

Dear Grower,

Important updates regarding produce safety inspections:

Produce safety inspections to resume

Produce farm inspections for assessing compliance with the [FSMA Produce Safety Rule](#) will resume effective today, June 10th with additional safety protocols for inspection staff. Inspections will be scheduled in advance during the growing season as normal. Inspection staff will follow new safety protocols that including wearing face-coverings and PPE, maintaining 6 ft social distancing, limiting in-person contact, as well as other measures to protect farm workers and inspectors during the inspection. Farms requiring inspection in 2020 include:

- Farms subject to the FSMA Produce Safety Rule with annual produce sales greater than \$500k due for routine inspection.
- Farms subject to the FSMA Produce Safety Rule with annual produce sales between \$250k-\$500k due for initial inspection.

If you have questions please contact the program inspector, Tucker Diego, at tucker.diego@vermont.gov (802) 622-4412.

Reminder to follow COVID-19 health and safety requirements

All businesses are reminded to follow the Governor's mandatory health and safety requirements to limit the spread of the virus and to keep essential farm workers and farm visitors safe. Review current health and safety requirements and sector specific guidance, including for Pick-Your-Own operations, at the ACCD website: <https://accd.vermont.gov/news/update-new-work-safe-additions-be-smart-stay-safe-order>. General requirements that apply to all businesses are included below:

- Employees shall not report to, or be allowed to remain at, work or job site if sick or symptomatic (fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell).
- Employees must observe strict social distancing of 6 feet while on the job. Businesses and non-profit or government entities shall ensure customers observe strict social distancing of 6 feet while on location, to the extent possible.
- Limit the occupancy of designated common areas, such as break rooms and cafeterias, so that occupants maintain strict social distancing of no less than 6 feet per individual. The employer shall enforce the occupancy limit and require employees to wipe down their area after use or shall ensure cleaning of the common areas at regular intervals throughout the day.
- Employees must wear face coverings over their nose and mouth when in the presence of others. In the case of retail cashiers, a translucent shield or "sneeze guard" is acceptable in lieu of a mask. Businesses and non-profit and government entities may require customers or clients to wear masks.
- Employees must have easy and frequent access to soap and water or hand sanitizer during duration of work, and handwashing or hand sanitization is required frequently including before entering, and leaving, job sites.
- All common spaces (when open) and equipment, including bathrooms, frequently touched surfaces and doors, tools and equipment, and vehicles must be cleaned regularly and, when possible, prior to transfer from one person to another, in accordance with CDC guidance.
- Prior to the commencement of each work shift, pre-screening and health survey shall be required to verify each employee has no symptoms of respiratory illness (fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, sore

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throat, new loss of taste or smell). At the present time non-contact thermometers are in short supply, however employers shall immediately order, and use their best efforts to obtain, thermometers in order to conduct routine temperature checks.

- Signs must be posted at all entrances clearly indicating that no one may enter if they have symptoms of respiratory illness.
- When working inside, open doors and windows to promote air flow to the greatest extent possible and limit the number of people occupying a single indoor space.
- No more than 3 people shall occupy one vehicle when conducting work.
- No symptomatic or COVID-19 positive workers are allowed on site and any worker(s) who have contact with a worker or any other person who is diagnosed with COVID-19 are required to quarantine for 14 days.
- All operations shall designate a health officer on-site at every shift responsible for ensuring compliance with the Executive Order and the Addenda thereto and applicable ACCD Guidance. This person shall have the authority to stop or modify activities to ensure work conforms with the mandatory health and safety requirements.
- All business, non-profit and government operations must use remote work whenever possible.
- All employees, including those already working (except healthcare workers, first responders, and others already trained in infection control, personal protection/universal precautions), must complete, and employers must document, a training on mandatory health and safety requirements as provided by VOSHA, or another training program that meets or exceeds the VOSHA-provided standard. Employers who need translations of the training have one week from the release of the translated training to complete this requirement.
- All businesses that have been closed for 7 or more days during the state of emergency must complete and keep on file a reopening and training plan (businesses with fewer than 10 employees at any physical location are not required to create such a plan, however, they must follow all other guidelines and employees must take the VOSHA training). VOSHA and the Agency of Commerce have provided a template at <https://accd.vermont.gov/covid-19/business/restart>.

Sincerely,

The Produce Program team

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