



NEWS RELEASE

STATE EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER

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U-pick, U-cut and other agri-tourism operations reminded of required COVID safety measures for fall, winter

Social distancing, wearing masks, enhanced cleaning among protocols

LANSING, MICH. Now is a popular time of the year for fall agri-tourism activities in Michigan like visiting cider mills, orchards, corn mazes and pumpkin patches; and u-cut Christmas tree sales are right around the corner. The Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) is reminding the state's agri-tourism operators to stay vigilant and follow specific COVID-19 guidance to ensure the safety of all employees and customers.

"Michigan is home to a wide array of delicious products and these farms play a critical role in our food supply chain and a source of great outdoor family entertainment," said Gary McDowell, MDARD Director. "Our agri-tourism operators must remain vigilant in adhering to specific guidance such as social distancing in the retail and field areas, using masks, and taking the necessary steps to protect public health."

Businesses or operations are subject to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services' (MDHHS) [Gathering Prohibition and Face Coverings Order](#), as well as the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity, Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration's [Emergency Rules on COVID-19](#).

A couple of key items to note, (the full list is available [online](#)):

- Evaluate routine and reasonably anticipated tasks and procedures to determine employee exposure to COVID-19 and classify jobs and tasks according to risk categories listed under [Rule 3. Exposure determination for all employees](#).
- Develop a written COVID-19 preparedness and response plan and make it readily available to employees and customers; train employees; and supervise implementation as outlined in [Rule 4. COVID-19 preparedness and response plan for all employees](#).
- Screen staff daily for symptoms and for suspected or confirmed exposure to COVID-19. Those who do not pass screening should not be permitted to work in accordance with [Rule 6. Health surveillance for all employees](#).
- Limit in-person interaction with clients and patrons to the maximum extent possible and prohibit any such interaction in which people cannot maintain six feet of distance from one another.
- Add hand washing stations or hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol and to frequently clean hands.
- Provide staff with masks or cloth face coverings.

For the public, operations must:

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- Take steps to maintain social distancing in sale and retail areas and in fields. Spacing out guests is critical to the safety of all guests. As a reminder, a minimum of six feet between guests must be maintained at all times.
- 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.
- Require patrons to wear face coverings (unless the patron is unable medically to do so) and post signs at entrances instructing patrons to wear face coverings.
- Install physical barriers at any checkout and other service points.

Enhance sanitization of all operational areas. All items that customers touch must be sanitized after every use.

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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