

COVID-19 Guidance for Agricultural Workers in Idaho

May 1, 2020

All agricultural employers should have an operational plan in place to mitigate the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Plans do not need to be submitted for review or approval. However, to ensure confidence of workers, vendors, patrons, and consumers, agricultural employers are encouraged to make their plans available if requested.

1. **Ensure employee training on COVID-19.**

Agricultural employers should provide training in a way that is readily understandable by all employees, including in multiple languages if needed.

- What COVID-19 is and how it is spread.
- Symptoms of COVID-19 and when to seek care.
- Preventing spread to others if you are sick.
- What to do if an employee is sick
- Measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 at the workplace.

Post clear and visible signs in multiple locations on not working when sick, hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette, and avoiding touching eyes, nose, and mouth.

2. **Establish a protocol to maintain the six (6) foot physical distancing requirements for employees, vendors, and patrons.**

- Physical distancing should be practiced whether outdoors, in vehicles, or in structures.
- If carpooling or shuttling vehicles are a necessity and cannot be avoided, develop a protocol (including face coverings, ventilation and other measures), and train employees on control practices.
- Establish work practices and workstations, and adjust line speed and other processes, to enable employees to maintain safe social distance while working.
- If physical distancing is not possible, use physical barriers such as strip curtains, plexiglass or similar materials, or other impermeable dividers or partitions, to separate workers, if feasible.
- Consider staggering break and lunch times, and adding additional seating and shade structures, to enable employees to maintain safe social distance while on break.
- Limit crew size when possible by staggering work shifts or increasing the number of work shifts
- Establish procedures for clocking in/out that reduce crowding and consider touch-free methods.
- Establish procedures for pick up and drop off times or locations to minimize interactions between people.
- Maintain a single point of entry and exit to limit non-essential workers or visitors.
- Take steps to minimize air from fans blowing from one worker directly at another worker.
- Communicate with farm worker housing managers about ways to keep workers at least six feet apart while sleeping.

3. Identify how the employer will provide adequate sanitation and personal hygiene for employees, vendors, and patrons.

- Establish procedures for routine cleaning and disinfection of commonly touched surfaces and objects (e.g., water containers, steering wheels, door handles, shared tools)
- Ensure that bathrooms and handwashing facilities are readily accessible and are maintained to stay clean and sanitary.
- Ensure easy access to necessary supplies (e.g., soap, clean running water, single use paper towels, hand sanitizers) for adequate hand washing and for hand sanitizing.
- Ensure safe use of cleaners and proper disinfectants (see list: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>).
- Consider other workplace programs to promote personal hygiene such as building additional short breaks into staff schedules to increase how often staff can wash their hands, providing tissues and no-touch trash receptacles, educating workers that cigarettes and smokeless tobacco use can lead to increased contact between potentially contaminated hands and their mouth, and that avoiding these products may reduce their risk of infection.
- Identify how personal use items such as masks, face coverings, and gloves shall be worn, if necessary, for employees, vendors, and patrons. Wearing face cloth coverings is recommended.

4. Identify strategies for managing ill employees, which should include requiring employees with COVID-19 to stay home while contagious and may include restricting employees who had close contact with a person with COVID-19. Workers who are sick should limit their interaction with animals.

- Review sick leave and incentive policies and consider modifying them to avoid punishing sick workers (who might otherwise work out of economic necessity) if they stay home.
- Consider screening workers for COVID-19 symptoms and temperature checks for workers in congregate indoor settings, such as meat packing or other processing plants.
- Consider providing monitoring of these workers. Follow CDC Critical Infrastructure Guidance for exposed, not ill workers <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/critical-workers/implementing-safety-practices.html>. Follow CDC Discontinuation of Isolation for Persons with COVID-19 Not in Healthcare Settings (Interim Guidance), for ill workers who have COVID-19, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/disposition-in-home-patients.html>
- Consider following CDC Critical Infrastructure Guidance for exposed, not ill workers for workers who are arriving from out of state. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/critical-workers/implementing-safety-practices.html>

Resources

COVID-19 Infection Prevention for Agricultural Employers and Employees. Upper Midwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center. <http://umash.umn.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/COVID19-Infection-Prevention-April-2020.pdf>



Use of Respirators, Facemasks, and Cloth Face Coverings in the Food and Agriculture Sector During Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Pandemic., <https://www.fda.gov/food/food-safety-during-emergencies/use-respirators-facemasks-and-cloth-face-coverings-food-and-agriculture-sector-during-coronavirus>

What to Do if You Have COVID-19 Confirmed Positive or Exposed Workers in Your Food Production, Storage, or Distribution Operations Regulated by FDA. <https://www.fda.gov/food/food-safety-during-emergencies/what-do-if-you-have-covid-19-confirmed-positive-or-exposed-workers-your-food-production-storage-or>

Meat and Poultry Processing Workers and Employers: Interim Guidance from CDC and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/meat-poultry-processing-workers-employers.html>

COVID-19: Best Practices for Sharing Farm Vehicles, <https://vetmedbiosci.colostate.edu/hicahs/wp-content/uploads/sites/17/2020/04/covid19-and-sharing-farm-vehicles-v4-15.pdf>

Coronavirus/COVID-19 Agricultural Worksite Checklist, https://aghealth.ucdavis.edu/sites/g/files/dgvnsk261/files/files/page/COVID-19%20Employer%20Checklist_English_3.30.2020.pdf

Coronavirus Resources. High Plains Intermountain Center for Agricultural Health and Safety. Colorado State University. <https://vetmedbiosci.colostate.edu/hicahs/resources/covid-19/>

COVID-19 Resources for Agriculture. Pacific Northwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center. <https://deohs.washington.edu/pnash/covid19-farming>

Coronavirus (COVID-19). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Published May 1, 2020