

Social
Democrats

Holly CAIRNS TD

Representing West Cork



HOLLY CAIRNS CALLS FOR FARMERS' MARKETS TO BE ALLOWED TO CONTINUE DURING COVID-19 EMERGENCY 31 Mar 2020

Cork South West TD Holly Cairns has today called for farmers' markets to be allowed to re-open and trade during the COVID-19 emergency.

"I've received notification from the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) clarifying that outdoor food markets, operating to all Government and HSE guidelines, should be OK to remain open," she said, referencing a response she had received to a query she had sent to the FSAI. "I'm calling on the government to work with the relevant departments to provide the necessary guidelines and re-open these vital local food supply networks."

"Some markets, such as the English Market in Cork City have remained open and procedures have been put in place to facilitate the re-opening of markets, I see no reason why responsibly run farmers markets can't trade too." Deputy Cairns said that as long as guidelines including social distancing, crowd control and sanitisation were strictly followed, it should be possible to facilitate the safe-operation of farmers markets – possibly even considering novel approaches such as drive-through or pre-ordering.

Deputy Cairns said farmers markets are valued spaces supporting rural livelihoods, from small farmers to small local producers and manufacturers. "They provide a vital link in local food supply chains and with growing concerns over food sovereignty and our capacity to produce fresh produce locally, will help address any difficulties caused by disruption to the international imports we rely on for so much of our fruit and vegetables in Ireland."

"West Cork is famous for its markets and many of our traders are very small-scale producers who rely on farmers markets as a valuable source of income. When we shut them out, we force them onto social welfare payments and see good quality produce going to waste at a time when access to fresh food has never been more important."

 +353 86 361 5830

 www.hollycairns.ie

 holly.cairns@oireachtas.ie

 www.socialdemocrats.ie/our-people/holly-mckeevercairns

Deputy Cairns has written to An Taoiseach and the Minister for Agriculture Food and the Marine to immediately act to include farmers markets as “Essential Retail Outlets” during the emergency period.



+353 86 361 5830



www.hollycairns.ie



holly.cairns@oireachtas.ie



www.socialdemocrats.ie/our-people/holly-mckeevercairns