

## Basic Protective Measures Against the New Coronavirus

Stay aware of the latest information on the COVID-19 outbreak, available on the WHO website ([www.who.int](http://www.who.int)) and through your national and local public health authority. Most people who become infected experience mild illness and recover, but it can be more severe for others. Take care of your health and protect others by doing the following:

**Wash your hands frequently** Regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water. Why? Washing your hands with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand rub kills viruses that may be on your hands.

Maintain social distancing

**Maintain at least 1 metre (3 feet) distance between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing.** Why? Contain virus. If you are too close, you can breathe in the droplets, including the COVID-19 virus if the person coughing has the disease.

**Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth** Why? Hands touch many surfaces and can pick up viruses. Once contaminated, hands can transfer the virus to your eyes, nose or mouth. From there, the virus can enter your body and can make you sick.

**Practice respiratory hygiene** Make sure you, and the people around you, follow good respiratory hygiene. This means covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze. Then dispose of the used tissue immediately. Why? Droplets spread virus. By following good respiratory hygiene you protect the people around you from viruses such as cold, flu and COVID-19.

**If you have fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical attention, and call in advance.** Stay home if you feel unwell. If you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical attention and call in advance. Follow the directions of your local health authority. Why? National and local authorities will have the most up to date information on the situation in your area. Calling in advance will allow your health care provider to quickly direct you to the right health facility. This will also protect you and help prevent virus and other infections.

**Stay informed and follow advice given by your healthcare provider** Stay informed on the latest developments about COVID-19. Follow advice given by your healthcare provider, your national and local public health authority or your employer on how to protect yourself and others from COVID-19. Why? National and local authorities will have the most up to date information on whether COVID-19 is spreading in your area. They are best placed to advise on what people in your area should be doing to protect themselves.

**Protection measures for persons who are in or have recently visited (past 14 days) areas where COVID-19 is spreading** Follow the guidance outlined above.

- Stay at home if you begin to feel unwell, even with mild symptoms such as headache and slight runny nose, until you recover. Why? Avoiding contact with others and visits to medical facilities will allow viruses to operate more effectively and help protect you and others from possible COVID-19 and other viruses.

- If you develop fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical advice promptly as this may be due to a respiratory infection or other serious condition. Call in advance and tell your provider of any recent travel or contact with travelers. Why? Calling in advance will allow your health care provider to quickly direct you to the right health facility. This will also help to prevent possible spread of COVID-19 and other viruses.

## Frequently Asked Questions About COVID-19 and Agriculture

**Is agriculture considered critical industry?** Absolutely. Food and agriculture is recognized by the US Department of Homeland Security as being one 16 critical infrastructures for national security. The guidance document from Homeland Security, with an addition from the North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services (NCDA&S) lists the critical infrastructure workers in food and agriculture as:

- Workers supporting groceries, pharmacies and other retail that sells food & beverage products
- Restaurant carry-out and quick serve food operations - Carry-out and delivery food employees
- Food manufacturer employees and their supplier employees—to include those employed in food processing (packers, meat processing, cheese plants, milk plants, produce, etc.); livestock, poultry, seafood slaughterer; pet and animal feed processing facilities; human food facilities producing by-products for animal food; beverage production facilities; and the production of food packaging
- Farm workers to include those employed in animal food, feed, and ingredient production, packaging, and distribution; manufacturing, packaging, and distribution of veterinary drugs; truck delivery and transport; farm and fishery labor needed to produce our food supply domestically
- Farm workers and support service workers to include those who field crops; commodity inspection; fuel ethanol facilities; storage facilities; and other agricultural inputs
- Employees and firms supporting food, feed, and beverage distribution, including warehouse workers, vendor-managed inventory controllers and blockchain managers
- Workers supporting the sanitation of all food manufacturing processes and operations from wholesale to retail
- Company cafeterias - in-plant cafeterias used to feed employees
- Workers in food testing labs in pharmaceuticals and in institutions of higher education
- Workers essential for assistance programs and government payments
- Employees of companies engaged in the production of chemicals, medicines, vaccines, and other substances used by the food and agriculture industry, including pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers, minerals, enrichment, and other agricultural production aids
- Animal agriculture workers to include those employed in veterinary clinics; manufacturing and distribution of animal medical materials, animal vaccines, animal drugs, feed ingredients, feed, and bedding, etc.; transportation of live animals, animal medical materials; transportation of deceased animals for disposal; raising of animals for food; animal production operations; slaughter and packing plants and associated regulatory and government workforce
- Workers who support the manufacture and distribution of forest products, including, but not limited to timber, paper, and other wood products
- Employees engaged in the manufacture and maintenance of equipment and other infrastructure necessary to agricultural production and distribution
- Agriculture workers supporting the green industry to include nursery operations, garden centers, landscape and maintenance companies critical to the environmental and physical living conditions necessary in our communities.

