

# CORONAVIRUS PRECAUTIONS FOR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS

**As a farmer, rancher, or agricultural worker, you are part of the essential workforce. This means, you should:**

- Take extra precautions to prevent injury and illness on the farm/ranch. Medical providers are overwhelmed with Coronavirus patients.
- Follow Coronavirus guidance from the CDC, State and local government officials, medical providers, extension and other trusted sources.
- Make a business continuity and pandemic plan and implement it.
- Focus on your core business activities. Postpone non-mandatory in-person activities.
- Work remotely when possible. Use electronic communication tools (phone, video conference, radio).
- Control the spread of virus by: Eliminating exposure, Engineering controls, Administrative controls, and Personal Protective Equipment use.

## **Social distancing on and off the farm**

- **Who:** You, your family members, workers and visitors need to be made aware that social distancing is a top concern on your farm operation
- **What:** Keep a minimum of 6 ft distance between people
- **Why:** You can get infected by direct contact with infected persons, surfaces they have touched, and droplets in the air created by coughing and sneezing. Keeping distance reduces exposure.
- **Where:** At home, in work areas, farm offices, agribusiness locations, stores, gas stations, vehicles, other confined spaces, and also outdoors
- **When:** At all times
- **How:** Apply 'universal precautions': assume that you, and anyone around you, is infected. You will never know as some people are infected without symptoms. Avoid meetings and gatherings, and keep distance when you do meet or work with people. Schedule work times and tasks to minimize working together. Rearrange worksites by barriers and distance when possible.

## **Respiratory protection for agricultural dust, gases and the Coronavirus**

- **Who:** You, family members, workers
- **What:** Common respirators for ag use: N95/N100 mask for dust; half mask with cartridges for dusts and gases (including pesticides). N95/N100 protects also against viruses. If none available, tight fitting surgical mask and home-made masks can provide some protection.
- **Why:** Protecting you from ag and virus exposures. Protecting others around you in case you are infected
- **Where:** In agricultural work with dust or gas exposures.
- **When:** When exposed at work, or having to be near people in confined areas and public places
- **How:** Select the right mask. Do a seal check. Wear the mask when exposed. Avoid donning/doffing and adjusting the mask with contaminated hands; wash or sanitize. Keep the mask clean and in good shape so it can be re-used; use clean cloth/bandana over the mask in dirty and very dusty environments. For protecting others in case you are infected, minimize spreading small particles and droplets in your exhaled air; if your mask has an exhale valve, tape it shut. Sanitize the mask; UV light including sunlight kills viruses; half masks can be washed with soap. Store the masks in a clean dry place. When re-using a mask, assume that it has some contamination on it. Wash or sanitize your hands after donning, doffing, cleaning, caring and storing masks.

## **Hand hygiene on and off the farm**

- Who: You, family members, employees, visitors
- What: Washing frequently with soap; hand sanitizer when not able to wash
- Why: You can easily get viruses on your hands by touching infected people and surfaces they have touched. You can get infected if you touch your face area with contaminated hands.
- Where: Home, farm office, shop, vehicles, public places
- When: Frequently, any time your hands may have been exposed to viruses
- How: Wash hands frequently. Keep hand sanitizers available at home, office, shop, vehicles. Keep hand sanitized with you when going to necessary business, shopping and pharmacy visits. If you cannot purchase hand sanitizer, you can make some following instructions from trusted sources.

## **Disinfecting surfaces on and off the farm**

- Who: You, family members, workers
- What: Cell phone, touch screens at stores, ATMs, vehicle steering wheels and controls, tools, utensils,
- Why: Touching contaminated surfaces is very likely to transmit viruses
- Where: Common work areas, public places where people touch surfaces
- When: Frequently, after surfaces may be contaminated from touching, coughing, sneezing
- How: Using water with cleaning/disinfecting agents, disinfecting wipes, [add more info here]