



## Agriculture and Markets

ANDREW M. CUOMO  
Governor

RICHARD A. BALL  
Commissioner

October 9, 2020

Dear Partner,

I would like to take this opportunity to send a critical reminder about the State's *New York Forward* guidance as it relates to agritourism activities, which includes pick-your-own fruit and vegetable operations as well as other on-farm activities. As we continue to work to protect all New Yorkers from COVID-19, New York State is actively partnering with local governments and municipalities to strictly enforce the face covering mandate and social distancing policies across all industries in New York. It is imperative that you, as the business owner of a farm that welcomes the public, adhere to these guidelines during the ongoing public health emergency.

In early September, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo [announced](#) new State guidance for agritourism businesses, allowing families to safely enjoy their favorite fall activities while providing a boost for our farming communities and local economies in a responsible manner. These on-farm activities are considered low-risk outdoor arts and entertainment, and have been permitted to operate under the State's *New York Forward* guidance.

All farms that are hosting the public for pick-your-own operations, corn mazes, and more are specifically subject to the [Low Risk Outdoor Arts and Entertainment](#) and [Public Transportation](#) guidance. This guidance includes, but is not limited to:

- Reduced capacity in outdoor and indoor areas
- Required face coverings
- Maintained social distance between individuals/parties

As an additional resource, Cornell University's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences' Small Farms Program has issued a document to help our farms ensure their compliance. Please find these best practices here: <https://smallfarms.cornell.edu/resources/farm-resilience/best-management-practices-for-agritourism-covid/>.

I urge you to read and continue to follow the *New York Forward* guidance, as well as Cornell's best practices, so we can ensure that New Yorkers are able to continue to enjoy some of the best of New York agriculture in a safe way.

Thank you,

Richard Ball  
Commissioner  
New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets