



COVID Guidance Checklist for Farmers and their Employees (November 6, 2020)

This document outlines a draft checklist for COVID-19 risk mitigation strategies for farms. Recommended measures to be implemented are based on the hierarchy of controls, a hazard mitigation framework that outlines controls in decreasing order of effectiveness. This is a guide only and should be adapted to the context of each facility.

INITIAL ASSESSMENT PLAN

- Monitor federal, state and local public health communications about COVID-19
- Designate a workplace coordinator/camp superintendent responsible for COVID-19 assessment and control planning
 - Ensure coordinator/superintendent know OSHA requirement (immediately report to Local Health department name and address of any individual in the camp known or suspected of having COVID-19)
 - Ensure all workers know how to contact coordinator/superintendent
 - Ensure coordinator/camp superintendent communicates in workers' preferred languages
 - Ensure coordinator/superintendent provides materials in preferred languages
- Obtain emergency contact information for each worker that is willing to provide it
- Ensure workers have access to information on healthcare facilities that provide free or low-cost care to uninsured workers
- Ensure H-2A workers are aware of available health insurance plans
- Post local health department information, as well as nearest Community Health Centers, Farmworker Health Clinics, and other locations where workers can receive medical care if needed

- Post information on how to contact 911 for emergencies, including camp address so workers know where to direct an ambulance
- Establish a routine to conduct work and camps assessments to identify risk and prevention strategies

MANAGING WORKERS

- Provide education materials in workers' preferred languages on COVID-19 mode of transmission, symptoms and complications
- Ensure workers have access to current information on risk for workplace exposure, and how workers can protect themselves
- Have a plan for newly arriving workers. Ideally test and quarantine new workers for 14 days prior to integrating with workers already on the farm.
- Educate workers on how to wash hands, use of hand sanitizer
- Train workers on general social distancing measures and farm-specific social distancing practices
- Inform workers about mask policy and train workers on proper use of masks and gloves
- Inform workers on sick leave policies and open-door policy about reporting symptoms
- Inform workers on policies and protocols regarding housing, working sites, cleaning and disinfection
- Conduct training outside and in small groups, with participants 6 feet apart
- Screen workers before they enter the worksite or, if possible, before they board shared transportation
- Check workers' temperatures at the beginning of each shift, identifying anyone with a fever of 100.4°F or greater
- Use social distancing, barrier or partition controls, and personal protective equipment (PPE) to protect screeners
- Encourage workers to report symptoms immediately

MANAGING SICK WORKERS = ISOLATION PLAN

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- Immediately separate workers who tested positive and workers who appear to have symptoms from others in the workplace and their living quarters
- Provide workers who have symptoms with access to direct medical care or telemedicine, when appropriate
- Contact your local health department as required by OSHA
- Coordinate any recommended diagnostic testing with local health officials
- Have a procedure for safely transporting sick workers to housing or a healthcare facility
- House sick workers who can't be isolated in their existing housing arrangement in alternative housing
- Use local resources and partners to look for alternate housing solutions
- Train and provide appropriate PPE to personnel managing sick workers and those needing to be within 6 feet of them (gloves, gown, face shield, and face mask, at minimum)
- Monitor sick worker for worsening symptoms and have an emergency plan
- Outline who will provide for water, food, clean laundry and medical supplies available for sick workers
- Ensure sick workers avoid contact with animals, including livestock and pets
- Inform anyone who has been in close contact with the sick worker of their possible exposure to COVID-19 but protect the sick worker's confidentiality. Generally, any worker that shared transport or housing with the sick worker should be considered close contacts, as well as any additional people who may have been within 6ft of the worker for 15 minutes or more.
- Clean and disinfect the work area, equipment, common areas, and tools the sick worker used
- Clean and disinfect living quarters, common areas, bathrooms and laundry facilities the sick worker used
- If the sick worker is going to a home in the community, provide guidance to reduce the risk of spread in the home
- Work with local health officials to identify other exposed individuals and conduct testing of other employees

MANAGING EXPOSED WORKERS = QUARANTINE PLAN

- All exposed workers should be tested. Consult with your local health department for assistance with testing

