



Downtown Yakima Farmers Market Set to Open May 24th

For Immediate Release:

April 26, 2020

(Yakima, WA) – Originally scheduled to open Mother’s Day Weekend on May 10th, The Downtown Yakima Farmers Market (DYFM) is tentatively scheduled to open May 24th and run through October 11th. The two-week delay provides time to address state mandated COVID-19 safety measures. “We wanted to open on time,” said Downtown Association of Yakima (DAY) Executive Director, Andrew Holt, “but with the uncertainty of what will be required and the time needed to prepare for those protocols, we needed to move it back two weeks. We are trying to balance the need for economic vitality with our responsibility to guarantee the safety of our community members, volunteers, and vendors.”

The Governor’s restriction on public gatherings does not include farmers’ markets as they are considered essential businesses in the same category as a grocery store. However, in essence, they are still a public gathering and thus, many safety measures must be installed and managed.

Yvette Lippert, Market Manager reaffirmed Holt’s comments. “I have been working closely with the Yakima County Health Department, the City of Yakima, and Washington State Farmers Market Association since the end of March,” said Lippert. “I’m confident we will have everything in place to allow social distancing, sanitation, and use of PPE. Unlike other markets or grocery stores, DYFM features vegetables, fruit, flowers, cheese and other products **direct** from the producer (grower). This means what you get is direct from fields to the market — no extra stops and minimal handling.” Lippert also points out that there will be fewer vendors – only those considered essential.

The SNAP/EBT programs, which address underserved and stressed sectors of the population, have seen substantial growth at DYFM and Lippert expects the increases to continue given the current conditions. Additionally, DYFM features other Federal and State food programs such as WIC, Senior WIC, SNAP & SNAP Market Match, WIC FMNP, and Senior FMNP.

The Farmers Market plays a vital role in the community. DAY is fully committed to providing a market, says Holt, as long as it is safe for everyone involved. To guarantee that, there will be many measures taken, such as the market will have a designated entrance and exit, movement through the market will be only one-way, established social distancing will be enforced along with no sampling or

touching of products, shoppers will be asked to limit their time at the market, mandated handwashing stations will be in place, and so on. This will require more financial investment and volunteers.

Yet, Holt and Lippert emphasize that “Now, more than ever, farmers markets are essential. Markets like ours offer healthy foods to communities in a fresh air setting while ensuring public safety as a first priority.”

There is still room for additional vendors. Send application to farmersmarket@downtownyakima.com

To become a sponsor or a volunteer at DYFM, contact either Lippert or Holt (contact information below).

For updates on the market:

Website: www.downtownyakimafarmersmarket.com

Instagram and Facebook pages @DowntownYakimaFarmersMarket.

Administered by the Downtown Association of Yakima (DAY), the Downtown Yakima Farmers’ Market (DYFM) is a member of the Washington State Farmers Market Association, guaranteeing product sold come directly from the producer; no resale is allowed. The Market was developed to promote Washington State agriculture, offer consumers access to farm fresh fruit, vegetables and agricultural product while also revitalizing the downtown core.

####

Contact Info:

Yvette Lippert
Downtown Yakima Farmers’ Market Manager
farmersmarket@downtownyakima.com
509-961-2055

Andrew Holt
Downtown Association of Yakima
director@downtownyakima.com
509-571-1328