

***Town of Weymouth
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Press Release

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Weymouth Farmers Market to Kick Off 2020 Season on June 21st

*Despite the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Weymouth Farmers Market will
begin on the third Sunday in June, implementing health and safety
precautions*

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Weymouth Farmer's Market
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Weymouth, MA – Thanks to the efforts of the Weymouth Recreation Department, Health Department, and committee overseeing the [Weymouth Farmers Market](#), the town-run market will begin June 21st, at 10AM. This will be the 11th season of the local market, however, it will have a slightly different look due to new precautions, requirements, and health and safety measures that are being taken in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. These measures are all in accordance with the guidance and requirements of the Federal and State health agencies and executive orders.

The market will be held every Sunday from 10AM – 1PM at the Weymouth High School from June 21st until October 4th.

This year's market will be similar to previous years, but will follow safety protocols issued by the [Massachusetts Department of Public Health](#) to protect against the spread of COVID-19. Shoppers will not be able to touch any products this year but will have to "Point and Pick" the items they want.

Social distancing will be maintained throughout the market by spreading out vendors and limiting market capacity. All shoppers and vendors will need to wear a mask, and vendors must wear gloves as well.

Vendors at the 2020 market will include:

- Auntie's Cake Stand
- Carriage House Farm
- The Doughnut bar
- Ellies Treats LLC
- Freitas Farm
- Herr Farm
- Lipinski Farm Inc.
- South Shore Snackery
- Sweet Addy's Kettle Corn
- Townie Frozen Desserts

"Weymouth is proud to offer the farmers market this year in spite of the COVID-19 pandemic," **said Mayor Hedlund.** "Town Staff have worked exceptionally hard to coordinate the logistic of the market, and we are happy we still can offer this resource to residents, particularly those that need access to healthy food options or have limited access to fresh, locally sourced food. In addition, this is a small way to help our local businesses and enable them to run a stand at the market to reach a clientele that they rely on every summer."

This year's market is currently limited to food vendors only, per the state guidelines. However, the Town hopes to add non-food vendors to the market once the reopening plans and public health guidance allows it. A number of non-food vendors have expressed interest in participating in the market if this option becomes a possibility.

As with previous years, shoppers will have the ability to swipe their cards and receive wooden tokens, which act as cash for market purchases. These tokens will be sold by Weymouth Farmers Market staff and can be used for purchases at the market throughout the summer.

The Weymouth Farmers Market has worked with the [Weymouth Food Pantry](#) for 6 seasons to improve access to healthy food options for low to moderate income residents. The market's Farm to Family program allows SNAP and Weymouth Food Pantry shoppers to receive double their dollars back for up to \$20 in purchases made at the market. This means that those shoppers can receive up to \$40 worth of produce, vegetables, meats, cheeses, and more for the price of \$20. This same match will be provided to Weymouth Food Pantry clients who enroll in the program at their local pop-up pantry.

In addition, the Weymouth Farmers Market offers a HIP – Healthy Incentives Program – Farmer. Through this [state-sponsored initiative](#), shoppers can use their SNAP benefits to buy fruits and vegetables from a HIP authorized farm or vendor and receive \$1 for each dollar spent on eligible fruits and vegetables, up to a monthly limit.

The market's unique Farm to Family Program would not be possible without the participation of the Weymouth Food Pantry and their dollar for dollar match of up to \$20 for qualifying participants. In 2019, Food Pantry client sales were up 92% from 2018 and up 60% from 2017. For the 2019 season, the market relocated to the Weymouth High School Parking lot, a change that overall was well received by both vendors and shoppers. This market location provides for easy of set up and breakdown, ample space for parking and opportunities to expand.

About the Market

The Weymouth Farmers Market began in 2009 with support from [Healthy Wey's Mass In Motion grant](#) which continues to provide funding for marketing, promotion, and supplies. The mission of the market is to cultivate community engagement by creating a place where residents, farmers, and producers connect for a happier, healthier Weymouth. Market programs are overseen by a Steering Committee comprised of volunteer employees from the Town offices and local organizations including the Weymouth Health Department, Mayor's Office, Recreation Division, and Weymouth Food Pantry.

The market features a wooden token system, allowing shoppers to swipe an EBT card or debit card in exchange for wooden tokens that act like currency at the market. Tokens never expire, so shoppers can keep what they don't use for more shopping later.

In 2019, market shoppers in Weymouth spent \$9,695 in wooden tokens – money that goes directly into the hands of Massachusetts' farms and small businesses. While overall shopper transactions were decreased from 2018, total food pantry and average food pantry transactions were up from 2018.

For more information on the market, including vendor participation, be sure to visit the Weymouth Farmers Market [webpage](#) or contact the Mayor's Office at (781) 340-5012. You can also follow their [Facebook](#) and Twitter.

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