



Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Twilight Q&A: Operating During the COVID-19 Pandemic

In Sickness and In Health

- Understand and communicate symptoms of COVID-19 with anyone who works at the farm
- Anyone who is sick should stay home (employees)
- Monitor employee health



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Family First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA)

- If you have less than 500 employees, **this will apply to you.**
- Two weeks (up to 80 hours) of **paid sick leave** at the employee's regular rate of pay where the employee is unable to work because of quarantine (pursuant to Federal, State, or local government order or advice of a health care provider), and/or experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and seeking a medical diagnosis.
- Two weeks (up to 80 hours) of **paid sick leave** at **2/3** of the employee's regular rate of pay because the employee is unable to work because of a bona fide need to care for an individual subject to quarantine, or care for a child (under 18 years of age) whose school or child care provider is closed or unavailable for reasons related to COVID-19.

Family First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA)

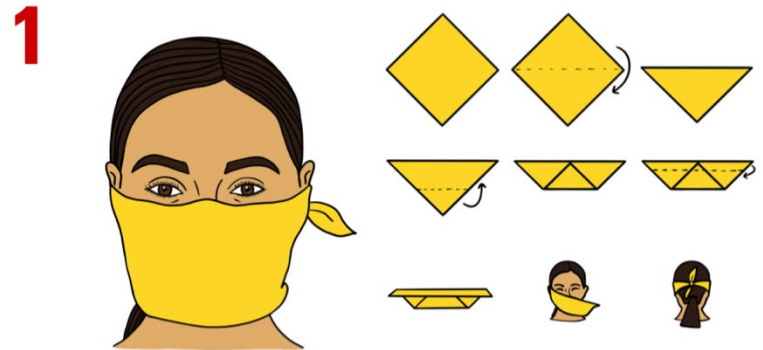
- A covered employer must provide to **employees that it has employed for at least 30 days**:
 - *Up to an additional 10 weeks of **paid expanded family and medical leave** at 2/3 of the employee's regular rate of pay where an employee is unable to work due to a bona fide need for leave to care for a child whose school or child care provider is closed or unavailable for reasons related to COVID-19.*
- Small businesses with fewer than 50 employees may qualify for exemption from the requirement to provide leave due to school closings or child care unavailability if the leave requirements would jeopardize the viability of the business as a going concern.
- Poster with this information needs to be available to employees:
https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/WHD/posters/FFCRA_Poster_WH142_2_Non-Federal.pdf
- Enforced by the Department of Labor and the IRS (reimbursed by the government). More info at: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/pandemic>.
- For reimbursement information go to: <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/covid-19-related-tax-credits-for-required-paid-leave-provided-by-small-and-midsize-businesses-faqs>
- Effective April 1 to December 31.

Prepare for Employee Absence

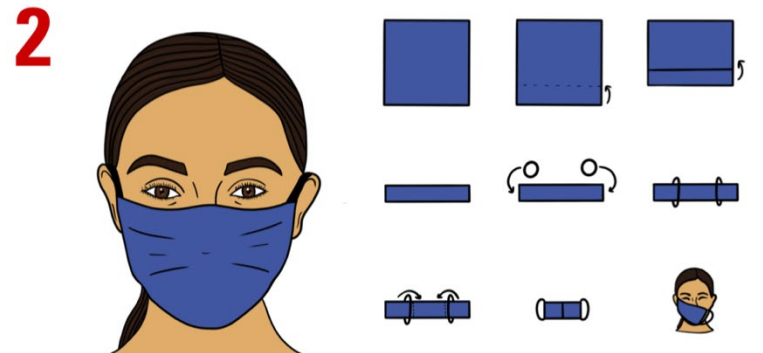
- Think through each essential task on your farm (you can do this by day, by week, etc.).
- Who knows how to do it?
 - Make sure at least two people can do each task.
 - Consider splitting workers in teams- two people that know how to do the same essential task would be on separate teams.
- Who needs to be trained?
- How will they be trained? (i.e., written SOP, in-person demo (w/physical distancing), video recording, and/or audio recording of instructions)

Masks

- Masks should be optional for workers in the packinghouse and/or the field- you know your operation best!
- Masks should be worn by worker handling CSA box drop-off



Option 1 shows how to fold a plain bandana. Option 2 uses hair ties or rubber bands to create ear loops for a tighter fit.



