



## Agriculture and Markets

RICHARD A. BALL  
Commissioner

Dear Partner,

I would like to take this opportunity to send a critical reminder about New York State's New York Forward guidance as it relates to agritourism activities. This includes pick-your-own fruit and vegetable operations and 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 municipalities to strictly enforce the mask 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.

In early September, Governor Cuomo announced new state guidance for agritourism businesses, allowing families to enjoy their favorite fall activities while providing a boost for our farming communities and local economies in a responsible and safe manner. These on-farm activities are considered low-risk outdoor arts and entertainment and have been permitted to operate under New York's NY 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. Guidance includes, but is not limited to:

- Reduced capacity
- Face coverings required
- Social distance maintained between individuals/parties

In addition, Cornell University's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences' Small Farms Program has issued a document to help our farms navigate the guidance and 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 follow the New York Forward guidance, as well as Cornell's best practices, so we can ensure that New Yorkers will be able to continue to enjoy some of the best of New York agriculture in a safe way.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard A. Ball".

Commissioner Ball