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## GUIDELINE FOR MINIMISING SPREAD OF COVID-19 ON KIWIFRUIT ORCHARDS

On Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March, the Government announced that New Zealand was moving to a COVID-19 Alert Level 3 response immediately and to an Alert Level 4 response to COVID-19 from Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March (<https://covid19.govt.nz/>). This means that all people **except** those employed in essential services must stay at home. Food producers and their essential supply chain businesses are considered essential services and can continue to operate. However, businesses who are permitted to continue operating **MUST be registered and** have processes in place to ensure that they protect their workers and the Government has made it clear that businesses who do not protect their staff will be forced to stop operating.

Harvest crews are particularly challenged as they move from site to site. The Government is publishing updated guidelines on a daily basis. Please ensure that you are familiar with Government directions as they are made available and keep up-to-date with these and with Zespri requirements. It is important to stress to all your staff that these rules are important, and they **MUST** be followed. Remember, some of your staff may not speak English and may not be aware of Government announcements.

Managers of staff operating on-orchard (growers, contractors and sub-contractors) must ensure all staff are aware of and are meeting Government requirements alongside other regulatory and Zespri requirements for on-orchard practices, including those relating to health and safety. Managers are responsible for ensuring they develop and carry out procedures that protect all staff working on their site. Please update your orchard hygiene rules, onsite registers, policies and protocols and any signage you provide (if any) on the orchard for your workers.

This guideline is provided to help growers and contractors meet their requirements as an essential business. Zespri will updating its GAP systems to ensure that Government regulatory requirements for COVID-19 are met.

### 1. Protecting vulnerable workers

People of the age of 70 and those with compromised health are at particular risk from COVID-19. Government rules require employers to ensure these people remain at home.

<https://covid19.govt.nz/help-and-advice/for-everyone/vulnerable-people/>

- Persons over the age of 70 should not be employed in a harvest gang or on an orchard in any situation where they are working/mixing with other people.
- Workers must be required to disclose any underlying health conditions that make them higher risk (see Appendix 4). Such workers should be asked to immediately return home and stay there.
- Workers living with vulnerable relatives/family may also need to stay home.
- If workers disclose health issues that may increase their vulnerability, either for themselves or for anyone they live with, seek medical advice before permitting them to remain at work if you are unsure about their level of risk.

## 2. Pre-employment protocols

- All workers should be asked for their travel movements in the past 14 days.
- No worker who has entered the country within the past 14 days should be allowed on any orchard.
- No worker should be employed if they have not completed required self-isolation.
- All potential workers should be asked if they have any signs of illness (<https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-novel-coronavirus-health-advice-general-public#symptoms>).
- No workers over the age of 70, or workers with compromised immune systems should be employed during the period of COVID-19 Level 3 and Level 4 restrictions.
- Make it very clear to staff that they **MUST NOT** come to work if they have a sore throat, runny nose, fever, persistent cough or are having problems breathing. If they arrive for work presenting any of these symptoms they must be sent home immediately, and Healthline advised (0800 358 5453).

## 3. Prior to entry into the orchard

- Only essential authorised staff are to be present on the orchard at all times (visitors must be limited to essential personnel only).
- Growers should maintain a record of all personnel on the orchard.
- All employers (labour contractors and growers) must maintain a record of all staff present on every orchard using the template in Appendix 1 or equivalent.
- Anyone entering the orchard must be checked for any signs of illness and if so, they should be prevented from entry.
- Prior to work, at every break time and at the conclusion of work, all workers must be checked for signs of illness and the information recorded (Appendix 1).
- Record the contact details, entry and exit time of all transient staff (such as truck drivers) from site.
- Familiarise staff with basic COVID-19 spread prevention protocols ([https://covid19.govt.nz/assets/resources/COVID-19\\_Key-Message\\_A4-Posters\\_Protect\\_English.pdf](https://covid19.govt.nz/assets/resources/COVID-19_Key-Message_A4-Posters_Protect_English.pdf)).
- All transient staff (such as truck drivers) should be required to stay in vehicles as much as possible.
- There must be clear separation of vehicles, break times and workspaces to ensure that a 2-metre distance between workers is maintained at all times.

## 4. Follow good hygiene practices

- Growers are responsible for providing adequate handwashing facilities (see Appendix 2).
- All orchards are required to have hand washing facilities available (Appendix 2). If there are no handwashing facilities available, the harvest crew should not be working there until adequate handwashing facilities are available.
- Ensure all staff wash their hands when they first arrive at work, after breaks and after using toilet facilities and at any other time their hands may have become contaminated. This includes before and after eating or smoking (see Appendix 1).
- Washing hands means 20 seconds of vigorous rubbing with soap and water. After washing, hands should be dried using a paper towel.  
[https://covid19.govt.nz/assets/resources/COVID-19\\_Key-Message\\_A3-Posters\\_Wash-Hands.pdf](https://covid19.govt.nz/assets/resources/COVID-19_Key-Message_A3-Posters_Wash-Hands.pdf).
- Hands should be washed or sanitised after sneezing/coughing.

