



# GROW

WG COVID-19 Webinar  
Series



July 9, 2020



# WG COVID-19 Webinar Series - Part Three: Shared Housing and Transportation



**Cornell CALS**  
College of Agriculture and Life Sciences



# Agenda

- Introductions
- Richard Stup, Ph.D
  - COVID-19 Prevention in Worker Housing & Transportation
- Jason Resnick
  - Shared Housing and Transportation
- WG Members' Stories
  - Susan Quale
  - Lorraine Ingram
- Live Q&A Session





# Meet The Presenters

*Jason Resnick*  
Western Growers



*Dr. Richard Stup*  
Cornell University - College of  
Agriculture and Life Sciences



*Susan Quale*  
Sierra-Cascade Nursery



*Lorraine Ingram*  
Tanimura & Antle



## Disclaimer

*This webinar includes recommendations for mitigating risks and COVID-19 infection prevention strategies in agricultural workplaces based on CDC and health agency guidance. This guidance is based on what is currently known about COVID-19, which is subject to frequent change. We are not offering legal advice. Participants are encouraged to review all updated guidance as additional information becomes available and seek legal counsel about applying the guidance to their particular operations and circumstances.*

# COVID-19 Prevention in Worker Housing & Transportation



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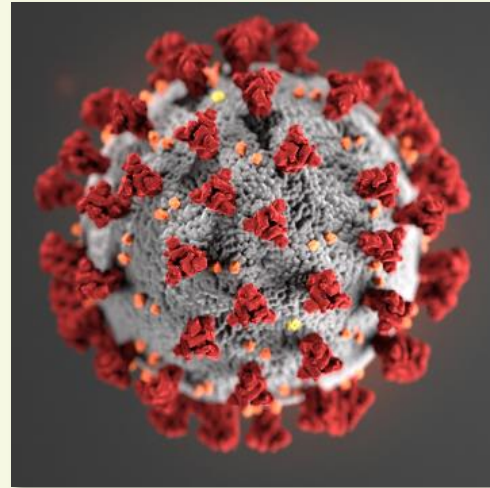
Richard Stup, Ph.D.,  
Cornell Agricultural Workforce Development

