

Important Information Regarding Coronavirus (COVID-19) and Food Production in Minnesota

Food Establishment Business Guidance

- Currently there is no evidence to support that COVID-19 is spread through food.
- Identify objectives to reduce worker transmission and protect your employees who are at higher risk for adverse health complications.
- Stay up to date on guidance from your local health officials.
- Prepare for increased absences of employees (because they are sick, a member of their household is sick, or they need to stay home because of school closures).
- Assess your essential functions and customer/community reliance on your services or products, and:
 - » Develop plans for the continuance of essential business functions and determine if some functions can be suspended
 - » Cross-train various personnel on essential functions
 - » Identify alternative suppliers and prioritize customers
- All Minnesota Department of Agriculture employees including those that inspect your food, feed, meat, and dairy, have been asked to stay home if they have cold or flu-like symptoms to help protect themselves and the public.

Food Establishment Employees and Cottage Food Producers Guidance

- Employees who are sick or showing respiratory symptoms should not work until they are symptom free.
- Cottage food producers should not produce food for sale to the public if they or anyone in their household where food is made and stored is sick.
- Follow safe food handling requirements, including handwashing with warm, soapy water for at least 20 seconds.
- Cover coughs and sneezes. Employees should cover their nose and mouth with a tissue or use the inside of their elbow but should NOT sneeze or cough into their hands. Throw used tissues in the trash and immediately wash hands.
- If used, remember to limit glove use to only one task and discard them when damaged, soiled or when interruptions occur in the operation. Remove gloves after a cough or sneeze and immediately wash hands.
- Prevent bare-hand contact with exposed, ready-to-eat food by using deli tissue, spatulas, tongs, single-use gloves, or dispensing equipment.
- Continue to regularly clean and sanitize equipment, objects, and surfaces, with special attention to surfaces that are often touched by employees and customers such as doorknobs, countertops, touchscreens, and dispensing utensils.
- Consider providing alcohol-based hand sanitizers, extra napkins/tissues, and no-touch disposal receptacles for customers to use.

Find out more at the Minnesota Department of Health [Coronavirus Disease 2019 website](#).