- Remind staff to sneeze or cough into a clean tissue or their sleeve. **DO NOT** sneeze/cough into your hand. Dispose of tissues directly into a rubbish bag/bin and ensure staff wash their hands after use.
- Provide a rubbish bag/bin for staff to use that does not require them to touch the bag/bin.
- Encourage staff not to touch their faces, lick their fingers etc.

## 5. All sick staff must go home immediately

- Make it very clear to staff that they **MUST NOT** come to work if they have a sore throat, runny nose, fever, persistent cough or are having problems breathing.
- Any person who is unwell should immediately leave the workplace and go home. They should not mix with other staff. If they have used the toilet on the orchard this should be sanitised as should any equipment they have been using.
- If a staff member is going home sick, ensure you talk to them about where they are going.
- If they live with other staff e.g. in a hostel or camping ground, then they need to consider how they can isolate themselves in this environment.
- Check to see how the sick staff member is getting home if they have travelled with others to come to work and ensure they are able to get home safely.
- Encourage any person going home sick, or not coming to work because they are sick, to contact their health practitioner or to ring the COVID-19 health line to discuss their symptoms.
- Require any sick staff to advise you immediately if they are diagnosed with COVID-19.
- Workers who have been sick should not return to work without medical clearance.

## 6. Maintain a safe distance between all staff

The Government requires all people operating during COVID-19 Levels 3 and 4 to maintain at 2 metres distance between themselves and other people.

- This means pickers will need to spread out and maintain a 2 metre separation when they are picking fruit and maintain this distance at all times.
- Take care to maintain this 2 metre distance when workers empty their bags into harvest bins.
- Consider how staff will take their breaks to ensure that the distance is maintained at all times. Breaks must be staggered so only a few staff are on break at once.
- A 2 metre distance must also be maintained during transport to and from work. Individual cars are preferable unless workers are living together in the same accommodation.
- If there are small groups of people that live in the same accommodation, these people can be clustered to travel and work together, but they must maintain a safe 2 meter distance from any other people on site.
- Ensure any essential visitors to the picking site check in with the site supervisor for instruction on where they can go. Keep them at least 2 metres distance from any other people.
- Limiting the size of a gang operating at one site will make it easier to keep a distance.

## 7. Site registers

The ability to trace back every case of COVID-19 that is diagnosed is critical and the Government has asked that every work site keeps a record of who is on the site each day. Please ensure you:

- Keep a record with names and contact details of every person working on the site each day including the time they start and finish.
- Utilise the checklist in Appendix 3 to record names, contact details, the time the person enters the site and when they leave.

- Additionally, you need to confirm handwashing has been observed and a health check undertaken before work and at every break and before leaving the site.
- Record details of any visitor to the site.
- Record details of anyone leaving the site due to illness, including the time they left.

## 8. Site and equipment hygiene

Ensure that all equipment and surfaces touched by staff are regularly cleaned - See Appendix 3 for approved sanitisers.

- Do not share picking bags. Make sure each person has their own picking bag for the full day.
- Clean and sanitise each bag at the end of each day or if before another staff member uses the bag.
- Clean and sanitise all other equipment used at the end of each day.
- Restrict drivers to one per vehicle e.g. tractor, forklift - don't share it around. Sanitise surfaces e.g. steering wheel, gear lever etc if you need to change drivers during a day.
- Do not share drink bottle, cups, plates etc.
- Provide drinking water in individual bottles rather than asking staff to get water from the same tap or large containers.
- Regularly (several times per day) clean and sanitise toilets and handwashing areas.
- Regularly sanitise all surfaces in shared spaces such as lunchrooms and toilets. Include door handles.
- Change pickers gloves when soiled or damaged.
- Require workers to discard old gloves directly into a rubbish bag. Do not allow other people to handle them.

## 9. Communicate risks and good practice to all staff

As an essential service, kiwifruit workers are allowed to continue to work but they must follow all guidelines both at work and at home. You must provide staff with information on Government requirements that apply outside of the workplace (<https://covid19.govt.nz/>). Workers must self-isolate and only leave home to travel to work and directly home again.

Workers operating during COVID-19 Levels 3 and 4 are required to complete the declaration form included in Appendix 4 (or equivalent) to demonstrate that they understand and are complying with self-isolation requirements in the workplace and at home. Where an employer becomes aware that an employee is not meeting Government requirements, the employer must report this immediately to Zespri Compliance at [Compliance.Mail@zespri.com](mailto:Compliance.Mail@zespri.com) or call on 07 572 6464.

