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Commissioner

# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Office of the Commissioner



The practices and protocols below are for community gardens and urban agriculture to implement in an effort to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. These recommendations are in addition to guidance provided by the [CDC](#), [USDA](#), and other federal agencies.

Per Governor Lamont's [Executive Order 7H](#) and [DECD's guidance on essential services](#), food and agriculture and providers of basic necessities are 'essential business.'

As such community garden and urban agriculture are:

1. Essential to the local community
2. Venues to grow and harvest healthy, local food
3. An opportunity for accessible food while practicing social distancing

In order to provide a safe and reliable nutritious food source for those growing, all community garden and urban agriculture organizers, staff, volunteers, and growers must be committed to adhering to health and safety standards identified by the [CDC](#) and this guidance.

- Wash hands regularly, at least 20 second each time, multiple times throughout the day.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover mouth with a bent elbow when sneezing or coughing. If a tissue is used, dispose of it immediately and follow with proper handwashing.
- Maintain the recommended social distancing protocols of at least six (6) feet of separation between individuals.
- Limit access to and disinfect common areas regularly.
- Stay home if you are sick.

### **Guidance for the Production Areas of Community Garden and Urban Agriculture Organizations**

- All community gardens and urban agriculture sites should be restricted to those who grow food and staff and volunteers who are necessary to meet the essential care and maintenance of the production area.
- The production area should not be open to the public.
- No animals/pets are allowed in the production area.
- Growers must be aware that they must stay home if they feel sick, have a sick person at home or have been in contact with someone who has either tested positive for COVID-19 or has symptoms of COVID-19.
- Growers who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 must inform farm and community garden organizers.
- If there is high traffic at the production area, have growers request a time to go to the production area to limit the number of people within the production area at one time. The number of growers visiting production areas at one time should be limited as much as possible.
- Signage regarding social distancing, frequent handwashing, not touching your face, etc., should be posted at all sites. Post CDC's posters available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).
- Signage should be posted with the following information:

- Food harvested from the production area cannot be consumed at the production area.
- Food harvested from the production area should be taken home and washed thoroughly prior to being consumed.
- Eating is not allowed in the production area.
- Growers should have the ability to wash their hands with soap and water at each production area. This could include a central handwashing station.
- Have a 'wash-in' policy for growers. CDC guidance on proper handwashing should be posted
- Growers should be strongly encouraged to bring their own tools. Sharing tools should be limited to the greatest extent possible and disinfected before and after each use. If tools are shared, it is recommended growers be provided with gloves, in addition to disinfecting supplies, between uses.
- Entry gates, water access points, and other high-touch areas should be disinfected multiple times per day and after each use.
- Any eating and socializing areas should have signage noting the area is closed, be roped off, or removed if possible.
- Signage explaining any changes or extra precautions taken to limit exposure to COVID-19 should be posted on websites, social media, and onsite.
- Discuss with your insurer your current policy limits, any changes or concerns they may have.

### **Guidance to Share with Growers/Employees at Community Gardens and Urban Agriculture**

- If you have COVID-19 or may have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 do not come to the production area.
- If you are sick with any cold symptoms do not come to the production area.
- If you are sick, including a positive diagnosis with COVID-19, and require the food grown at your community garden plot, please contact the organization that manages the garden for information how it may be possible for you to obtain the food from the community garden.
- Food harvested from the production area cannot be consumed at the production area.
- Food harvested from the production area should be taken home and washed thoroughly prior to being consumed.
- Contact the organizers of the production area to sign up to visit the production area to limit the number of people in the growing space at one time.
- If someone else is in the production area, practice social distancing of at least six (6) feet between people.
- Common areas such as pavilions, benches, picnic tables, or greenhouses are limited to gardeners and staff conducting essential tasks.
- Wash your hands per the CDC's guidelines or use hand sanitizer frequently.
- Bring sanitizing wipes or disinfectant and be prepared to wipe anything down that you touch that someone else might come in contact with.
- After touching a common surface, such as locks, gates, doors, hoses, etc. wash your hands per the CDC guidance or use hand sanitizer.
- If it is necessary for tools to be shared, they should be disinfected before and after each use.
- No animals/pets are allowed in the community garden.