



COVID-19

GUIDE FOR SEASONAL AGRICULTURAL WORKERS

Health and
Social Services
Haldimand and Norfolk

What is COVID-19 (novel coronavirus)?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that circulate both in humans and animals. Human coronaviruses are common and are typically associated with mild illness, similar to the “common cold” or more severe illnesses, such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS).

How does it spread?

Coronaviruses spread through **droplets** from an infected person who coughs or sneezes. Through these virus-laden droplets, it can spread to people who you spend a lot of time with (close contacts) such as household members – similar to how the flu and other respiratory illnesses spread. If someone with a coronavirus coughs on a surface, and you touch the surface and then touch your eyes, mouth or nose with an unwashed hand, the virus could infect you.

Coronaviruses may survive on surfaces for a few hours or up to several days. This may vary under different conditions (e.g. type of surface, temperature or humidity of the environment).

If you think a surface may be infected, clean it with disinfectant to kill the virus and protect yourself and others. Also clean your hands regularly with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Avoid touching your eyes, mouth, or nose.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms include fever, cough, difficulty breathing.

Who is most at risk?

Risk of severe disease may be higher if you have a weakened immune system. This may be the case for:

- people aged 65+; or
- people with chronic disease such as diabetes, cancer, heart, renal or chronic lung disease.

How farmers and migrant workers should be prepared?

1. Have a COVID-19 Plan for your workers. This should include having a separate room or living accommodations to isolate ill persons, increase cleaning and disinfection schedules; promotion of hand hygiene; providing food and potable water to those who are on isolation orders.
2. Reach out to the Health Unit for COVID- 19 resources. Contact the EHT hotline at 519-426-6128.
3. Promote respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene.
4. Provide adequate hand washing supplies at the hand wash sink(s).
5. Provide hand sanitizer.
6. Prepare a cleaning and disinfection plan/schedule. There should be increased cleaning and disinfection.

Promoting practices to prevent the spread of COVID-19

The Health Unit advises that farmers share information regarding:

- Hand hygiene - hand washing posters
- Ensure workers have tissues and bins to dispose of garbage
- Providing hand sanitizers that contain at least 70% alcohol based rubs.

- Ensure signs are posted at each bunkhouse entrance and in the washroom and kitchen areas
- Provide disinfectant for workers to clean counter tops, bathrooms, door handles (including fridges/freezers), and other surfaces and equipment that are commonly touched.
- Make sure that workers have access to these supplies at the worksite, in common areas and in the bunkhouses

Prevent the spread of COVID-19

1. Workers are to be kept on the farm(s) for at least 14 days from the day they arrive in Canada.
2. Any seasonal worker(s) under isolation **must not** leave the bunkhouse. This means no working on the farm during the isolation period. If there is a fenced perimeter outside/around the bunkhouse, workers would be able to go outside. They must exercise physical distancing of no less than 6 feet between each worker.
3. **Upon workers arrival**, inquire if they have symptoms of COVID-19. Monitor the health of workers who are self-isolating, as well as any worker who becomes sick after the 14 day isolation.:
 - a. Isolate workers.
 - b. Communicate with the workers on a daily basis during the self-isolation period.
 - c. Maintain a record of daily responses received.
 - d. If workers symptoms worsen, call ahead to report to a medical facility before taking them to the medical facility. This allows the medical facility to make arrangements for a suspect COVID-19 case.
 - e. Workers with respiratory symptoms should take a private vehicle and not public transportation.
 - f. If you need to take the worker to the hospital, the worker should sit in the back seat of the vehicle:
 - i. Only one person and the worker should be in the vehicle
 - ii. Lower the windows, if possible.
 - iii. Provide a mask to the worker.

4. **After the 14 day isolation is over;** if a worker reports having COVID-19 such as fever, cough, or shortness of breath:
 - a. Ensure the worker stops working immediately and is isolated.
 - b. Notify the health unit by calling phone 519-426-6170 ext. 9999
 - c. Follow the above noted actions in #3 if the worker needs medical attention.
 - d. Workers should be isolated for 14 days from the onset of illness.
 - e. If the workers symptoms last for more than 14 days, the worker should remain isolated until 24 hours after the symptoms have resolved.
 - f. Ensure there is adequate food and water provide for the worker. The worker should not be allowed to go to the store.
 - g. If the workers symptoms worsen, please follow the actions in the above section in #3.
 - h. If the worker is tested positive for COVID-19, a list of close contacts should be provided to the health unit.
 - i. The worker must be cleared to return to work or leave the country by the health unit.

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