

COVID-19: Guidance for Community Gardens

It is important for community garden organizers to adjust practices to prevent the transmission of COVID-19. This includes practices such as safe physical distancing, proper individual hygiene practices and ensuring adequate cleaning and disinfection.

ADVICE FOR GARDEN ORGANIZERS

- Limit the number of individuals in the garden at any given time.
- Ensure physical separation of 6 feet or 2 metres between individuals.
- Regularly clean and disinfect any surfaces within the garden space such as hoses, watering cans, benches, sheds, storage bins etc.
- Consider asking volunteers and staff to use their own garden tools. If not possible, clean and disinfect tools between uses.
- Prohibit activities at the garden that promote gathering such as demonstrations and live musicians.
- Individuals who have any symptoms of COVID-19 may not participate in work activities, and should self-isolate at home and call 811 for advice.

ADVICE FOR INDIVIDUALS WORKING IN THE GARDEN

- **WASH YOUR HANDS** with soap and water for at least 20 seconds at the beginning of the shift, as often as possible.
- Cough or sneeze into your arm or tissue, and wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer (minimum 60% alcohol content) after coughing or sneezing.
- Avoid touching face, eyes, nose or mouth.
- Do not share gardening gloves. If you choose to wear disposable gloves, proper handwashing is required before and after use. Discard of disposable gloves immediately after into a sealed garbage bag.
- Always maintain a physical separation of at least 6 feet or 2 metres from others.
- When you are not able to maintain the 6 feet or 2 metres physical distancing, consider wearing a non-medical mask or face covering mask. This is an additional measure that protect those around you.
- Avoid sharing foods, drinks, cigarettes, personal hands tools.
- Remain home when sick. If you experience any symptoms of COVID-19 you should self-isolate at home and call 811 for advice.

FOOD SAFETY IN THE GARDEN

- We are not aware of any reports of human illnesses that suggest COVID-19 can be transmitted by food. Coronaviruses need a host to grow and there is no scientific evidence at this time that coronaviruses could grow in food.
- Although food is not a host of the virus, it is possible that infected individuals could introduce the virus to food by coughing and sneezing, or through hand contact.
- It is not certain how long the virus that causes COVID-19 survives on surfaces, but studies suggest that coronaviruses may last on surfaces for hours or up to several days.
- The best course of action is to practice good hygiene and safe food handling practices when handling food. As always, individuals should wash or scrub fruits and vegetables under running water before using them.

For more information on Food Safety, check out these links:

[General Food Safety](#)

[Food Safety for Food Banks and Community Kitchens](#)

[Food Safety Information for Food Donors](#)

[Fresh Fruits and Vegetables](#)