**Is my agricultural-related business allowed to be open for business?** Yes. NCDA&CS encourages businesses in food and agriculture, especially food production and distribution facilities, to continue operations. Governor Cooper's Executive Orders 117 and 118 place restrictions on gatherings of 100 people or more as well as the operations of restaurants and bars. FAQs for the Governor's Executive Orders can be found at [ncda.gov/disaster/documents/COVID-19.htm](http://ncda.gov/disaster/documents/COVID-19.htm). Guidance to businesses in North Carolina can be found from the NC Department of Health & Human Services COVID-19 website ([www.ncdhs.gov](http://www.ncdhs.gov)). This is a changing situation and businesses should continue to monitor new developments.

**Are Farmers Markets open?** Yes. In NC, farmers markets fall under the same classification as grocery stores and are considered an important source of food for local communities. Farmers markets who choose to operate during the COVID-19 outbreak are required to follow the same federal or state mandated directives as grocery stores on issues such as social distancing, or crowd size (if indoor). In addition, restaurants located at farmers markets are also subject to Executive Order No. 118. There is no evidence to suggest COVID-19 is a food-borne illness.

NCDA&CS operates four State Farmers Markets (located in Asheville, Charlotte, Colfax and Raleigh) and intends to keep them open and follow any guidance concerning grocery stores and retail outlets. To help ensure the safety of farmers market vendors and visitors, market staff is encouraging social distancing, proper hand washing, reduced contact with products and has stopped product sampling. Information, opening times, and availability of produce and other food items can be found on the NCDA&CS Farmers Markets website ([ncagr.gov/markets/facilities/index.htm](http://ncagr.gov/markets/facilities/index.htm)).

**Is our food supply safe?** Yes. From the US Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) FAQs on food safety and COVID-19 ([www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov)), "Additionally there is no evidence of food or food packaging being associated with transmission of COVID-19."

Unlike foodborne gastrointestinal (GI) viruses like norovirus and hepatitis A that often make people ill through contaminated food, SARS-CoV-2, which causes COVID-19, is a virus that causes respiratory illness. Foodborne exposure to this virus is not known to be a route of transmission.

The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person. This includes between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet), and through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs. It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads. However, it's always critical to follow the 4 key steps of food safety—clean, separate, cook, and chill – to prevent foodborne illness."

**What is NCDA&CS doing during this COVID-19 situation?** NCDA&CS is committed to a safe, stable, and abundant food supply at all times and especially during times of crisis. Critical NCDA&CS services which protect the safety of food for consumers, support farmers and the food supply system, and keep agricultural and food system commerce flowing are our highest priorities. Following guidelines issued by NC Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS), we have taken steps to protect our employees and the critical roles they play in order to keep these programs and services in place.

We have engaged state and national leaders on the issues listed above as well as providing significant input on measures which need to be in place to produce food in 2020. For example, planting season is upon us and much of NC agriculture, including our fresh fruit and vegetable production depends on H2A guest worker farm labor. We have been engaged with the Department of Homeland Security and the US State Department to ensure those guest workers wishing to come to North Carolina remain able to do so.

The NCDA&CS Food Distribution division is delivering needed food to many school districts around the state as they provide meals for children out of school as well as food banks in North Carolina whose valuable service are becoming increasingly important. Additionally, the Marketing Division is working with farmers, wholesalers, and retailers to ensure NC products reach the consumer in different ways in light of the change to restaurants and food service facilities. We continue our commitment to operate the four State Farmers Markets.

## Hornwood, Inc. is in search of Plant Electricians.

The qualifications are as follows:

- Must have working knowledge of safe work practices and a good safety record
- Industrial Electrician or a two-year associate degree in an electrical field
- Ability to work with minimal direction
- Able to use various pieces of electrical test equipment such as, but not limited to; multimeters, meggers, and clamp-on ammeters
- Ability to interpret electrical schematics for repair, installation, and maintenance
- PLC, AC, AND DC drive knowledge preferable
- Mechanical and hydraulic knowledge a plus
- Able to work with other electrical and mechanical craftsmen, and plant operating personnel
- Able to interact with other maintenance, operation, and plant operating personnel
- Position will work 1st (8hr or 12hr 2-2-3 rotation) or 12hr night shift rotation.
- A qualified individual must be able to work all scheduled and non-scheduled (emergency) overtime.

If you feel you meet these qualifications, please contact

Dale Kelly @ 704/848-4121 or email  
@dkelly@hornwoodinc.com

## Anson Family Optometric has cancelled all routine eye exams until further notice.

You should receive a phone call or text message from our office number if you have an appointment in the upcoming weeks ahead.

You may text our office number 704-694-3618 for non-routine eye care questions, or see our Facebook page for announcements.

Thank you, Anson Family Optometric, PLLC

CDC Health Reminder Release Today (3/17/2020): Healthcare facilities and clinicians should prioritize urgent and emergency visits and procedures now and for the coming several weeks. The following actions can preserve, expand, personal protective equipment, and COVID-19 pandemic; ensure staff and patient safety; and expand available hospital capacity during the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Delay all elective ambulatory provider visits
- Reschedule elective and non-urgent admissions
- Delay inpatient and outpatient elective surgical and procedural cases
- Postpone routine dental and eyecare visits



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