

U-Pick Operation Guidelines under COVID-19

The CDC, FDA and USDA have no reports at this time of human illnesses that suggest coronavirus can be transmitted by food or food packaging.

U-Pick operations are unique with customers going out into the field to do their own harvesting. This creates special situations for the grower and customer. How do you protect the customers, workers, and grower?

Questions to ask yourself:

1. How many customers will you allow to pick at one time and how will you manage this?
2. Will you provide picking containers, or do you expect the customer to bring their own?
3. Will you provide harvest tools, or do you expect the customer to bring their own?
4. Where are your handwashing facilities located? Do you need to add more or change the locations?
5. How will you provide produce to those who are unable to enter your retail area or conduct U-Pick activities?
6. What areas will need frequent [cleaning and sanitation](#)? What products will you use for this task?

Customer notification prior to arriving

1. Use your social media site to inform potential customers how you are going to run your U-Pick operation with COVID-19.
2. Inform customers that they must maintain 6 ft social distance from other customers and employees.
3. Let them know that handwashing stations and hand sanitizers will be available when they arrive.
4. Encourage your customers to come alone. Leave family at home. Only someone picking should be in the field.
5. Let them know if you will provide picking containers or they need to bring their own.
6. Face coverings are required for customers. If a customer arrives without one, or refuses to wear one, they cannot enter retail and production areas. Alternative methods of obtaining produce should be made available to them.

Upon customer arrival

1. Encourage everyone to wash their hands prior to going into the field.

2. Inform customers where they can pick and how many people are allowed in the field at one time.
3. Direct customers to wear face coverings and to practice social distancing.

Handwashing

1. Have handwashing stations at several locations on the farm. These should be conveniently located. If the field is not next to the check out area have handwashing stations out in the field.
2. Everyone should wash their hands often for 20 seconds with soap and water. This means as soon as customers come to the farm, if they stop to eat, when they use bathroom facilities, etc. If hand sanitizers are available customers should wash hands then apply hand sanitizers. The sanitizer should be at least 62% alcohol.
3. Post [handwashing signage](#) in the appropriate language at each handwashing station.
4. Designate the responsibility of monitoring handwashing facility supplies (water, soap, paper towels) to an individual. Provide ample supplies for restocking.

Field Picking

1. There different ways to handle picking. The number of pickers can be restricted at any one time or pick every other row. Whichever system is used there needs to be someone in the field to enforce the rules.
2. Consider what you supply to the customer when they go into the U-Pick areas. Harvest tools, containers, wagons, etc. Ensure that you can properly clean and sanitize these commonly touched surfaces.

Employees

1. Train all employees on proper handwashing and food safety.
2. In New Jersey employers must provide face coverings and gloves for their employees.
3. Handwashing is critical when dealing with customers (see above).
4. Hand sanitizers should be used between each customer by employees at checkout.
5. Touchpads should be sanitized between payment uses.
6. One person should handle money when checking out customers.

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