

# Farming operations hiring contract workers

## What employers need to know when hiring contract workers during COVID-19

As an employer of farm labour, you are responsible and liable for all workers in your workplace - those you hire directly and those you hire through a temporary help agency (THA).

Introducing workers from a variety of labour sources during the COVID-19 pandemic brings heightened risks of COVID-19 transmission. Using an illegitimate temporary help agency could leave you responsible for thousands of dollars in unpaid wages. Most important is the health and safety of all those who are working for you.

You invest in crop protection and insurance, it's equally important to invest in your workers – know, train and protect them.

Here's what you need to know to protect your workforce, farm and future.

## 5 Things to consider when hiring a contract worker...

### 1. Know your contract workers

- Find out what they know about farming and where they have been.
- Learn about the agency you are working with and how they recruit workers.
- Make sure that contract workers have the appropriate paperwork. Keep in mind that those with SIN cards starting with 9 will also need a valid work permit.
- Document the names and contact information of every contract worker. This is especially important for contact tracing in the event of an outbreak to quickly protect other workers.

### 2. Make sure the temporary help agency is registered with WSIB

- Ask for a copy of the temporary help agency's WSIB Certificate.

### 3. Know your temporary help agency

- Know where the temporary help agencies secure their contract workers.
- Know the training the temporary help agencies provide for their contract workers.
  - Relevant topics include health and safety awareness, working on farms and relevant hazards and working safely during COVID-19.

- Be mindful of cash payments.
  - If the temporary help agency asks for their fees to be paid in cash, ensure that payments are well documented and easy to reconcile.
- Request the temporary help agency to sign off that all contract workers have the appropriate paperwork.

## 4. Health and Safety

Employer duties under the [Occupational Health and Safety Act](#) apply to both the host employer and the temporary help agency providing the contract worker. Both are jointly responsible for taking every precaution reasonable in the circumstances to protect the worker.

- **Keep temporary help agency workers informed**
  - Employers must train all workers, including contract workers, on how to avoid the risk of COVID-19 transmission in their workplace.
- **Screen**
  - Farms should immediately implement active screening for COVID-19 for anyone entering the farm.
  - Anyone showing symptoms of COVID-19 should not be allowed to enter the farm and should be advised to go home immediately, self-isolate and notify the temporary help agency.
- **Create work pods or cohorts**
  - Consider grouping workers together in cohorts, groups, teams or work pods to avoid interactions to limit the potential spread of COVID-19.

## 5. Responsibility

Both the temporary help agency and farm employer have responsibility for:

- [Employment Standards](#)
- [Occupational Health and Safety](#)
- [Workplace Safety and Insurance](#)

For more information, please visit [resources to prevent COVID-19 in the workplace and using temporary help in agriculture](#).

General inquiries about workplace health and safety or reporting health and safety incident call 1-877-202-0008.

## Health and Safety Guidance (COVID-19) in the Agriculture Sector

Last update: July 8, 2020

Select resources to preventing the spread of COVID-19 in the agriculture (farming and greenhouses) sector include:

- [Health and safety for employers and supervisors including the use of temporary help agencies](#)
- [Health and safety for employees including temporary foreign workers](#)
- [Other relevant information for both employers and employees](#)

Please visit the agriculture health and safety during COVID-19 resources webpage (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/agriculture-health-and-safety-during-covid-19>) and the agri-food sector workplace safety resources (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/agri-food-sector-workplace-safety-resources>) for more information.

Content below is updated on a regular basis. Some resources are also available in Spanish.

