

# SAMPLE COVID-19 FARM SAFETY PLAN

## Agriculture

**NOTE:** Using a fictitious fruit and vegetable grower with 5 full time employees, 15 temporary foreign workers (TFWs), and 15 temporary local workers as an example, this sample safety plan shows how one agricultural employer can create a plan tailored to their business. This fictitious employer is located in Windsor-Essex and includes on-site bunkhouses for TFWs as well as an open air/roadside seasonal fruit and vegetable stand, open to the public.

### COVID-19 Safety Plan – WSPS Farming Operation

**Business name:** Old McDonald Farm

**Revision date:** New

**Date completed:** February 11, 2021

**Developed by:** Johnny and Moira McDonald (Owners)

**Division/group:** N/A

**Date distributed:** February 11, 2021

**Others consulted:** Bobbi Lenard (H & S representative), Farm workers, fruit & veggie stand Workers, and Supervisors

**For more information visit [WSPS.CA/COVID19](https://www.wsp.ca/covid19)**

NOTE: This document is intended for informational purposes only to provide an overview of the potential hazards posed in the workplace due to COVID-19. It is not intended as medical or scientific advice, to provide a comprehensive risk assessment for all workplaces, or to replace any legislated workplace safety obligations. Due to the ongoing evolution of the situation in Ontario and around the world, this document may be used as a guide for Employers in addition to guidance delivered by government and public health authorities, including, but not limited to the [World Health Organisation \(WHO\)](https://www.who.int/), [Ontario Ministry of Health, Public Health Ontario](https://www.health.gov.on.ca/) and the [Centres for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](https://www.cdc.gov/). Any use which is made of this document by any Employer, or any reliance on or decisions to be made based on it, is the responsibility of the Employer. WSPS and its partners, officers, directors, employees, agents, representatives, suppliers and service providers accept no responsibility for any errors or omissions in content or for damages of any kind or nature suffered by any Employer or any third party as a result of use of or reliance on this communication.

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### 1. How will you ensure all workers know how and are able to keep themselves safe from exposure to COVID-19?

Note: If any of the people listed in this plan are away from work (example – on vacation or off sick), Johnny and Moira (Owners) will make sure someone else is assigned to complete their tasks.

#### Staying up to date

- Every Monday and Thursday Johnny, will check Ontario.ca and our health unit website for any updates including a check of the current local level (colour).
- Johnny will maintain a current understanding of all relevant COVID-19 screening requirements, regulations and local by-law requirements.
- David and Roland (Farm and Stand Supervisors, respectively) are required to inform Johnny and Moira of any relevant information they see in the news.

#### Communication with Workers

- David (Farm Supervisor) will circulate this plan to all Supervisors. A copy will also be placed on the Health and Safety bulletin board in the breakroom for all workers to access. Any other COVID-19 safety related information will also be posted on the bulletin board with the date it was posted clearly marked.
- All workers are responsible for checking the board for new information each shift. Information posted will be made available in both English and the language of majority in the workplace (based on temporary foreign workers).
- Worker debriefs will be done outside (physically distanced) where possible. Sign off on training, and a confirmation of understanding test will be performed and collected by David.
- All updates will require additional training which will be documented and recorded by David. He will also post the updates on the Health and Safety bulletin board.
- All shifts will start with a 5 minute meeting led by the Supervisors. The meetings will include the presentation of any new information and changes to process or policy, or a reminder of key COVID-19 safety measures. The meeting will be held outside when possible and everyone attending will wear a mask and maintain physical distance throughout. The information discussed and relayed to workers will be documented.
- David is responsible for making sure that the workers' contact information is kept up to date. All workers are responsible for informing David if their information changes.

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### Worker training

- Workers will be trained on donning and doffing masks using government videos. Training and instruction will be provided upon hire and/or during a COVID-19 specific training session. No workers will be permitted to work at Old McDonald Farm until they have received the training. Re-training will be provided on an as-needed basis (i.e. improper use, government update, etc.).
- Important health and safety information will be discussed with workers and provided in hard copy and during a training session by Johnny or Moira.
- For Temporary Foreign Workers (TFW), translators will be used on an as-needed basis to communicate the required information if they are not able to read or comprehend English.
- Workers will be told, both in orientation training and COVID-19 specific training, not to come to work if they are sick. They will be provided with information about what to do if they develop symptoms, where the online self-assessment tool can be found, and who their workplace contact is should they need to inform us. Workers are encouraged to use available COVID-19 tracking and exposure tools, such as the [Canadian COVID Alert app](#).
- Workers will be notified that screening will be performed prior to entry of each shift.
- Resources and tip sheets such as how to commute safely and where to access mental health supports will be shared orally and posted on the Health and Safety bulletin board.
- Workers will be trained on the cleaning and disinfection procedures and schedule, during orientation training, and again as often as deemed necessary (i.e. improper cleaning, government update, complaint, etc.).

