



# HANDLING COVID-19

## GUIDANCE FOR COMMUNITY GARDENS

COVID-19 is not a foodborne illness. It is extremely unlikely that someone will catch it through eating. The virus is most likely to cause illness through respiratory transmission, not eating. The routes to be concerned about include being in very close proximity to many people or coming in contact with high touch surfaces.

### BEST PRACTICES

- Limit the number of people at the garden at one time or space people out to prevent groups of ten or more.
- If gardens stay open to the public, have a manager or gardener present to monitor the garden and visitors.
- Cloth face coverings should be worn by employees while working.
- Cloth face coverings should also be encouraged for customer use, based on local guidance.

### COMMUNICATION

- **Communicate that anyone displaying symptoms of COVID-19, or have come in contact with someone who has, should not come to the gardens and if they are displaying symptoms on site they will be asked to leave.**
- Communicate to gardeners and the public through signs, social media or newsletters, etc.
- Cloth face coverings should be encouraged for customer use, based on local guidance.
- Communicate that gardeners will not work if they have symptoms or were exposed.
- Remind visitors of school gardens to follow school procedures and/or closures.

### CLEANING AND DISINFECTION

- Gardens should provide handwashing stations, if at all possible, and/or hand sanitizer to all guests and request that they wash their hands before entering the garden and upon exiting.
- Disinfect surfaces on a regular basis, including: reusable bins and buckets, shared tools, railings, doorknobs, tables, etc.
  - Use non-porous plastic tables that can be easily disinfected whenever possible.
- CDC advises using compounds on the list of EPA recommended disinfectants, which can be found at: [go.ncsu.edu/epacovid-19](https://go.ncsu.edu/epacovid-19)
  - Note: this list is based on current data, but compounds have not been validated for inactivation of the virus causing COVID-19
  - Bleach may be used to disinfect surfaces, but the concentration is higher for COVID-19 than for everyday sanitation: 5 tablespoons bleach per gallon of water

### EMPLOYEE HEALTH

- Businesses should follow CDC and FDA guidance for screening employees who have been exposed to COVID-19.
- Pre-screen employees for symptoms or fever before starting work.
- Employees with fever and symptoms should be advised to see a doctor for evaluation and should be deferred to Human Resources for next steps.

