow a circular path that will take them past each vendor in turn. All farm vendors will be provided masks sewn by downtown shop Wild Rose and paid for by the Market; vendors will be the only ones allowed to touch products.

Shoppers can also choose to use a new online pre-order option that includes curbside pick-up at the Market on April 25th. Shoppers can order online starting today through Wednesday, April 22nd at https://www.localline.ca/old-capitol-farmers-market. Shoppers make their selections from each farm vendor and pay each using a credit card. Then on April 25th starting at 10 am, they can drive up in the right lane of Washington Street to have their aggregated orders placed in their vehicle.

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Shoppers coming to the Market should:

- Follow CDC guidelines to wear masks, and practice good cough and hand hygiene.
- Follow the signs and arrows pointing you in the circular walking path which will take you past every vendor booth.
- NOT touch any products before buying. Vendors will bag the purchases you ask for/point to while they wear gloves.
- Pay each vendor with a credit or debit card if possible. If you must pay with cash, vendors will accept exact change (so please be prepared to “round up” and donate the difference to the vendor if you do not have exact change). There will be no cash tokens available at this Market. Only SNAP customers will be able to redeem their LINK card for tokens at the Market Booth.
- Stay at least six feet away from other shoppers and vendors.
- NOT linger in the parking lot after finishing shopping nor consume any food products while there.

The Summer Season of the Old Capitol Farmers Market is scheduled to begin on Wednesday, May 13th. DSI is currently planning to reconfigure the Adams Street location to provide more distance between booths and utilize some of the same social distancing policies it is rolling out at the April 25th Winter Market. More details about the Summer Season will be announced the first week of May.

*Downtown Springfield Inc. celebrated 20 years of overseeing the Old Capitol Farmers Market summer season in 2019. That same year, DSI added six Winter Markets to its Old Capitol Farmers Market program, once-a-month markets which had originally been developed by Illinois Stewardship Alliance. Follow Old Capitol Farmers Market on Facebook for updates or bookmark our website at http://www.downtownspringfield.org/old-capitol-farmers-market/*

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