## 2. How will you screen for COVID-19?

### Screening Workers and Management

- Workers and Management must complete the [Ontario COVID-19 Screening Tool for Workplaces](#) each day before leaving home/living accommodations. They must provide their completed assessment each day to their Supervisor, and copy David prior to their shift.
- David and Roland must verify that these assessments for each of their workers have been received and reviewed before they can begin work each day. If workers forget to provide their assessments, David or Roland must ask them and document the responses to the screening questions before they will be permitted to start their shifts. A simple chart will be used to confirm each day that each worker has been actively screened. Hard copies of screening forms, as well as the chart confirming active screening will be retained by David.

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- Upon arriving at work, David and Roland will perform active screening of their respective workers, using the thermometer and confirming no symptoms of COVID-19 upon arrival. This will be recorded on the Active Screening form and submitted to David daily for retention of information.
- Should symptoms begin during their shifts, workers will be required to immediately notify David or Roland and go home (or to their accommodations) and contact their health care provider or Telehealth Ontario (1-866-797-0000) for next steps and provide an update to their respective Supervisor.

### Screening other work-related visitors (e.g., maintenance, delivery, inspection, etc.)

- David will ensure that a sign is posted on the fruit and veggie stand and the main entry gate to the farm, asking all work-related visitors to call the Supervisor on duty at the number provided and to wait outside. David or Roland will then ask the questions in the [Ontario COVID-19 Screening Tool for Workplaces](#), as well as complete active screening temperature checks, and record the date and time of the visit, name, contact details and note of screening outcome (admitted or denied entry). Records of screening will be kept/provided to David for retention.
- A sign leading to any building/room/area in the workplace outside of the fruit and veggie stand will advise all visitors that it is for worker use only.
- David will ensure the work-related visit records are maintained for at least 30 days.

### Screening Customers

- Screening questions will be posted on our outdoor/open air fruit and veggie stand for customers advising them of our safety plan requirements and restrictions.

## 3. How will you control the risk of transmission in your workplace?

### Maximize distance and separation

- Jobs will be assigned to minimize the number of worker interactions.
- All efforts will be made to ensure Farm Workers maintain a separation of 6ft/2m while working in the fields. This will include staggering workers entering the field and their work locations.
- All bus transportation for the Farm Workers to the fields from the bunk houses will require a separate seat per person, forward-facing and masks will be required at all times.
- Bunk houses will be operated and managed based on local COVID-19 requirements and occupancy restrictions.

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- Where possible, start times, breaks and lunches will be staggered to prevent congestion and support physical distancing.
- Break rooms and areas will have limited capacity posted, and workers are required to maintain a minimum separation of 6ft/2m when eating, drinking, or smoking in designated areas.
- Where appropriate, indicators like masking tape will be placed on tables/benches to indicate 6 ft/2m spacing to help workers achieve this separation.

### Source control masking and using personal protective equipment

- All workers must wear a mask at all times when inside buildings (e.g. Maintenance Building, etc.), excluding bunk houses.
- Only when working in the field at a minimum separation of 6ft/2m are Farm Workers permitted to remove their masks.
- David and Roland will continually monitor their workers and ensure masks are being worn properly.
- Any violation of mask or plan requirements must be reported to Roland so that he can speak to the individual and follow up as necessary.
- David will ensure that masks are available for anyone who needs one.
- David will provide training and information to all workers on the proper use and care of a mask and a face shield. Records of training will be documented and retained.
- David will ensure there is up-to-date and clear signage at the entrances of the buildings clearly stating that all individuals must wear a face covering when entering the premises.

### Transmission from surfaces and objects

- All commonly touched surfaces and shared areas will be cleaned at minimum at the start of the day, and again after lunch and before the end of the shift. This includes the bus, farm tools, cash registers, counters, doorknobs, and washrooms.
- Bunk houses will be disinfected prior to occupancy, and will be cleaned daily, following the sanitation schedule.
- Whenever possible, Farm Workers will be provided with their own tools to be used throughout their shift. Where tools are required to be shared, they must be disinfected prior to another worker using them, in accordance with the sanitation procedure.
- Wherever possible, fruit and veggie stand workers will be assigned for a specific job for the duration of their shift to prevent rotation and sharing of tools/equipment/common surfaces.