## Health and Safety Guidance (COVID-19) in the Agriculture Sector

Last update: July 8, 2020

### Agriculture Resources (Employer and Supervisor)

Resource	Organization	Language	Source
Agriculture Health and Safety during COVID-19	Ontario - Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development (MLTSD)	English	<a href="https://www.ontario.ca/page/agriculture-health-and-safety-during-covid-19">https://www.ontario.ca/page/agriculture-health-and-safety-during-covid-19</a>
		Spanish	<a href="https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-agriculture-health-and-safety-covid-19-spanish-2020-06-18.pdf">https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-agriculture-health-and-safety-covid-19-spanish-2020-06-18.pdf</a>
Health and Safety Guidance: Agriculture Employer (Poster)	MLTSD	English	<a href="https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd1/mltsd-essential-sector-posters-agriculture-employer-en-8.5x11-2020-04-30.pdf">https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd1/mltsd-essential-sector-posters-agriculture-employer-en-8.5x11-2020-04-30.pdf</a>
		Spanish	<a href="https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-essential-sector-posters-agriculture-employer-spanish-8.5x11-2020-06-23.pdf">https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-essential-sector-posters-agriculture-employer-spanish-8.5x11-2020-06-23.pdf</a>
		French	<a href="https://www.wsp.ca/wsp/media/site/resources/downloads/covid-19-essential-sector-agriculture-employer-fr.pdf?ext=.pdf">https://www.wsp.ca/wsp/media/site/resources/downloads/covid-19-essential-sector-agriculture-employer-fr.pdf?ext=.pdf</a>
Guidance on Health and Safety for Agricultural Supervisors During COVID-19	Workplace Safety and Prevention Services (WSPS)	English	<a href="https://www.wsp.ca/wsp/media/site/resources/downloads/covid-19-agricultural-supervisors-health-and-safety-guidance.pdf?ext=.pdf">https://www.wsp.ca/wsp/media/site/resources/downloads/covid-19-agricultural-supervisors-health-and-safety-guidance.pdf?ext=.pdf</a>
		Spanish	<a href="https://d1ow5xpphy0w2p.cloudfront.net/common/covid-19-agricultural-supervisors-health-and-safety-guidance-es.pdf?mtime=20200605144439&amp;focal=none">https://d1ow5xpphy0w2p.cloudfront.net/common/covid-19-agricultural-supervisors-health-and-safety-guidance-es.pdf?mtime=20200605144439&amp;focal=none</a>
		French	<a href="https://d1ow5xpphy0w2p.cloudfront.net/common/covid-19-agriculture-supervisors-health-and-safety-guidance-fr.pdf?mtime=20200622081919&amp;focal=none">https://d1ow5xpphy0w2p.cloudfront.net/common/covid-19-agriculture-supervisors-health-and-safety-guidance-fr.pdf?mtime=20200622081919&amp;focal=none</a>

## Health and Safety Guidance (COVID-19) in the Agriculture Sector

Last update: July 8, 2020

Resource	Organization	Language	Source
A 'Quick and Dirty' Guide to Cleaning & Disinfecting Surfaces on the Farm	New York Center for Agricultural Medicine and Health	English	<a href="https://www.nycamh.org/media/photos/0521/5_clean_disinfect_wip_no_color.jpg">https://www.nycamh.org/media/photos/0521/5_clean_disinfect_wip_no_color.jpg</a>
Safely Transport Farmworkers during the COVID-19 Pandemic	New York Center for Agricultural Medicine and Health	English	<a href="https://www.nycamh.org/media/photos/0521/6_transport_safety_final_infographic.jpg">https://www.nycamh.org/media/photos/0521/6_transport_safety_final_infographic.jpg</a>
Agricultural Employer Checklist for Creating a COVID-19 Assessment and Control Plan	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)	English	<a href="https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/pdf/Agricultural-Employer-checklist.pdf?deliveryName=USCDC_10_4-DM31187">https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/pdf/Agricultural-Employer-checklist.pdf?deliveryName=USCDC_10_4-DM31187</a>
Guidance on Health and Safety for Agricultural Employers Using Temporary Help During COVID-19	WSPS	English	<a href="https://d1ow5xpphy0w2p.cloudfront.net/common/covid-19-agriculture-employers-using-temporary-workers-health-and-safety-guidance.pdf?mtime=20200622090134&amp;focal=none">https://d1ow5xpphy0w2p.cloudfront.net/common/covid-19-agriculture-employers-using-temporary-workers-health-and-safety-guidance.pdf?mtime=20200622090134&amp;focal=none</a>
		Spanish	<a href="https://d1ow5xpphy0w2p.cloudfront.net/common/covid-19-agricultural-employers-health-and-safety-guidance-es.pdf?mtime=20200702091313&amp;focal=none">https://d1ow5xpphy0w2p.cloudfront.net/common/covid-19-agricultural-employers-health-and-safety-guidance-es.pdf?mtime=20200702091313&amp;focal=none</a>
		French	<a href="https://d1ow5xpphy0w2p.cloudfront.net/common/covid-19-agriculture-employers-using-temporary-workers-health-and-safety-guidance-fr.pdf?mtime=20200624082444&amp;focal=none">https://d1ow5xpphy0w2p.cloudfront.net/common/covid-19-agriculture-employers-using-temporary-workers-health-and-safety-guidance-fr.pdf?mtime=20200624082444&amp;focal=none</a>

