

Our Community Responds to the COVID-19 Health Crisis

Description

As our community responds to the COVID-19 global health crisis, we hope that you and your family stay safe and healthy. Now more than ever, it is evident that a resilient and sustainable local community is important to our health, economy and well-being. Friends of Urban Agriculture is committed to helping build a thriving local and regional food system that is key to our being able to weather global threats such as this one.

There are several things you can do now to support local food and farmers and our most vulnerable neighbors who are feeling the impact of the measures that have been put into place to protect us:

1. **Support local farmers.** Our local farms are the key to a resilient local food system. Right now is the time to sign up for a CSA share from a local farm. Several local farms are now offering online ordering and direct delivery. Ask your favorite farm if this is an option.

2. **Shop at farmers markets.** Open air farmers markets are safe and you know where the food comes from. Farmers market operators care deeply about the communities they serve, and have taken proactive steps to protect market customers, farmers, and staff. You should practice social distancing and safe practices like only touch what you buy and use a bag over your hand to pick up items. Find our Arlington farmers markets here.

3. **Support local nonprofits serving our most vulnerable neighbors**. Please consider making a generous donation to Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC). Donations from grocery stores are down, and the demand for their services is going up. Arlington Street People's Assistance Network (A-SPAN) is committed to providing shelter and food for our homeless neighbors. Arlington Thrive provides same-day, emergency financial assistance to County residents who experience sudden financial crisis. Read how local nonprofits are collaborating during this crisis.

4.

Support efforts to feed our kids. Arlington County Public Schools is offering grab-and-go meals at Kenmore Middle School and Drew Elementary School. Local nonprofit Real Food for Real Kids is partnering with local restaurants like Bayou Bakery to offer grab-and-go meals. One Pantry at a Time is a fundraiser by teachers to get a $100 grocery gift card into the hands of every APS student that qualifies for free or reduced lunch. At Jaleo in Crystal City, a community kitchen will operate from the side door.

5. **Support local food.** Support local restaurants that serve locally sourced food by ordering take
6. 
d about restaurants offering free meals to kids and **Grow your own food.** Go out and get your hands dirty in your own yard! Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia and the Arlington Cooperative Extension have canceled their workshops, but they offer great online resources to support your veggie garden efforts. They hope to move some of their workshops to webinar format.
7. **Get involved with planning Met Park at Amazon's HQ2.** We call on companies like Amazon to be leaders in supporting urban agriculture efforts and making local food production a priority. The next two Met Park planning sessions are scheduled for April 2 and April 29. We will keep you posted if these sessions are postponed. Read about our vision for Met Park.
8. **Support FOUA.** Please consider a donation to support our work to build a resilient, community-driven urban agriculture sector that provides a fair, healthy, sustainable food system for all Arlingtonians. And if you shop on Amazon, we invite you to use Amazon Smile and designate FOUA.

We will continue to update our blog with news, resources and information as we all navigate through this global health crisis that has hit our home. We urge you to keep informed of what Arlington County Government is doing to help mitigate and reduce any unnecessary exposure and spread of COVID-19.

Be safe. Be healthy. Grow your own food!

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p.s. Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future's Food Policy Networks project is hosting a webinar this Friday, March 20 about how food policy councils can play a key role addressing food system resilience concerns in their cities.

Category

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Tags

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