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# Key Strategies

- Leadership
- Hierarchy of controls
- Cohorts

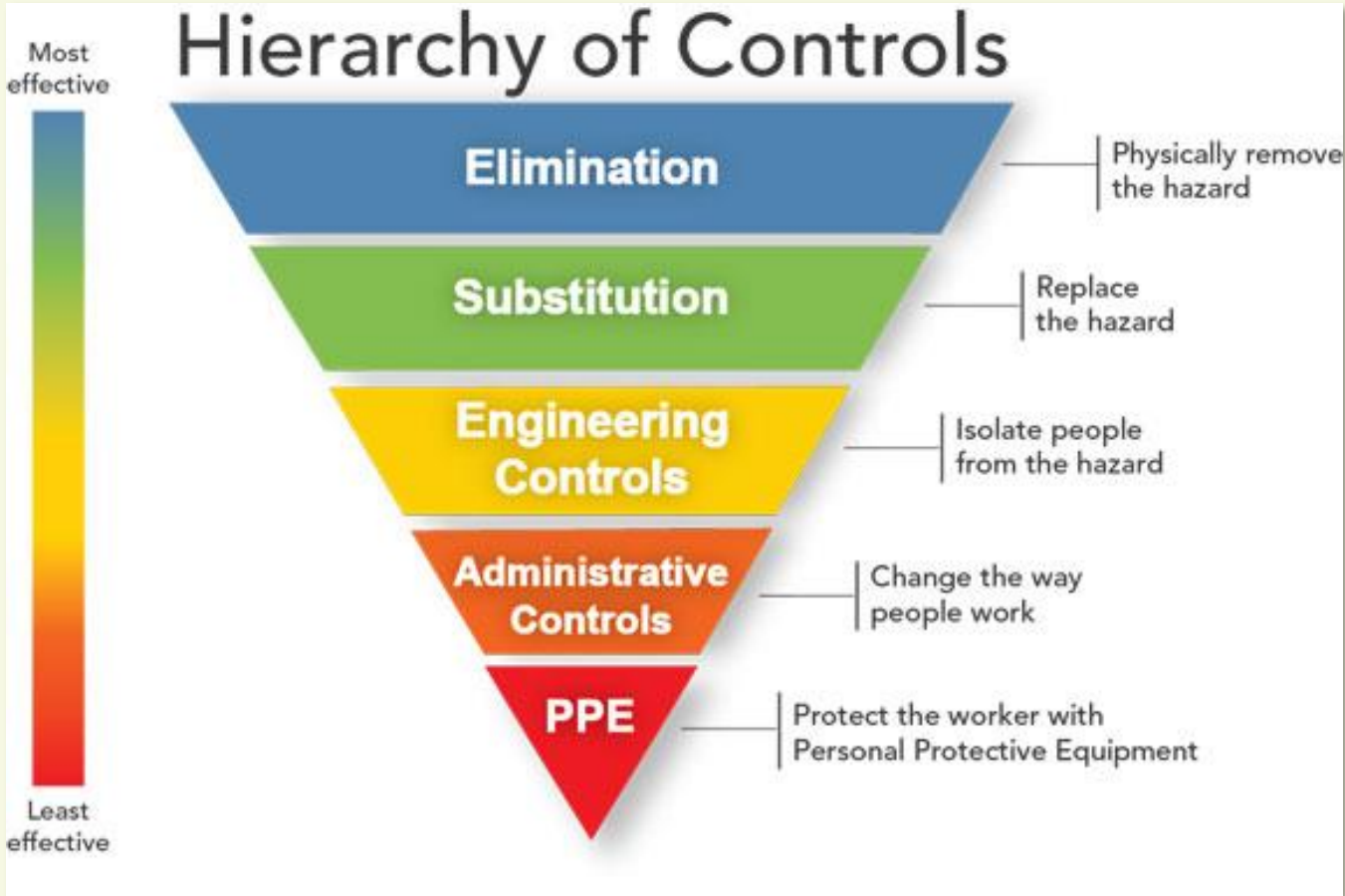




# Leadership

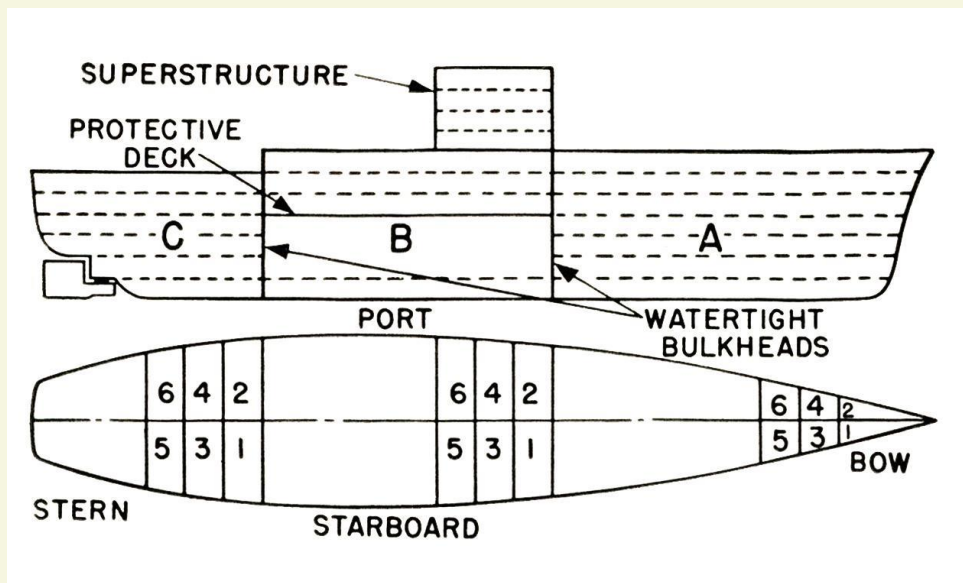
- Use an authoritative, action-oriented approach
  - Get informed on best practices, make a plan with some employee input, set expectations and procedures, follow up
  - Measure results, provide feedback, adapt
- Lead by example, actions speak louder than words
- Stay positive







# Employee Cohorts or Family Groups



Cohorts should be separated at work, in transport, and at home. Use state guidance to reinforce as much as possible.

