

COVID-19 Update

Talbot County Emergency Services
Clay Stamp, Director, Asst. County Manager
www.talbotdes.org



Talbot County Health Department
Dr. Fredia Wadley, Health Officer
<https://health.maryland.gov/talbotcounty/>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APRIL 7, 2020

Avalon Farmers Market Reimagined, Relocated and CDC Compliant

By Amelia Blades Steward

Necessity is the mother of invention and when COVID-19 arrived on the Mid-Shore in March, many of the Shore's businesses had to reinvent how they were delivering goods and services. The Talbot County Emergency Operations Center is helping businesses and organizations to understand CDC and Health Department requirements. With the popular Easton Farmers Market scheduled to open on April 11th in downtown Easton, the Avalon Foundation, which coordinates the Farmers Market, was faced with how to provide this popular service to the community without causing a health threat to the general public.

With one of his Executive Orders, Governor Hogan declared farmers markets to be an essential service and encouraged them to remain open. According to Al Bond, Executive Director of the Avalon Foundation, "Given the uneven availability of fresh produce in stores and the many farmers who have had their businesses interrupted, the Avalon Foundation wanted to find a way to continue its Farmers Market. In conjunction with the Talbot County Office of Economic Development and Tourism, we have developed a plan to reimagine the Easton Farmers Market as a 100% drive-through market that complies with CDC guidelines."

"We applaud Cassandra Vanhooser, Director of the Talbot County Office of Economic Development and Tourism, with getting us through the hoops to do this. She and her staff took the lead and with County Council support, solved the problem," adds Bond.

If all goes as planned, beginning this Saturday, April 11th, the Farmers Market will be held from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the large parking lot behind the Talbot County Business Center (formally the Black & Decker plant) on Glebe Road. Participants will be able to drive up to the various vendors, make their selections, pay, and receive their orders through their vehicle windows or trunks with minimal contact with vendors.

“Booths will be at least 30 feet apart to allow for vehicular traffic and people will be able to queue up at the vendor of their choice. Each booth will exhibit the products available that day along with the price of items,” says Marie Nuthall, Coordinator of Outdoor Events for the Avalon Foundation.

She adds, “Vendors will take orders, 'pick' and bag products and place completed orders in people’s cars. Credit and debit cards and exact change will be accepted. In addition, hand sanitizer, provided by Lyon Distilling, will be at each vendor station for vendor use between transactions and no sampling of products will be allowed – all of which will contribute to a safe shopping environment. We are asking people not to come to the market if they are sick and to be patient, respectful and courteous. Masks are encouraged for the drivers of the vehicles to promote safe interactions when ordering and making payments.”

The Talbot County Sheriff’s Department will be on hand to monitor traffic and participants are encouraged to exercise caution when pulling away from each vendor stall.

A list of vendors and their websites, as well as their locations at the Farmers Market, is available on the Avalon Foundation’s website www.avalonfoundation.org. It is suggested that customers pre-order and/or prepay whenever possible through individual vendor sites. The vendors at the Farmers Market on April 11th include Priapi Gardens, Alaskawild Seafood, CD Produce, Honeybee Flower Farm, St. Helier Farm, The Federal Brewing, Harrington Nursery, Agave Arts & Juicing, T’s Divine Sweets, Triangle Farms, Lyon Rum, and Hoopers Island Oysters. Vendors that will have pre-orders available for pickup only are Chapel Farms, and Chesapeake Soaps and Apiary.

Vic Priapi of Priapi Gardens, an organic farmer in Cecilton, has been participating in the Easton Farmers Market for six years. He comments, “We are excited about the Drive-Through Farmers Market as it will keep us healthy, as well as the public healthy during this pandemic, while also providing bio-secure food. It is a huge responsibility to provide safe products for area residents.”

Bond adds, “We are meeting the demand for a range of products in the county while helping the vendors get their products to market. This will help the economic impact caused by the closing of a number of our restaurants.”

For further information on the April 11th Farmers Market, visit www.avalonfoundation.org.

Captions:

#1: Pictured is produce routinely offered at the Farmers Market in Easton which will open on Saturday, April 11 in the large parking lot behind the Talbot County Business Center (formerly the Black & Decker plant) off of Glebe Road in Easton. The new location will enable this popular event to continue to serve the community without causing a health threat to the general public.

#2: Map of the Drive-Through Farmers Market in Easton at the Talbot County Business Center.