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- Workers, drivers, staff members who had close contact with a COVID-19 patient must quarantine for 14 days
 - If individual quarantine is not possible then workers should quarantine in as small a group as possible. Every effort should be made for workers at higher risk for severe disease to quarantine individually.
 - Consult with Local Health Departments, County Emergency Management Agencies, or NC 2-1-1 about alternative housing
 - Outline who will provide for water, food, clean laundry and medical supplies available for quarantine workers or staff members
 - Some exposed workers may be deemed essential to continued operation of critical farm functions. This subset of workers may continue to work if they remain asymptomatic and do not test positive and if CDC guidelines for critical infrastructure workers can be met.
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MANAGING SAFE RETURN TO WORK

- The local health department will provide assistance in determining when workers may be released from isolation and quarantine.
 - Some workers may require longer isolation or quarantine times if:
 - They tested positive and/or developed symptoms during quarantine
 - They were hospitalized
 - Another worker they were quarantining with tested positive during quarantine
 - Provide workers with information in preferred languages on when it is safe to return to work and the operation's return-to-work policies and procedures as sick worker return, reassess COVID-19 transmission at the worksite and housing facilities
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MANAGING WORKSITE

- Adjust workflow to allow for at least a 6-foot distance between workers
- Have farmworkers work in alternate rows in fields to keep at least a 6-foot distance from other workers
- Place materials and produce at a central transfer point instead of transferring directly from one worker to the next
- Reduce crew sizes
- Stagger work shifts, mealtimes and break times
- Train workers to follow protective measures while on breaks

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- Workers should wear face coverings any time they are inside (including in transportation) or outdoors if 6ft of distance cannot be maintained.
 - Provide access to permanent or temporary hand washing facilities
 - When soap and water are not immediately available, provide access to hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol
 - Develop cleaning and disinfecting procedures for tools and equipment
 - Prevent or limit sharing of tools and equipment
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MANAGING SHARED HOUSING

- Adjust beds configuration to allow for at least a 6-foot distance between workers – if possible, residents should sleep head-to-toe with at least 6 feet between beds
- Consider placing physical barrier between workers in shared bedrooms
- Remove or rearrange chairs or add visual cues in common areas to support social distancing
- Minimize or avoid the use of bunkbeds
- Ensure there is good airflow - Use an air conditioner or open windows
- Increase the number of hand washing stations
- Use no-touch receptacles when possible
- Keep family members together in housing facilities
- If possible, keep the same workers together in housing facilities, transportation, and at work
- Encourage social distancing during all housing activities, including cooking, sleeping, and recreation
- Do not allow sharing of dishes, drinking glasses, cups, or eating utensils
- Provide supplies for cleaning and disinfecting common areas and living quarters
- Routinely clean and disinfect common areas and living quarters – if possible, identify a person responsible for carrying out the plan regularly
- Provide disposable gloves, soap for handwashing, and household cleaners to help residents and staff implement sanitation measures
- Handle non-disposable food service items with gloves and wash with hot water and dish soap or in a dishwasher
- Establish social distancing guidelines in laundry facilities

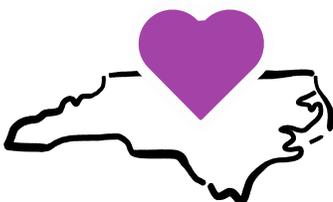
- Conduct meetings and conversations outdoors, whenever possible, to minimize congregation in close quarters

MANAGING SHARED TRANSPORTATION

- Require all riders to wear a face covering whenever they are in the vehicle
- Allow for at least a 6-foot distance or as much space as possible between riders. The number of vehicles and/or the frequency of trips may need to be increased to allow for social distancing
- Transport workers from the same crew (in housing and at worksite)
- Train riders to follow coughing and sneezing etiquette
- Increase air flow in vehicles by opening windows if weather permits. Do not set air to recirculate.
- Provide hand washing/sanitizing stations for use before and after rides
- Clean and disinfect vehicles between rides

Additional Resources

- NC DHHS: [North Carolina COVID-19](#)
- CDC: [Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers](#)
- CDC: [Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility](#)
- CDC: [Reopening Guidance](#)
- EPA: [Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2](#)
- FDA: [Food Safety and the Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)
- HHS/OSHA: [Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19](#)



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