# Farm Leader's COVID Action List

1. **Lead your team and reinforce vigilance** about sanitation, mask wearing and social distancing practices. Communicate and re-communicate the value of prevention.
2. **Provide the needed tools:** face coverings, cleaning solutions, brushes, buckets, mops, hand sanitizers, etc.
3. Develop the [standard operating procedures \(SOPs\)](#) for preventing COVID-19. Link to [CDC](#) and [OSHA](#) recommendations for business and [agriculture](#).
4. [Train employees](#) in how to use SOP's and tools. **Train and re-train repeatedly** as new recruits arrive at the farm. Make training for COVID-19 part of your [employee onboarding](#) and a key part of a manager's job.
5. **Assign cleaning details.** Use your leadership authority and assign important tasks to individuals as part of their work. Assign cleaning in farm-provided housing also.
6. Manage for compliance with **measurement, [feedback](#) and reinforcement.** Document your plans, actions, and results.
7. **Model the behaviors** you want from followers. Your actions speak louder than your words so model grit, determination, and most of all, perseverance.

# Use Visuals and Language-Appropriate Resources

## Stop the Spread of Germs

Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.

The infographic is titled "Stop the Spread of Germs" and includes the subtitle "Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19." It contains seven panels with illustrations and text:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.** Illustration of two people, one coughing into their elbow.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.** Illustration of a person coughing into a tissue.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.** Illustration of a person's face with a red 'X' over the nose and mouth.
- When in public, wear a cloth face covering over your nose and mouth.** Illustration of a person wearing a cloth face mask.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.** Illustration of hands being cleaned with a spray bottle.
- Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.** Illustration of a person in bed with a house icon.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.** Illustration of hands being washed with soap and water.

[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

## Detenga la propagación de gérmenes

Ayude a prevenir la transmisión de enfermedades respiratorias como el COVID-19

The infographic is titled "Detenga la propagación de gérmenes" and includes the subtitle "Ayude a prevenir la transmisión de enfermedades respiratorias como el COVID-19". It contains seven panels with illustrations and text in Spanish:

- Evite el contacto cercano con personas que están enfermas.** Illustration of two people, one coughing into their elbow.
- Cúbrase con un pañuelo desechable al toser o estornudar y luego bótelos en la basura.** Illustration of a person coughing into a tissue.
- Evite tocarse los ojos, la nariz o la boca.** Illustration of a person's face with a red 'X' over the nose and mouth.
- Cuando esté en un lugar público, use una cubierta de tela para la cara sobre su nariz y boca.** Illustration of a person wearing a cloth face mask.
- Limpia y desinfecta los objetos y superficies de contacto frecuente.** Illustration of hands being cleaned with a spray bottle.
- Quédese en casa cuando esté enfermo, excepto para recibir atención médica.** Illustration of a person in bed with a house icon.
- Lávese las manos frecuentemente con agua y jabón por al menos 20 segundos.** Illustration of hands being washed with soap and water.

[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

# Changing Guidance

- Keep up with changes.
- Update your policies and SOPS as appropriate.
- Document your decisions and actions.

From NPR:

THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS

## CDC Now Recommends Americans Consider Wearing Cloth Face Coverings In Public

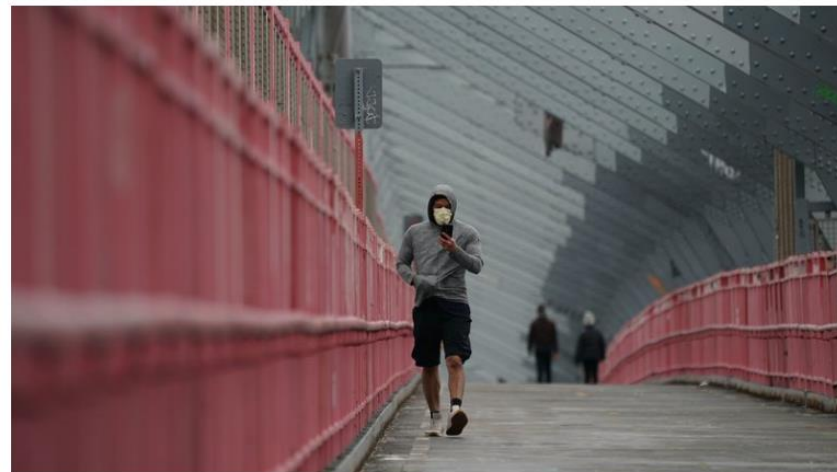
April 3, 2020 - 5:49 PM ET



COLIN DWYER



ALLISON AUBREY



A pedestrian in a face mask crosses the Williamsburg Bridge in New York City last month. U.S. health authorities have announced they're changing the official recommendations on face masks, now urging people to wear them in public spaces to help slow the spread of the coronavirus.

