

HANDLING COVID-19

GUIDANCE FOR U-PICK FARMS

COVID-19 is not a foodborne illness. It is extremely unlikely that someone will catch it through eating. The virus is most likely to cause illness through respiratory transmission, not eating. The routes to be concerned about include being in very close proximity to many people or coming in contact with high touch surfaces.

BEST PRACTICES

- Employees should use gloves when handling money, or considering using cards to limit transfer of cash. If money is handled, hands should be washed or hand sanitizer should be used afterward.
- Postpone any large events or gatherings to avoid large numbers of people in close proximity.
- Cloth face coverings should be worn by employees while working.
- Limit the number of people at the farm at one time or space people out to prevent groups of ten or more.
 - Provide ground markers to help customers maintain six feet of physical distance.

COMMUNICATING WITH CUSTOMERS

- Communicate that customers should not come to the farm if they are displaying symptoms of COVID-19, or have come in contact with someone who has, and if they are displaying symptoms at the farm they will be asked to leave.
- Cloth face coverings should be encouraged for customer use, based on local guidance.
- Communicate to customers through signs, social media or newsletters, etc.
- Communicate that employees will not work if they have symptoms or were exposed.

CLEANING AND DISINFECTION

- Farms should provide handwashing stations and/or hand sanitizer to all guests and request that they wash their hands before entering the field and upon exiting.
 - Employees should hand-sanitize after every transaction, and should wear gloves.
- Disinfect surfaces on a regular basis, including: reusable bins and buckets, railings, doorknobs, tables, etc.
 - Use non-porous plastic tables that can be easily disinfected whenever possible.
- CDC advises using compounds on the list of EPA recommended disinfectants, which can be found at: go.ncsu.edu/epacovid-19 (**Note: this list is based on current data, but compounds have not been validated for inactivation of the virus causing COVID-19**)
 - Bleach may be used to disinfect surfaces, but the concentration is higher for COVID-19 than for everyday sanitation: 5 tablespoons bleach per gallon of water

EMPLOYEE HEALTH

- Businesses should follow CDC and FDA guidance for screening employees who have been exposed to COVID-19.
- Pre-screen employees for symptoms or fever before starting work.
- Employees with fever and symptoms should be advised to see a doctor for evaluation and should be deferred to Human Resources for next steps.

For more info, visit: cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov

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NC STATE

EXTENSION