



## COVID-19 Agriculture Workers and Employers Guidance: CDC and the U.S. Department of Labor

Informational Collaboration  
Florida Department of Health, Martin County  
University of Florida, IFAS Extension Martin County



**Purpose:** Agriculture work sites, shared worker housing, and shared worker transportation vehicles present unique challenges for preventing and controlling the spread of COVID-19. Consistent application of specific preparation, prevention, and management measures can help reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19.

### **Assessment & Control Plan**

Owners/operators should develop a COVID-19 assessment and control plan to protect themselves and farmworkers, in accordance with the [CDC Interim Business Guidance for Businesses and Employers](#) and [General Business Frequently Asked Questions](#).

- **Checklist for COVID-19 assessment & control plan**  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/pdf/Agricultural-Employer-checklist.pdf>

### **Workplace Coordinator**

Owners/operators should designate a qualified workplace coordinator who will be responsible for COVID-19 assessment and control planning. All workers should know how to contact the identified coordinator with any COVID-19 concerns, and the coordinator should handle such concerns confidentially, as appropriate. The workplace coordinator should have a means to communicate in the preferred languages spoken or read by the workers.

### **Managing Sick Workers**

Workers who appear to have [symptoms](#) including a fever, cough, shortness of breath, or two or more of the following symptoms including chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, or new loss of taste or smell, upon arrival at work, or who develop these symptoms during the day should be sent home.

Consider modifying leave and sick leave policies to make sure that ill workers are not in the workplace and are not penalized for taking sick leave. Make sure that workers are aware of and understand these policies.

## **Essential Workers Who May Have Had Exposure to a Person with COVID-19**

The following are recommended protection measures to prevent spread in the workplace: screening, monitoring, cloth face coverings, social distancing, cleaning & disinfection. A full description of safety practices is available at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/critical-workers-implementing-safety-practices.pdf>.

## **Cloth Face Coverings in Agricultural Operations**

CDC [recommends](#) wearing cloth face coverings as a protective measure in addition to social distancing (i.e., staying at least 6 feet away from others). Cloth face coverings may be especially important when social distancing is not possible or feasible based on working conditions. A cloth face covering may reduce the amount of large respiratory droplets that a person spreads when talking, sneezing, or coughing.

**Cloth face coverings are not PPE. They are not appropriate substitutes for PPE such as respirators (like N95 respirators) or medical facemasks (like surgical masks) in workplaces where respirators or facemasks are recommended or required to protect the wearer.**

If cloth face coverings worn in agricultural operations become wet, soiled, or otherwise visibly contaminated, employers should provide readily available clean cloth face coverings (or disposable facemask options) for workers to use.

## **Employee Ride Sharing**

- Grouping workers together into cohorts may reduce the spread of COVID-19 transmission in the workplace by minimizing the number of different individuals who come into close contact with each other over the course of a week and may also reduce the number of workers quarantined because of exposure.
- Owners/operators should maximize opportunities to place farmworkers residing together in the same vehicles for transportation and in the same cohorts to limit exposure.
- Take steps (increasing number of vehicles/trips, etc.) to limit the number of people in a vehicle and provide as much space between riders as possible.
- Highly encourage all passengers and drivers to wear cloth face coverings when in the vehicle, follow coughing/sneezing etiquette, and use hand hygiene.
- Clean transportation vehicles in accordance with [CDC guidelines for non-emergency transport vehicles](#) before and after each trip, or daily at a minimum.

## **Guidance for Larger or Extended Families Living in the Same Household**

This [document](#) explains how to: protect the household when you leave for errands, protect household members at high risk for severe illness, protect children and others from getting sick, safely care for a household member who is sick, eat meals together, and feed a sick household member.

## **Safety Guidelines for On-Farm Retail of Produce**

Farms offering produce for retail to the public can take steps to prevent spread of COVID-19 by following [CDC safety precautions for food retail workers](#).