Bryan R. Smith/AFP via Getty Images

# Madison County greenhouse hot spot shows worker density is a problem, Cuomo says

Updated May 06, 2020; Posted May 06, 2020



The 32-acre Green Empire Farms in the city of Oneida has become a hot spot for coronavirus. N. Scott Trimble | [strimble@syra](mailto:strimble@syra)

# Actively Manage Cleaning and Disinfection in the *Workplace and Employee Housing*

1. Set up regular weekly and daily schedules with assigned responsibility
  - CDC guidance for cleaning homes: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/home/cleaning-disinfection.html>
  - [OSHA COVID-19 resources](#), including [guidance on preparing workplaces](#)
2. Provide cleaning supplies (cleaning solutions, buckets, mops, brushes, etc.)
  - CDC guidance: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/disinfecting-building-facility.html>
3. Create standard operating procedures (SOPs) for using cleaning products according to label directions, to include: mixing directions, required contact times, and worker safety.
4. Provide and restock supplies for personal hygiene: handwashing stations, soap, paper towels, etc.



# Plan for Distancing, Quarantine, and Isolation in Employee Housing

- Use the **cohort strategy**: cohorts work, travel, eat, socialize, and live together like a family and maintain separation from other cohorts
- Spread out employees in existing housing to increase social distancing
  - Keep beds 6 feet apart, increase ventilation by opening windows or turning up fans, use plastic sheets as physical barriers
- Act now to secure additional housing, if possible
  - Federal and state authorities are being flexible with approving additional H-2A and other temporary housing
- Discourage visiting and social interaction both at work and home:
  - Train about COVID-19 social distancing
  - Organize grocery/supply runs, discourage individual store trips/socializing
  - Implement and reinforce your state's restrictions
    - No gatherings of people, stay 6-feet part, limit contact
    - [New York's Pause Plan Point 5](#): "*Businesses and entities that provide other essential services **must implement rules that help facilitate social distancing of at least six feet.***"
- Make plans now for quarantining or isolating workers
  - [Quarantine](#) keeps someone who might have been exposed to the virus away from others
  - [Isolation](#) separates people who are infected with the virus away from people who are not infected
  - Coordinate with local health department



# Employee Transportation

- Travel in cohorts
- Stagger start times and shifts
- Limit passengers to maintain 6 feet of separation
- Open windows to increase ventilation
- Consider installing physical barriers
- Clean and disinfect vehicles after each trip
- Wear cloth face coverings/masks
- Hand cleaning before and after riding on transportation
- CDC: [Cleaning and Disinfection for Non-emergency Transport Vehicles](#)

NYCAMH: [Safely Transporting Workers During COVID-19](#)



# Act to Protect Your Employees, Customers, Community, And Your Business



## Coronavirus cluster investigated at Oswego apple-packaging facility

Updated Jun 16, 2020; Posted Jun 15, 2020



The Champlain Valley Specialty of NY Inc. facility on Route 104 in Oswego.



1.8k  
shares

By [Nolan Weidner](#) | [nweidner@syracuse.com](mailto:nweidner@syracuse.com)

Oswego, N.Y. — Seven workers at an apple-packaging facility in the Town of Oswego have tested positive for the [coronavirus](#) in what Oswego County officials are describing as a new cluster.

**Oswego County Medical Director Dr. Christina Liepke** said the employer is cooperating with the health department and has complied state-established Covid-19 guidelines, including employee social distancing and providing hand sanitizer.

“It appears this cluster was initially transmitted through community spread,” said Oswego County Legislature Chairman Jim Weatherup. “Our health department is working closely with the New York State Health Department to ensure all necessary testing, tracing and control measures are in place to effectively control its spread.”

“Champlain Valley Specialty is currently working in tandem with the New York State Department of Health and the Oswego County Health Department as we remain diligent in ensuring the well-being of our employees, their families and the communities in which we operate,” the company said in a statement issued Monday night.



