

# FOOD CHAT NOTES | APRIL 30, 2020

## PRODUCER MEETUP: COVID-19 NEEDS

We appreciate your participation in a quick survey. If you attended or listened to the Food Chat, please follow the link.

[go.unl.edu/foodchat\\_4-30-20](https://go.unl.edu/foodchat_4-30-20)



### NEBRASKA FOOD COUNCIL

*Fostering new connections and encouraging action.*

### FARMERS MARKETS

Questions about farmers markets during COVID-19 focused on concerns about guidelines being different at each market, from PPE to packaging and transactional rules. There was also concern voiced about whether customers would show up at the markets, or would choose to stay home.

At this time, there are no universal requirements for farmers markets to operate during COVID-19 in Nebraska. The NDA has provided a useful set of guidelines to follow to help prevent the spread. Each market should talk to their local health department for guidance and to ensure that it is safe to open in your community.

Caitlyn Andrews from the Nebraska Department of Agriculture said they will communicate to large market managers to encourage guidelines and communication to producers.

#### RESOURCES MENTIONED:

Find your Health Department Here:

[go.unl.edu/LPHDmap](https://go.unl.edu/LPHDmap)

Find your Health Department Contact Info Here:

[go.unl.edu/LPHDcontacts](https://go.unl.edu/LPHDcontacts)

NDA Guidance for Farmers Market Operators:

[nda.nebraska.gov/COVID-19/  
FarmersMarketGuidance.pdf](https://nda.nebraska.gov/COVID-19/FarmersMarketGuidance.pdf)

### PRODUCERS COLLABORATING

The conversation turned to ways in which producers can collaborate to address some of the collective challenges during COVID-19. A common thread was, "If we [small to large producers] all work together, we can pull through with collaboration."

#### RESOURCES MENTIONED:

Buy Fresh Buy Local Nebraska Farmers Market Managers Facebook Page:

[www.facebook.com/groups/  
NEmarketmanagers](https://www.facebook.com/groups/NEmarketmanagers)

Barreras' Family Farm is putting other producers' products on their website and adding them into their weekly pick up and delivery days:

[www.barrerasfamilyfarm.com](https://www.barrerasfamilyfarm.com)

**VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR  
MORE COVID-19 INFORMATION:**

[FOODSYSTEMS.UNL.EDU/COVID-19](https://FOODSYSTEMS.UNL.EDU/COVID-19)

## TRANSPORTATION AND DISTRIBUTION ISSUES

Several producers spoke about challenges they were facing with distribution of their products to customers. Some expressed challenges finding supplies for packaging food items, such as lined boxes.

### RESOURCES MENTIONED:

Several suggestions were offered for sourcing appropriate packaging supplies:

- Uline - [www.uline.com](http://www.uline.com)
- Seven Sons Farm (IN) - availability in palates - [sevensons.net](http://sevensons.net)
- Plastilite (Omaha) - [www.plastilite.com](http://www.plastilite.com)

The image features a white banner at the top with the text "MARKETMAKER" in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The letter "O" is replaced by a stylized orange and yellow circle. Below the banner is a photograph of fresh produce, including two red tomatoes, green asparagus, and green leafy vegetables. The bottom portion of the image is a solid green triangle containing white text.

**MARKETMAKER**

**COMING SOON!**  
In response to conversation around online platforms, Nebraska Extension and our partners will be launching a statewide MarketMaker page very soon. You can create and update your profile now. Stay tuned for the official launch!  
[ne.foodmarketmaker.com](http://ne.foodmarketmaker.com)

## ONLINE PLATFORMS

Much of the conversation focused on availability of online platforms to assist with sales. Nebraska Extension updated attendees about plans to establish a Market Maker site in Nebraska, which would function as a hub for producers. With MarketMaker producers could either use the platform to list their sales (think of functioning like eBay) or link to their own existing sales platforms.

### RESOURCES MENTIONED:

Producers are encouraged to contact one of the following existing local foods distributors with online platforms:

- Lone Tree Foods - [www.lonetreefoods.com](http://www.lonetreefoods.com)  
(Contact Angelyn [angelyn@lonetreefoods.com](mailto:angelyn@lonetreefoods.com))
- Farm Table Procurement and Delivery in Western Iowa serving Omaha Metro - [farmtabledelivery.localfoodmarketplace.com](http://farmtabledelivery.localfoodmarketplace.com)  
(Contact Ellen [salesfarmtabledelivery@gmail.com](mailto:salesfarmtabledelivery@gmail.com))
- Nebraska Food Coop - [www.nebraskafood.org](http://www.nebraskafood.org)  
(Contact Roy Guisinger [royguisinger@gmail.com](mailto:royguisinger@gmail.com))

At least two new Facebook groups have formed for producers to list items for sale and for consumers to find local foods:

- The Scottsbluff area has started a facebook Farm to Table group where growers can list items and start communications with buyers, called Farm to Table - WyoBraska - [www.facebook.com/groups/604594550095991](http://www.facebook.com/groups/604594550095991)
- Another group has formed to serve the same purpose, called Nebraska Farm Market - [www.facebook.com/groups/712721015935067](http://www.facebook.com/groups/712721015935067)