

Farmers? Market aims to re-open May 23

Some sense of spring normalcy might soon return to the community as the Aurora Farmers' Market aims to re-open in a new way.

Should the Aurora Farmers' Market (AFM) get the go ahead from York Region Public Health this week, produce and food vendors will once again be greeting customers ? back on Wells Street and under new circumstances.

?Because we have been designated an essential service for only food and farm, if we're allowed to open on May 23, it will just be farmers and food vendors, with the exception of [vendor] Kim Boland for soap and hand sanitizer,? says Market Chair Cathy Williams of Catharina's Kitchen.

?There would be one way in and one way out where everyone coming in will use hand sanitizer, go around the market and come back out. We will only have so many people in at a time and volunteers and our two paid staff as well will be maintaining social distancing.?

At press time, Ms. Williams says AFW's aim to re-open for the Saturday following the Victoria Day weekend has received the enthusiastic support of the Town of Aurora ? along with Mayor Tom Mrakas and Councillor Sandra Humfries, Council's Market Liaison ? and the Municipal Bylaw Department.

Should the Market get the final go-ahead, 16 vendors have confirmed their attendance.

?Everybody is thrilled, everybody wants this,? says Ms. Williams.
?It kind of lends a sense of normalcy, which we have been lacking for a while. We're going to have as many things in place [for hygiene] as a supermarket would, but we're just going to be going outside. It's all fresh from the farm.

?The Town is behind us 100 per cent.?

Added Councillor Humfries: ?During these times when all seems to be so different and difficult, it's wonderful to hear that the province is allowing farmers' markets to open under the new safety guidelines. The AFM has worked diligently with Town Staff and Public Health Department to ensure the AFM is opening with the new safety standards while still allowing all farmers' market patrons to enjoy.

?I'm personally very excited that our Market is opening up. We need some positive news and things to look forward to and I believe the opening of the AFM will lighten spirits of our Town residents and all those who enjoy shopping on Saturday mornings beginning at 9 a.m. until 1 p.m.

?It is a bittersweet time as I know many will miss seeing our very own Jan Freedman (The Jam Lady) on opening day; If she were here, we would be busy discussing all the details

to make a perfect opening for everyone to enjoy. I know Jan will be smiling down at us and making sure all goes perfectly on May 23.?

For more information about the Aurora Farmers' Market, including an updated roster of vendors, visit theaurorafarmersmarket.com.

By Brock Weir