## Health and Safety Guidance (COVID-19) in the Agriculture Sector

Last update: July 8, 2020

### Agriculture Resources (Workers Including Temporary Foreign Workers)

Resource	Organization	Language	Source
Safety Tips: Agriculture Worker (Poster)	WSPS	English	<a href="https://www.wsp.ca/wsp/media/site/resources/downloads/covid-19-essential-sector-agriculture-worker-en.pdf?ext=.pdf">https://www.wsp.ca/wsp/media/site/resources/downloads/covid-19-essential-sector-agriculture-worker-en.pdf?ext=.pdf</a>
		Spanish	<a href="https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-essential-sector-posters-agriculture-worker-spanish-8.5x11-2020-06-23.pdf">https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-essential-sector-posters-agriculture-worker-spanish-8.5x11-2020-06-23.pdf</a>
		French	<a href="https://www.wsp.ca/WSPS/media/Site/Resources/Downloads/covid-19-essential-sector-agriculture-worker-fr.pdf?ext=.pdf">https://www.wsp.ca/WSPS/media/Site/Resources/Downloads/covid-19-essential-sector-agriculture-worker-fr.pdf?ext=.pdf</a>
Guidance on Health and Safety for Agricultural Workers During COVID-19	WSPS	English	<a href="https://www.wsp.ca/wsp/media/site/resources/downloads/covid-19-agricultural-workers-health-and-safety-guidance.pdf?ext=.pdf">https://www.wsp.ca/wsp/media/site/resources/downloads/covid-19-agricultural-workers-health-and-safety-guidance.pdf?ext=.pdf</a>
		Spanish	<a href="https://d1ow5xpphy0w2p.cloudfront.net/common/covid-19-agriculture-workers-health-and-safety-guidance-es.pdf?mtime=20200616153934&amp;focal=none">https://d1ow5xpphy0w2p.cloudfront.net/common/covid-19-agriculture-workers-health-and-safety-guidance-es.pdf?mtime=20200616153934&amp;focal=none</a>
		French	<a href="https://d1ow5xpphy0w2p.cloudfront.net/common/covid-19-agriculture-workers-health-and-safety-guidance-fr.pdf?mtime=20200616153934&amp;focal=none">https://d1ow5xpphy0w2p.cloudfront.net/common/covid-19-agriculture-workers-health-and-safety-guidance-fr.pdf?mtime=20200616153934&amp;focal=none</a>
Guidance for Temporary Foreign Workers	Ontario Ministry of Health	English	<a href="http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/cocs/2019_foreign_workers_guidance.pdf">http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/cocs/2019_foreign_workers_guidance.pdf</a>

## Health and Safety Guidance (COVID-19) in the Agriculture Sector

Last update: July 8, 2020

### Other Relevant Resources (Employers and Workers)

Resource	Organization	Language	Source
General COVID-19 health and safety tip sheet	MLTSD	English	<a href="https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-1_2/mltsd-general-covid-tip-sheet-en-2020-06-26.pdf">https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-1_2/mltsd-general-covid-tip-sheet-en-2020-06-26.pdf</a>
		Spanish	<a href="https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-general-covid-tip-sheet-spanish-2020-06-23.pdf">https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-general-covid-tip-sheet-spanish-2020-06-23.pdf</a>
New Worker Orientation: Seasonal Agriculture Worker	WSPS	English	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wjaHTwM9Rps&amp;t=43s">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wjaHTwM9Rps&amp;t=43s</a>
Orientacion general: trabajador temporal en la industria agrícola	WSPS	Spanish	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gRWu1Nro6CQ&amp;t=8s">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gRWu1Nro6CQ&amp;t=8s</a>
Targeted COVID-19 workplace testing campaigns on farms	Ontario Government	English	<a href="https://www.ontario.ca/page/targeted-covid-19-workplace-testing-campaigns-farms">https://www.ontario.ca/page/targeted-covid-19-workplace-testing-campaigns-farms</a>
Guía de Cal/OSHA sobre prevención de infección de COVID-19 para trabajadores agrícolas (Cal / OSHA Guidance on Prevention of COVID-19 Infection for Farmworkers)	California Department of Industrial Relations	Spanish (Video)	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=62&amp;v=u3aB4dyRMTM&amp;feature=emb_logo">https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=62&amp;v=u3aB4dyRMTM&amp;feature=emb_logo</a>
Acabe con los microbios. ¡Lávese las manos! (Put an end to microbes. Wash your hands!)	CDC	Spanish (Video)	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=9&amp;v=g_7HSIrG4Vs&amp;feature=emb_logo">https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=9&amp;v=g_7HSIrG4Vs&amp;feature=emb_logo</a>

