

A GUIDE TO FARMERS MARKETS

Farmers markets are an enjoyable activity as you get to walk around to pick delicious local produce and other delightful foods. However, people can overlook the food safety risk that can arise from farmers markets. Below are some tips to help you ensure your food is safe to eat.

1 TOUCHING PRODUCT

Unless you are buying the product, do not touch it. This can cause added bacteria for the next person that will be buying the product. Only touch the items that you are purchasing.

2 ORGANIC DOESN'T MEAN SAFE FOR IMMEDIATE CONSUMPTION

Organic foods are produced without the use of pesticides or other additives. However, these items still must be washed once brought home.

3 SPECIAL HANDLING

Always ask the vendor if the product you are buying needs to be refrigerated or has any special handling requirements. Especially products that are prepacked such as pickles, jams, sauces, etc.

4 PURCHASING MEAT

You should never buy exposed or unpackaged meat or poultry from a farmers market.

5 TRANSPORTING FOOD HOME

You should make the farmers market your last stop before going home, especially if it is a hot day. Purchase produce first and then any meats or dairy products last. Avoid putting food in the trunk of your vehicle because the temperature in there can be higher.

6 PERISHABLE FOOD

Once you are home, immediately refrigerate or freeze any perishable products that you purchased.

7 WASH YOUR PRODUCE

ALWAYS wash your produce before consuming it. But make sure to wash your hands with soap and water beforehand.

8 FOOD STORAGE

Make sure to eat, cook, or refrigerate cut or peeled fruit or vegetables within two hours after you have prepared it.

