



COVID-19 Farm Food Safety Reminders

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa-College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR)
Farm Food Safety Program

To All Farmers and Agricultural Stakeholders:

Thank you for your continued effort and dedication in supplying our communities with fresh, locally grown produce, especially during this rapidly changing environment brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The CTAHR Farm Food Safety Team understands that this is a particularly stressful time for farmers as there is uncertainty in the foreseeable future with produce outlets, markets, customers, and sales. **While there is no evidence of links between food and COVID-19 at this time, we would like to remind you of a few practical farm food safety strategies to continue implementing to protect yourself and employees and minimize the risk of contamination.** You may also consider using these points to communicate with your customers to reassure them of your food safety practices.

Please remember to follow all federal, state, and county regulations and recommendations. Lastly, feel free to contact your local Extension Agent should you have any questions.

Aloha and take care,

-CTAHR Statewide Farm Food Safety Team:

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Worker Health, Hygiene

- **Wash hands** properly and more frequently
 - **How:** With running water and soap, vigorously scrub palms, back of hands, fingers, nails, and exposed areas up to the elbows for 20 seconds, using a single use paper towel to dry and turn off the faucet
 - **When:**
 - Before:** Working on the farm, handling of any produce, putting on gloves (if used), eating
 - After:** Using the restroom, eating or break times, and any other time hands may become contaminated (e.g. picking up supplies)
 - Additionally, using a hand sanitizer with [at least 60% alcohol](#) can further sanitize hands
- **Sneeze and cough into elbow or arm**, away from produce and food contact surfaces
- **Discontinue or postpone farm visitors** (e.g. friends, family, regulators, auditors, certifiers, government agency representatives, University representatives, including Extension Agents)
 - Limit contractors and services to only essential activities (i.e. Porta-potty servicing and delivery of necessary materials)
- **Increase social distancing of employees** either working in smaller shifts and/or physically distancing at least 6 feet from each other (during planting, harvesting, packing, or any other activity)
- **Employees who are sick must stay home from work.** If you, or an employee, suspect you have been exposed to COVID-19, contact your healthcare provider immediately (call ahead to minimize spread)

Clean and Sanitizing

- **Bolster cleaning and sanitizing practices**

- What:

- Common touch points (e.g. door handles, tractors and equipment, break areas)
- Food contact surfaces (e.g. tables, knives, clippers, harvest bins)
- Toilet and restroom facilities

- When: As frequent as you deem necessary to reduce contamination and spread

- How:

Clean surfaces by physically removing soil and debris using a detergent or soap, rinsing with water before sanitizing

Sanitize using an antimicrobial product appropriate for the task

- Follow all label guidelines
- Use products registered for use on food contact surfaces as appropriate
- Contact your Extension Agent with questions about approved sanitizers

Other Helpful Measures

- **Train employees on practices and policies** regarding health, hygiene, and cleaning and sanitizing, emphasizing their importance during this COVID-19 pandemic
- **Continue practicing general food safety** to minimize other food safety risks
- **Reassure buyers of your practices** that you promote good worker health, hygiene, and sanitation
- **Maintain enhanced sanitation practices during distribution and marketing**

Additional Resources

- CTAHR Farm Food Safety Program Website: <http://manoa.hawaii.edu/ctahr/farmfoodsafety/>
 - CTAHR Farm Food Safety Printable Signs: <http://manoa.hawaii.edu/ctahr/farmfoodsafety/farm-signs/>
 - FDA-COVID-19 Food Industry FAQs and Industry Guidance: <https://www.fda.gov/food/food-safety-during-emergencies/food-safety-and-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19>
 - FDA-Stakeholder March 18, 2020 Call Recording: <https://www.fda.gov/media/136259/download>
 - Institute for Food Safety at Cornell University: <https://instituteforfoodsafety.cornell.edu/coronavirus-covid-19/food-industry-resources/>
 - OSHA: <https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf>
 - Center for Disease Control: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
 - U.S. Department of Agriculture: <https://www.usda.gov/coronavirus>
 - Hawaii State Department of Health: <https://hawaiicovid19.com/>
 - Honolulu County: <http://www.honolulu.gov/site-dem-sitearticles/37959-alert-covid-19.html>
 - Maui County: <https://www.mauicounty.gov/2370/COVID-19-Coronavirus-Information>
 - Hawaii County: <https://coronavirus-response-county-of-hawaii-hawaiicountygis.hub.arcgis.com/>
- Kauai County: <http://www.kauai.gov/COVID-19>

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