## Health and Safety Guidance (COVID-19) in the Agriculture Sector

Last update: July 8, 2020

Resource	Organization	Language	Source
Infographic: COVID-19. Cover your cough	Pan American Health Organization	English	<a href="https://www.paho.org/en/documents/infographic-covid-19-cover-your-cough">https://www.paho.org/en/documents/infographic-covid-19-cover-your-cough</a>
Infografía: COVID-19 - Cubra su tos	Pan American Health Organization	Spanish	<a href="https://www.paho.org/es/documentos/infografia-covid-19-cubra-su-tos">https://www.paho.org/es/documentos/infografia-covid-19-cubra-su-tos</a>
Infographic – Wash your hands with soap and water	Pan American Health Organization	English	<a href="https://www.paho.org/en/documents/infographic-wash-your-hands-soap-and-water">https://www.paho.org/en/documents/infographic-wash-your-hands-soap-and-water</a>
Infografía - Limpia tus manos con agua y jabón (Infographic – Wash your hands with soap and water)	Pan American Health Organization	Spanish	<a href="https://www.paho.org/es/documentos/infografia-limpia-tus-manos-con-aqua-jabon">https://www.paho.org/es/documentos/infografia-limpia-tus-manos-con-aqua-jabon</a>
Stop the Spread of Germs (COVID-19)	CDC	English	<a href="https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/stop-the-spread-of-germs.pdf">https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/stop-the-spread-of-germs.pdf</a>
Detenga la propagación de gérmenes	CDC	Spanish	<a href="https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/stop-the-spread-of-germs-sp.pdf">https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/stop-the-spread-of-germs-sp.pdf</a>
Workplace Safety for COVID-19	Napa Valley Farmworker Foundation	English	<a href="https://napagrowers.org/storage/app/media/Industry%20Issues/Pandemic/COVID%20SAFETY3.pdf">https://napagrowers.org/storage/app/media/Industry%20Issues/Pandemic/COVID%20SAFETY3.pdf</a>
Seguridad en el Trabajo Para Covid-19	Napa Valley Farmworker Foundation	Spanish	<a href="https://napagrowers.org/storage/app/media/Industry%20Issues/Pandemic/COVID%20SAFETY.ESP.pdf">https://napagrowers.org/storage/app/media/Industry%20Issues/Pandemic/COVID%20SAFETY.ESP.pdf</a>



## Health and Safety Guidance (COVID-19) in the Agriculture Sector

Last update: July 8, 2020

Resource	Organization	Language	Source
COVID-19 & Getting Back to Work: Mask Safety Basics	WSPS	English (Video – animated)	<a href="https://youtu.be/DcHN0CfIU0k">https://youtu.be/DcHN0CfIU0k</a>
Putting on Mask and Eye Protection	Public Health Ontario	English (Video)	<a href="https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/videos/ipac-maskeyes-on">https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/videos/ipac-maskeyes-on</a>
How to Properly Put on and Take off a Disposable Respirator/Cómo ponerse y quitarse adecuadamente un respirador desechable	CDC	English and Spanish	<a href="https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2010-131/pdfs/2010-131.pdf?id=10.26616/NIOSH PUB2010131">https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2010-131/pdfs/2010-131.pdf?id=10.26616/NIOSH PUB2010131</a>
Non Emergency Health Care Resources for Migrant Agricultural Workers by Region (Updated June 22, 2020)	Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers Inc.	English	<a href="https://www.ohcow.on.ca/edit/files/migrant_farm_worker/non_emergency_health_care_resources_for_migrant_agricultural_workers_in_ontario_by_region_june_22.pdf">https://www.ohcow.on.ca/edit/files/migrant_farm_worker/non_emergency_health_care_resources_for_migrant_agricultural_workers_in_ontario_by_region_june_22.pdf</a>
Postales de redes sociales: COVID-19 y tareas cotidianas (Postcards from social networks: COVID-19 and daily tasks)	Pan American Health Organization	Spanish	<a href="https://www.paho.org/es/temas/coronavirus/enfermedad-por-coronavirus-covid-19/postales-redes-sociales-covid-19-tareas">https://www.paho.org/es/temas/coronavirus/enfermedad-por-coronavirus-covid-19/postales-redes-sociales-covid-19-tareas</a>
Workplace guidance for sector employers and employees	Government of Canada - Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada	English	<a href="https://www.agr.gc.ca/eng/workplace-guidance-for-sector-employers-and-employees/?id=1588862952557">https://www.agr.gc.ca/eng/workplace-guidance-for-sector-employers-and-employees/?id=1588862952557</a>
Foreign Worker Rights	Government of Canada –	English, French and	<a href="https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-">https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-</a>

## Health and Safety Guidance (COVID-19) in the Agriculture Sector

Last update: July 8, 2020

Resource	Organization	Language	Source
	Employment and Social Development Canada	Spanish	<a href="#">development/campaigns/foreign-worker-rights.html</a>
Information for foreign agricultural workers and their employers	Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB)	English and Spanish	<a href="https://www.wsib.ca/en/novel-coronavirus-covid-19-update#faw">https://www.wsib.ca/en/novel-coronavirus-covid-19-update#faw</a>