



COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MĀNOA
COLLEGE OF TROPICAL AGRICULTURE AND HUMAN RESOURCES

WHITE PAPER

Installation of Field Toilets and Hand Washing Stations to Increase Worker Hygiene & Sanitation Jari Sugano, Jensen Uyeda, Steve Fukuda, Lynn Nakamura-Tengan and Joshua Silva

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Maintaining good personal hygiene is important to minimizing the spread of food borne illnesses in commercial food production operations. The FDA estimates approximately 48 million cases annually are related to food borne illnesses, which is equivalent to 1 in 6 Americans getting sick every year. These illnesses cause an estimated 128 hospitalizations and 3,000 deaths annually.

Providing field workers with access to restroom (toilet) and hand washing facilities is an integral part of a good food safety program. Employers must provide access to toilets and hand washing station to employees regardless of their working location to reduce the spread of contamination via human pathogens, blood, and other bodily fluids. Food handlers must undergo an educational training program on proper worker hygiene practices which may include education on hand washing, use of toilet facilities, eating, smoking, tobacco use, coming to work sick, wearing clean clothing, the use of jewelry and proper sanitation of farm tools.

As part of a good food safety program, employers are required to provide a toilet facility within a ¼ mile of the field site or provide transportation for the employee to access a toilet facility within a 5 minute drive. Toilet facilities must be properly stocked with toilet paper and cleaned regularly. Service logs should be utilized and properly maintained. Toilet system must provide for the sanitary disposal of human waste and toilet paper, with no run off into the production areas.

Providing a restroom and hand washing station away from the produce packing area can be challenging. Rather than building a restroom facility in the field, contracted services maybe used to install temporary and movable field toilet facilities for mobile working crews. Hand washing station can be made with home improvement or garden store products. Handwashing stations must be provided and readily available to prevent contamination of produce, food contact surfaces, water sources and water distribution systems from human waste, human pathogens, blood, and other bodily fluids. Stations should be equipped with soap, running water, hand drying devices (such as single use paper towels, air blower, etc.) and waste disposal for dirty water and hand towels. Hand washing should commence after using the toilet, before starting work, before putting on gloves, upon returning to work after a break, after touching an animal or animal waste, after coughing or sneezing, etc.

Increased access to readily available and properly placed restroom and worker sanitation stations can reduce the risk of human pathogens from contaminating fresh produce.



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Here are some simple, do it yourself (DIY) examples of restroom and hand washing stations:



Do it yourself (DIY) hand washing systems with potable water, single use paper towels and a catchment for the dirty water and trash



Commercial hand washing station by Scrub n Go



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DIY: Mobile restroom and hand washing station



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DIY: Portable hand washing station equipped with potable water, soap, single use paper towel, catchment for dirty water and towels



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DIY: Dirty water catchment system and disposal hose



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Example: In field use of mobile restroom & hand washing station at Food Safety Field Day in Waimanalo



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Contracted service: In field restroom facilities



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Properly re-stocked restroom facility with toilet paper



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Stationary in field restroom and hand washing station