## 10. Actions to take if someone in your team is diagnosed with COVID-19 or is suspected of having Covid-19

### COVID-19 IS A NOTIFIABLE DISEASE

It is important to educate workers and those supervising them about dealing with a potential notifiable disease. If someone is feeling unwell or if they have an unwell family member or someone that they have been in close contact with has been unwell, they should firstly seek medical advice from their health practitioner. In addition to this, they must notify their manager.

You must immediately isolate the worker and phone the health line and follow their instructions  
 COVID-19 Healthline: 0800 358 5453 (or for international SIMs +64 9 358 5453).

COVID19 Orchard Guideline v2 (26 March 2020)

Anyone that is diagnosed with a notifiable disease is to remain away from work until given full clearance by a public health official. Staff must follow all instructions by the local District Health Board (DHB) under instruction by the Ministry of Health (MoH) which may include isolation.

Notify your post-harvest operator so they are aware that fruit may have been handled by the sick worker. The post-harvest operator will notify Zespri who will decide what actions, if any, are required to manage fruit. If a worker is confirmed positive for a notifiable disease, the DHB will investigate to determine the extent of possible spread to other people and make decisions to manage the situation, including initiation of traceback and specifying stand down periods.



## Appendix 2: Handwashing

Reference: Zespri GAP On Orchard Food Safety Requirements

### TOILET AND HANDWASHING FACILITIES

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Toilet and hand washing facilities must be available for workers, contractors and visitors both during the growing season and at harvest time.

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#### Minimum Requirements for Toilet Facilities

- Be adequate for the number of workers - 1 toilet for every 20 workers is a good guide .
- Within easy access (5 minutes' walk) for all workers.
- Not present a risk of sewage leakage or leeching - consult local regulations regarding the use of "long drop" or composting facilities.
- Have hand washing facilities available as detailed below.
- Have a defined cleaning programme and suitable cleaning equipment for this activity.
- Be monitored regularly for cleanliness.
- Be of sound construction that is hygienic and easy to clean.
- Be cleaned at a frequency appropriate and practical for the toilets usage.

#### Minimum Requirements for Hand Washing Facilities:

- Potable water
- Liquid or foaming soap that meets MPI approval C51 or C56.
- If potable water is not available, make hand sanitizer available for use after hand washing. Hand sanitiser is not to be used as a replacement for handwashing.
- Single use towels (paper towels) or hand air driers.
- A rubbish bin for used towels.
- Prominently displayed pictorial signs on correct hand washing procedures.
- Hand washing must be monitored from time to time by managers/supervisors.

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#### Recommendations:

- ★ Ideally, hand washing facilities should be located in a manner that allows staff supervisors to monitor hand washing and should be considered when constructing new facilities.
  - ★ If handwashing facilities are not easily visible, other methods for monitoring hand washing need to be developed
  - ★ Consideration needs to be given to the disposal/release of the grey water associated with hand washing. Grey water cannot be released within 3 metres of vines.
  - ★ The frequency of cleaning of toilets depends very much on the level of use. Zespri would encourage growers and contractors to use common sense to establish what an appropriate frequency of cleaning is both during the harvest period and also during other times of the year.
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## HAND WASHING

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Hand washing is one of the single most important controls in managing food safety risks. Anyone touching or handling fruit including orchard workers, supervisors, contractors, harvest crews and visitors must wash their hands:

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### **Minimum Requirements:**

#### **Wash hands:**

- ➡ Prior to handling fruit i.e. before starting work
  - ➡ After going to the toilet
  - ➡ After eating
  - ➡ After smoking
  - ➡ When hands are visibly dirty
  - ➡ Hands must be washed using clean water, i.e. potable, with liquid or foam soap
  - ➡ If potable water is not available a hand sanitizer must be used after completing the washing and drying process.
  - ➡ Hands must be dried thoroughly using single use (paper) towels or electric hand dryer
  - ➡ Water from municipal sources does not require further testing. However, water from all other sources must be tested at least once per year to demonstrate that it is potable. A risk assessment may indicate more frequent water testing is required.
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### Appendix 3: Cleaning and sanitising products for bins & picking bags

- It is important that the cleaners and sanitisers used on any surface that come in contact with fruit do not leave residues on the fruit.
- Products that contain the Quaternary Ammonium Compounds (QAC), Didecyldimethylammonium chloride (DDAC) and Benzalkonium chloride (BAC) can leave residues on fruit, especially if the surface is still wet when fruit comes in contact with it. Many sanitizers do contain these products.
- Zespri has reviewed the ingredient list of a range of sanitising product for bins and bags that are available. The following products do not list DDAC or BAC in their ingredient list.
- Users of these products need to be aware that levels of DDAC (and potentially BAC) have been found in several different product groups. It is recommended that suppliers are asked for an analysis certificate prior to purchase.