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- Johnny and Moira will ensure that all cleaning and disinfection products are Health Canada-approved as effective against COVID-19.

### Hand and respiratory hygiene

- Roland will make sure that hand sanitizer is always available at fruit and veggie stand and at the cash register. In addition, Roland will ensure that hand sanitizer is available at the front of the bus used to transport workers from the bunk houses to the field.
- David and Roland will provide each worker with a bottle of hand sanitizer to keep on their person for use throughout the shift, or will make sure the workers have ready access to sanitizer where they are working. Workers are expected to alert their respective Supervisor when they need another bottle.
- Public health posters on washing hands and on cough and sneeze etiquette will be posted in each washroom.
- The person responsible for cleaning the washroom will make sure paper towel is restocked frequently, and washroom garbage bins are emptied daily.
- Hand sanitizer will also be provided for use in the bunk houses at minimum during any quarantining and/or isolation periods.
- For the port-o-johns located in the fields, workers are required to wash their hands after each use. Workers are also required to use hand sanitizer after exiting the port-o-john.
- Workers will wash their hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer frequently

### Ventilation and airflow

- Roland and David will walk through the workplace buildings (e.g. Maintenance Shop, etc.) every morning and open any windows and doors to allow for airflow, when weather permits.
- Johnny will coordinate maintenance of the air-handling (HVAC) systems according to the manufacturer's schedule and keep records in the office.
- The ventilation system will be left on overnight.
- The bus used to transport Farm workers from the bunk houses to the field will have all windows open, weather permitting.

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### 4. What will you do if there is a potential case, or suspected exposure to, COVID-19 at your workplace?

#### Procedure if someone becomes ill in the workplace (Farm or fruit/veggie stand)

- Workers should immediately notify their Supervisor if they start to experience COVID-19 symptoms or if they notice someone else showing symptoms.
- Call 911 if a person is experiencing severe and potentially life-threatening symptoms, such as difficulty breathing.
- If a customer becomes ill, they should leave the fruit and veggie stand as soon as possible. Workers must maintain physical distance, and any worker who must go closer than 2 metres (e.g., for first aid), must be wearing PPE (gloves, mask and face shield).
- If a worker becomes ill, they must inform their Supervisor immediately. The worker must continue to wear a mask. They should go directly home, contact their doctor or Telehealth, and follow the instructions given.
- The Maintenance Shop may be used as an isolation room for an ill worker if they cannot leave the premises right away (e.g., waiting for a ride) and cannot wait outside.
- In the event that the ill worker, or any workers requiring isolation due to exposure or awaiting test results lives in the onsite bunkhouse, Johnny and/or Moira will follow our local health unit's guidance for isolating the worker in separate accommodations (e.g. separate isolation room within farm or hotel).

#### Process for a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the workplace

- Workers must contact David if they are diagnosed with COVID-19 or test positive. David will ensure that all possible and suspected cases are reported to Johnny and Moira.
- David will ask whether a public health nurse or case manager has given any information on next steps, and whether the worker thinks they may have been infected at work.
  - David will complete an accident report form as soon as possible.
  - If the worker or a public health official believes that the illness may be from workplace exposure, David will report to the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development and the farm's Health and Safety representative within 4 days, and to the WSIB within 3 days.
- David will contact our local public health unit to let them know that there has been a case at the farm and ask for further direction.

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- David will inform all workers that there was an infected person at the farm, making sure that the person confirmed to have COVID-19 is not identified.
- David will keep in touch with the sick worker while they are off work and keep in touch with the WSIB if required. David will also keep in touch with any workers who have to self-isolate and share information about supports that may be available.
- A worker with COVID-19 will be allowed to come back to work after they have isolated for at least 10 days, don't have a fever and their symptoms have been improving for 24 hours, or as otherwise instructed by public health or their doctor.
- A worker who has been self-isolating because they were a close contact will be allowed to come back to work 14 days after their last contact with the ill person or as otherwise directed by public health.

### 5. How will you manage any new risks caused by changes to the way you operate your business?

#### **New Risk: More exposure to cleaning chemicals, and workers using new chemicals.**

- All workers will be trained on safe use of all cleaning supplies which we will be using, and Roland will make sure that the safety data sheets are in the binder located at the Health and Safety bulletin board.

#### **New Risk: Heat stress may be more likely due to the use of masks and potential that workers will drink less water throughout their shift as a result.**

- Water will be made available for both Farm and fruit and veggie stand workers.
- Heat stress training will be provided by David, and the reminder to stay hydrated will be stressed.
- We will post heat stress posters and reminders on symptoms and precautions on the Health and Safety bulletin board.

