



NEWS RELEASE

STATE EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER

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For more information contact:
[Jennifer Holton](#)
517-284-5724

MDARD Offers Guidance to U-Pick Operations in Advance of Opening for the Season

Social distancing, wearing masks, enhanced cleaning among protocols

LANSING, MICH. As warmer weather approaches, so does Michigan's U-pick season. Farm operations across the state are working so they can safely open and operate in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. Today, the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) outlined key protocols that U-pick operations should be implementing to protect themselves and their customers.

"Michigan is home to a wide array of delicious products and these farms play a critical role in our food supply chain. As we head into the 2020 growing season and early harvest for some commodities, U-pick operators will need to follow specific guidance such as social distancing in the retail and field areas, using masks, and taking the necessary steps to protect public health," said Gary McDowell, MDARD Director. A couple of key items to note, with the full list available [online](#):

- Operators must develop a COVID-19 preparedness and response plan and make it readily available to employees and customers; train employees; and supervise implementation as outlined in 2020-91.
- U-pick operations must screen staff daily for symptoms and those with symptoms should not be permitted to work until they subside.
- They will need to provide and require the use of personal protective equipment such as gloves, goggles, face shields, and face coverings as appropriate for the activity being performed.
- Limit in-person interaction with clients and patrons to the maximum extent possible, and bar any such interaction in which people cannot maintain six feet of distance from one another.
- Customers must take steps to maintain social distancing in sale and retail areas and in fields. Spacing out guests in U-pick areas is critical to the safety of all guests. A minimum of six feet between guests must always be maintained. This also means avoiding crowds waiting to enter sales or field areas and providing for six feet between each guest standing in any lines.
- Family units should stay together and six feet apart from others. Customers should only be accompanied with family members and should limit the numbers in their groups.

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MICHIGAN STATE POLICE

All provisions of Executive Orders 2020-91 and 2020-92 and more information and best practices from the Center of Disease Control and Prevention can be found [here](#).

Information around this outbreak is changing rapidly. The latest information is available at [Michigan.gov/Coronavirus](https://www.michigan.gov/Coronavirus) and [CDC.gov/Coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/Coronavirus).

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