COMPOUND	Comment	Distributor	ACTIVE INGREDIENT
Active Clean Botanical		Natural Processing Solutions Pty Ltd.	All Natural Botanical Oil
ACCEL PREvention		Safesan	Hydrogen peroxide
Aussan L44	Contact supplier for batch residue verification	Safesan	Octanoic acid & Bitter Orange extract
BioWash		Scitex NZ Ltd	Chlorine dioxide
Citrox PWT	Contact supplier for batch residue verification	Citrox (NZ) Ltd	citrus oil or citrus extract
Citrox 14T - Non - foaming Cleaner		Citrox (NZ) Ltd	Citrus extracts, fruit acids, organic acids
Citric Acid		Redox & Inter Chem	Citric Acid
Enviolyte ANK-Neutral Analyte		Enviolyte NZ Ltd	Hypochlorous acid (HClO), Hypochlorite ion (OCl-)
ExStinkt Pure H2O		Zychem Technologies Pty Ltd	chlorine dioxide
GeoSIL / GeoSIL 150		GeoSIL Pacific Ltd	Hydrogen peroxide
HarvestCide-gel/ HarvestCide Granules		Post-Harvest Solutions Ltd	bromo-chloro-dimethyl hydantoin
Hortisan		Alpha distributors, Nelson	chlorine dioxide
Huwa-San TR 50		Hydrowater	Hydrogen peroxide
Hyprox 500		ORICA New Zealand	Hydrogen peroxide
Jasol Hydrogen Peroxide 50%		George Weston Foods Ltd	Hydrogen peroxide
Nuron - Biosafe	Contact supplier for batch residue verification	Nuron Organics Limited	Sodium Hypochlorite
Orange Based Cleaner		Qualchem	D'Limonene
Oxine		Grower Consultancy Services	chlorine dioxide
Peratec		Jaegar Australia Pty Ltd, Australia	Hydrogen peroxide, peroxyacetic acid
Sodium Hypochloride		ORICA New Zealand	Sodium Hypochloride

COMPOUND	Comment	Distributor	ACTIVE INGREDIENT
Southern Defence			Chlorine dioxide
Southwell AC		Southwell Products Ltd, Eketahuna	Chlorine dioxide
Teracep		Venco Limited, Auckland	peroxyacetic acid
Zydox (PC4)		Zychem Technologies Pty Ltd	chlorine dioxide

**Notes:**

- For organic orchards, please ensure product(s) used meet organic certifications requirements. Products must have had BioGro approval/certification prior to use (<https://clients.biogro.co.nz/>).
- Users of these compounds need to be aware of any health and Safety risk associated with application.
- **Disclaimer:** Inclusion in this list does not indicate efficacy against Psa-V. The list has been compiled to provide guidance with respect to residue concerns. For information on the efficiency of sanitisers against Psa-V, please contract Kiwifruit Vine Heath.
- **This list will be revised on an ongoing basis.**

## Appendix 4: Staff declaration

All staff should complete this declaration form before commencing employment during a COVID-19 Level 3 and 4. Existing staff should complete this declaration form before commencing work after 11.59pm Wednesday, 25 March.

Name:	
Phone number:	
Email address:	
Nationality:	
Passport # (if non-resident):	
Date of birth:	
Entrance date to New Zealand (if non-resident):	
Location where self-isolation took place (if required):	
Accommodation address:	
How many others are living at the address and what is your relationship to them:	
Mode of transport to work:	
Names of others who share transport:	

Tick	Employee Declaration
	I am under the age of 70 years.
	I do not have any underlying health issue that makes me more vulnerable to COVID-19. These issues include COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease), heart conditions, high blood pressure, kidney problems, diabetes, cancer or undergoing cancer treatment, compromised immune system.
	I am not pregnant.
	No one where I live has health issues that make them more vulnerable to COVID-19.
	I can confirm that I have completed the full 14-days self isolation as per New Zealand Government Immigration Requirements (if applicable).
	I am well. I am symptom free. I will immediately report the onset of any symptom to my supervisor at any time during or outside of work.
	At work I will maintain a minimum of 2 meters distance from others at all times including during breaks.
	I can confirm I have read and understood the requirements of the KIWIFRUIT ORCHARD PROTOCOL FOR MINIMISING SPREAD OF COVID-19.
	I will travel direct between my stated home address and essential work in accordance with Government requirements.
	I confirm that I understand and will adhere to the New Zealand Government Staying at Home Rules at all times, leaving my stated home address for the acquisition of essential services only such as attending work in an essential service, food, medicines, fuel.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_