#### **New Risk: Mental health impacts because of customer demands, risk of infection due to contact with the public, temporary foreign workers living together in the bunk houses, and other changes and stress caused by the pandemic.**

- We will establish regular check-ins with workers about how they're doing and make sure all workers have access to mental health resources and supports.



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### **New Risk: Violence and harassment hazards due to customers being frustrated with the new protocols.**

- De-escalation and violence prevention training will be arranged by David as soon as possible for all Supervisors and Workers.
- Workers are to call a Supervisor over if a customer or visitor shows signs of irritation or anger.

## 6. How will you make sure your plan is working?

- David and Roland will get feedback from workers through regular conversations and pre-shift meetings, about the controls in place and if they are appropriate and/or causing concerns. All feedback will be provided to Johnny and Moira for review.
- Johnny and Moira will reach out to Bobbi (HS Representative) to gather information that may have been brought to her and ask for input on any changes needed to the plan.
- Johnny and Moira will have a check in with David and Roland every Friday morning about how the plan is going and review any feedback. Additional check-ins will also be held if there are changes to guidance or a major issue identified.
- Any changes to the plan will be communicated to workers through training at their pre-shift meeting, or in a COVID-specific training session, if required.

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## COVID-19 Safety Plan Snapshot – Agriculture

**Business name:** Old McDonald Farm**Revision date:** New**Date completed:** February 11, 2021**Developed by:** Johnny and Moira**Division/group:** N/A**Others consulted:** H & S representative,  
Farm and fruit and veggie Stand Workers,  
and Supervisors**Date distributed:** February 11, 2021

### MEASURES WE'RE TAKING

#### How we're ensuring workers know how to keep themselves safe from exposure to COVID-19

- Our owners are regularly checking health information and news to keep our protocols up to date and compliant with government requirements.
- The Health and Safety bulletin board is kept up to date with COVID-related information for our workers.
- Each shift begins with a pre-shift meeting in which COVID-related information and reminders will be discussed.
- All workers receive orientation training and COVID-19 specific training which will include information pertaining to the donning/doffing of personal protective equipment, workplace requirements, precautions, and expectations.
- Voicemail and posters at our farm inform everyone of safety measures.

#### How we're screening for COVID-19

- All workers are required to complete a screening questionnaire prior to leaving their homes/accommodations before their shift.
- Once arrived at the workplace, all workers and people entering for work-related purposes will receive active screening prior to entering.
- Screening questions are posted at the entrance gate.

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### How we're controlling the risk of transmission in our workplace

- Maximize distance and separation
  - Work and break times will be assigned to ensure separation of Workers.
  - All bus transportation for the Farm Workers to the fields from the bunk houses will require a separate seat per person, forward-facing and masks will be required at all times.
  - We are following provincial and local health rules for occupancy and building capacity. These rules and expectations are posted.
- Source control masking
  - All workers and visitors are required to wear a mask while inside the buildings. The only exception for workers is the bunk house.
  - Only when working in the field at a minimum separation of 6ft/2m are Farm Workers permitted to remove their masks.
  - Signage outlining the requirements will be posted at the entrances of the buildings.
- Transmission from surfaces and objects
  - High touch surfaces are cleaned and disinfected at the start of each day, again after lunch and before the end of the shift.
  - Individual tools and workstations will be assigned, wherever possible. If not feasible, proper disinfection is required before sharing tools or workstations.
  - Bunk houses will be disinfected prior to occupancy, and will be cleaned daily, following the sanitation schedule.
- Hand and respiratory hygiene
  - Hand sanitizer is available throughout the workplace (including the bunk house, bus and port-o-johns), and individual bottles provided to all workers.
  - Signage is posted to remind everyone how to properly wash their hands and cough/sneeze etiquette
- Ventilation and airflow
  - When it's possible, all doors and windows will be kept open.
  - The building ventilation system is being maintained to ensure it is working properly.

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### **What we will do if there is a case, or suspected exposure to, COVID-19 at our workplace**

- Support workers who are sick or self-isolating.
- Follow public health direction, and share information if needed.
- Communicate with our workers and customers.

### **How we're managing any new risks caused by the changes made to the way we operate our business**

- Added supports for mental health, posted material, provision of water throughout the workplace, and added training for new hazards.

### **How we're making sure our plan is working**

- Seeking feedback from workers, the Health and Safety Representative, and customers.
- Review our plan frequently and make changes based on feedback.

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