Wearing Gloves for Food Safety

- Typical food contact materials
 - Nitrile, vinyl (PVC), and polyethylene
- Putting on gloves and when to change them
 - Wash hands before putting on gloves AND after taking them off
 - Minimize touching the gloves before wearing them
 - Change gloves often (minimum 2-4 hrs or when necessary)
- Improper use of gloves can be worse than dirty hands
 - Extended use or torn gloves
 - Do **NOT** reuse single-use gloves
 - Remove gloves from the inside out



Cleaning, Disinfecting, Sanitizing

- You cannot sanitize or disinfect a dirty surface! Cleaning always comes first!
- Sanitizing is for food contact surfaces.
- Disinfecting is for non-food surface and high touch surfaces.
- The concentration is lower and contact time is less for sanitizers.
- **ALWAYS FOLLOW THE LABEL!**

Cleaning, Disinfecting, Sanitizing

- Farm equipment like hoes, harvest knives, harvest buckets and other commonly touched tools should be cleaned and sanitized as necessary.
- Better yet, whenever possible, have designated tools for each worker.
- Commonly used items or areas of high touch points (door knobs, refrigerator handles, etc.) should be disinfected regularly.

HandWashing

(adults, children, employees & customers)

step-by-step

1



wet hands

2



apply soap

3



rub soapy hands for
20 seconds

4



scrub fingertips &
between fingers

5



scrub forearm to just
below elbow

6



rinse forearms & hands

7



use a towel to dry hands
& forearms or use an
approved hand drying
device

8



turn off water
with towel

throw towel away

When to Wash Hands

- Before starting work
- Before putting on gloves and after removing gloves
- After using the toilet
- Upon returning to work after breaks
- After touching animals
- After touching face, blowing nose, coughing or sneezing
- When changing tasks
- Before entering cooler or packinghouse



Boxes or Containers

- Do NOT re-use cardboard boxes this year!
- Bringing any container back onto your farm could put your workers at risk.
- Instruct members that you do NOT want any containers back (i.e., berry boxes)!



Pick-up

- Do NOT start labeling boxes with customer names as this encourages people to touch more boxes, because their box may be at the bottom of the stack.
- Display boxes off of the ground and in as short of stacks as possible.
- Remove unnecessary items from pick up site that are frequently touched (e.g. pens).
- If a door needs to be opened to get to a pick-up site see if the host can leave it propped open and/or have host sanitize or disinfect handle frequently.
- Worker wears a mask and gloves.
- Think about foregoing ‘free-choice’ options this year.

Adapted from Community Alliance with Family Farmers.

Pick-up

- Communicate with members before each pick-up:
 - NOT come to the CSA pick up site if they are sick.
 - Drive-through pick-up (farm employee puts box in backseat or trunk, member stays in their car).
 - Only touch your box and your food.
 - Consider reserving first hour of pick-up for higher risk members.
 - If you split your CSA box with other people please have one person take the box, leave the pick-up site and divide box elsewhere.
 - Take your food and leave promptly.
 - If 6-ft markers are on the ground of the pick-up site, use them to maintain physical distancing.
 - Wear a cloth mask when you come to the CSA pick up site.
 - If possible, have only one person (no kids) come to pick up site.
 - Stagger pick-up times?
 - Delivery option for an upcharge?

Adapted from Community Alliance with Family Farmers.

Thinking of starting a CSA?

