GOOD FOOD mercantile virtual 2020
overview

With Americans spending more of their food dollars on groceries than ever before, we invite you to be part of the first Virtual Mercantile. A thoughtful series of weekly tastings in June, where buyers tune in live as they taste along with pre-shipped samples, the Virtual Mercantile is designed to connect makers and retailers of good food at a moment when time and resources are in short supply – yet the desire to support each other and build more direct supply chains has never been so abundant.

While the Good Food Mercantile traditionally convenes 500-700 buyers, food crafters often report it was a mere dozen interactions with the right category manager seeking to stock just what they are making that made the whole day worthwhile. The Virtual Mercantile, at a fraction of the cost, offers a targeted opportunity shaped by the times, to connect thoughtful food crafters with retailers seeking tasty, authentic and responsible food and drink.

how it works

DATE: Each Wednesday in June, 1-1:45 pm PST

TASTINGS: Each week on a live, moderated Zoom, a group of half a dozen food crafters will guide buyers through a tasting of up to three products each, samples of which are pre-shipped to stores. Five minutes will be dedicated to each crafter sharing their stories, their food and drink, and an inside glimpse into their kitchens and farms, a unique aspect made possible by the virtual format. A question and answer session will follow the tastings.

SHIPPING: Two weeks before their tasting, all crafters will receive a mailing label and address list of the 20-25 retailers who signed up for their tasting. Crafters are responsible for packing and shipping their samples, ensuring they are handled in the best possible way. While the five minute tasting is limited to three items, they are welcome to include more than three products in the sample box for retailers to try on their own. For most crafters, we anticipate shipping costs will be less than the cost of one plane ticket for a traditional trade show.

PRICE: Showing at the June Virtual Mercantile is $475. In most cases, total costs will amount to an investment of less than $35 for each buyer who gets to know you and what you make at the tasting. At less than half the cost of a live Mercantile and a fraction of traditional shows, the Virtual Mercantile offers a new model tailored to this unique moment in time.
**community**

**SHOWING:** To create a bite-sized, focused and easy to commit to tastings for buyers, the Virtual Mercantile is organized as 30-45 minute weekly tastings organized around a theme. Each tasting will feature 5-7 food and drink crafters who have passed the sustainability vetting process to become a Good Food Guild member. Focus will be placed on organizing vibrant and cohesive groupings so that it is easy for buyers to choose the tastings that introduce them to makers they are most likely able to work with and order from in the near future.

**ATTENDING:** The Virtual Mercantile is open to retailers and distributors, who can choose which weeks to tune into. Cost of attending each week is $35, of which $10 will go directly to a fund supporting farmworkers impacted by COVID-19. An invitation will be sent to the 800 retailers who have attended a Good Food Mercantile in the past, with special focus given to on-line retailers experiencing unprecedented sales and seeking new makers to work with. Each tasting session will be recorded, with the recordings sent to all retailers who registered in case any were not able to tune in live. Getting the Virtual Mercantile off to a strong start, the Good Food Merchants Collaborative members, listed below, have committed to being part of it:

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<tr>
<th>Bi-Rite Family of Businesses</th>
<th>Di Bruno Brothers</th>
<th>Good Earth</th>
<th>Market Hall Foods</th>
<th>Woodstock Farmers’ Market</th>
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<td>Mill Valley, CA</td>
<td>Oakland, CA</td>
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<td>Each Peach Market</td>
<td>Goose the Market</td>
<td>Market of Choice</td>
<td>World Foods Portland</td>
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<td>Foragers Market</td>
<td>Harmons Grocery</td>
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"AS WE WORK THROUGH THESE TRYING TIMES, IT IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER THAT WE FIND WAYS TO SUPPORT OUR CRAFT PRODUCERS AND LOCAL FOOD ECONOMIES. I AM SO EXCITED FOR OUR BUYERS TO BE PART OF THE VIRTUAL MERCANTILE, MEETING PRODUCERS AND TASTING THEIR PRODUCTS, ALLOWING US TO INTRODUCE MORE INTO OUR 13 MARKETS."

-JOHN BOYLE, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT OF MERCHANDISING AND PRODUCTS, MARKET OF CHOICE

![Community image](image)

**show at the virtual mercantile | $475**

Designed as a focused opportunity to connect with buyers on a human level and share your story, a glimpse of your kitchen, and the wonderful food and drink you make, this is a new kind of ‘un-trade show’ for a unique moment in time. Space is limited to 7 Good Food producers each week, all connected by a theme that ties to what buyers are looking for. Reserve your space at the Virtual Mercantile by May 8 here.

- Placement in a weekly themed tasting with 20-25 buyers
- Five minutes to guide buyers through three products, and share an insiders glimpse of your kitchen/farm
- Code for one free June tasting to share with your favorite buyer ($35 value)
- Listing with click through on the Virtual Mercantile Crafters page
- Listing in the Good Food Mercantile Program mailed to all retailers participating, not just those tuning into your weekly tasting

**REGISTER BY MAY 1 AND RECEIVE THE EARLY BIRD DISCOUNT OF $50.**

CONTACT FOR GENERAL QUERIES: Laura DeOliveira | laura@goodfoodfdn.org | 732 241 7895 | goodfoodfdn.org/mercantile/virtual