- CSA's take experience, coordination and organization (and the cooperation of the weather!)
- CSA's are complex
 - Much CSA planning takes place on paper
 - Plant extra and then plant more!
- A great idea to do a 'trial' with a market before jumping into a CSA with both feet

Questions to Ask Yourself

- Can you consistently provide a variety of crops (~10) for 20-30 weeks?
- How many people can you accommodate?
- Do you have a good mix of storage crops to add to boxes when 'light'?
- How much of each crop do you need to harvest and at what frequency?
- What is the quantity (in pounds, bunches, heads, etc.) of produce intended for each share and what is the frequency of harvest?
- What is the total number of plants required each week to supply this amount of produce at this frequency?
- What is the total number of plants required for the season to supply this amount of produce at this frequency?

Determining prices for CSA shares

Average CSA box in TN (14 CSAs, 2020 prices)	\$28
Average CSA full share (30 weeks) in TN (14 CSAs, 2020 prices)	\$840
Average CSA full share (20 weeks) in TN (14 CSAs, 2020 prices)	\$560
Minimum CSA share in TN (14 CSAs, 2020 prices), \$24/box	\$480
Maximum CSA share in TN (14 CSAs, 2020 prices), \$40/box	\$800

- Evaluate customer willingness to pay by looking at how much customers are paying in your area for a CSA share.
- Determine a base price for your products (it could be grocery store prices for the items included in a share box).
- Determine a premium over your base price according to your quality, delivery, service, production system, etc.
- Make sure your total price exceeds your costs of production and marketing, and provides a fair wage for you and your family.

Determining prices for CSA shares

Example of a July CSA box	Grocery Store Prices (Prices form three stores)		Farmers Market Prices (Rutherford, Knox)
	Conventional	Organic	
Carrots (1.5 lb =)	\$1.36	\$1.50	\$4.00
Head of lettuce (green or red leaf)	\$1.64	\$1.89	\$4.50
Cucumbers (4, about 2 lbs)	\$0.74	\$1.49	\$4.00
Sweet onions (2)	\$1.00	\$1.33	\$2.00
Greens bunch (1 lb kale, chard, collards)	\$1.24	\$1.69	\$3.50
Tomatoes (3 lbs)	\$7.50	\$8.97	\$9.00
Garlic	\$0.69	\$0.69	\$0.69
Eggplants (lb)	\$1.69	\$2.49	\$4.00
Value of share box	\$15.86	\$20.05	\$31.69
Value share (20 weeks)	\$317.2	\$401.0	\$633.8

E-commerce Options for CSAs

- CSAware
 - Farmigo
 - GrownBy
 - HarvestHand
 - Harvie
 - Local Food Marketplace
 - Local Line
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- Source: <https://www.youngfarmers.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Farmers-Guide-to-Direct-Sales-Software-Platforms.pdf>



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Example:



Comprehensive CSA management platform designed for member share customization, with robust customer support.

More details: https://tilth.org/app/uploads/2020/03/Harvie_OnlineSalesWebinar_200424.pdf

<https://www.harvie.farm/>

7% of sales

2.9% + \$0.30 per credit card transaction

\$500 setup fee

E-commerce Considerations

- Fee structure
- Set up time/ease
- Ease of updates
- Payment methods accepted
- Time to receive payment
- Customer interface
- Features needed (delivery routes, pack lists, labels)
- IT support available
- Ability to integrate with website and accounting software
- Data security and use
- More at <https://tilth.org/education/resources/questions-for-considering-online-sales-platforms-for-farms-direct-marketing/>



Q&A

Disclaimers

- Information presented is for educational purposes only and does not constitute legal or medical advice.
- Any specific products or services referenced is for informational purposes only and does not indicate an endorsement.

COVID-19 Resource Pages

- UT Vegetable Production
 - <http://utvegetable.com/covid-19-resources/>
- Center for Profitable Agriculture
 - <https://tiny.utk.edu/CPA-COVID19>



Send additional questions to
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