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# Planning to Fight Any Outbreaks

- Even as our states re-open we cannot relax
- CCE and NYFB Farm Employee Housing Action Plan:  
Quarantine, Isolation, Care
- Coordination with local health departments



***“Never give in.  
Never, never, never.”***

**-Winston Churchill, Prime  
Minister of the United Kingdom,  
1940-1945.**



The background image shows a person wearing a hat walking away from the camera on a dirt path that curves through a field. In the distance, there are trees and a fence. A solid red horizontal bar is positioned above the title text.

# Shared Housing and Transportation

Jason Resnick  
Vice President and General Counsel  
Western Growers



# Screening and Monitoring Workers

- Consider instituting daily health checks (e.g., symptom and/or temperature screening) and daily reporting to supervisors prior to and during the housing period to identify illnesses early.
- Complete the health checks in a way that keeps workers from congregating in large crowds, such as providing multiple screening points or staggered reporting times.
- Do not let employees enter the workplace if they have a fever (100.4°F or greater or report feeling feverishness), or if screening results indicate that the worker is suspected of having COVID-19-like symptoms.
- Encouraging workers to report symptoms immediately.
- Encouraging workers who have symptoms to self-isolate and contact a healthcare provider, or when appropriate, providing them with access to direct medical care or telemedicine.



# Housing and Enhanced Sanitation

- Provide disposable gloves, soap for hand washing, and household cleaners.
- Develop and implement enhanced sanitation and cleaning plans that address frequency of sanitation and cleaning, and identify a responsible person.
- Do not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, or eating utensils. Non-disposable food service items used should be handled with gloves and washed with dish soap and hot water or in a dishwasher.



# Disinfecting Living Quarters, Cooking and Eating Areas, Bathrooms, and Laundry Facilities

- Ensure shared rooms have good air flow:
  - Use an air conditioner or open windows, if possible.
  - Clean air conditioner units and change filters according to the manufacturer's directions.
  - Provide air filtration systems in units without air conditioners, if possible.
- Clean common areas routinely following CDC cleaning and disinfection guidelines.
- Provide supplies for cleaning shared cooking utensils (such as knives, ladles, spatulas) and shared appliances (such as stoves, microwaves, and refrigerators, etc.).
- Maintain access to laundry facilities and post guidelines for doing laundry, if possible (e.g., restrict the number of people allowed in laundry rooms at one time to ensure social distancing, avoid shaking dirty laundry).
- Provide appropriate storage options for reusable PPE, such as work gloves, coveralls, safety glasses, boots, etc., to prevent cross contamination.



# Housing and Social Distancing

- Support social distancing during the entire time farmworkers are housed, including while recreating, cooking, and sleeping.
- Consider if possible, adding physical barriers, such as plastic flexible screens, between bathroom sinks when there are multiple sinks. Modify common areas to encourage social distancing, if feasible, including furniture removal or spacing.
- Consider modifications to bed configurations to maximize social distancing in sleeping quarters, to the extent feasible.
  - Head-to-toe sleeping arrangements with at least 6 feet of distance between beds.
  - Adding physical barriers, such as plastic flexible screens when beds cannot be 6 feet apart.
  - Minimizing or avoiding the use of bunk beds, which make distancing more difficult.
- If possible and environmental conditions allow, conduct meetings and conversations outdoors to minimize congregating in close quarters.
- Encourage residents to wear cloth face coverings in shared spaces.



# **Establish Isolation Plans for Responding to Farmworkers With COVID-19:**

- Provide accommodations separate from others, if feasible. Consider using separate buildings or rooms instead of physical barriers where possible.
- Consider providing separate food and bathroom access where possible.
- Consider restricting access to non-essential persons.
- Provide medical access and telemedicine for emergent illnesses.
- Provide transportation, if necessary, in a manner that does not expose others.
- Consult with a clinician or public health authority so they may monitor the situation and provide guidance on treatment and continued housing of all farmworkers.



# H-2A Housing Unavailability Due to COVID-19

Where certified housing becomes unavailable, in whole or in part, due to COVID-19 the employer must promptly notify the State Workforce Agency (SWA) in writing of the new housing situation. An employer may place workers in other employer-provided housing or rental or public accommodation housing that complies with applicable local, State, or Federal housing standards upon notice to the SWA and, then, work with the SWA to provide documentation demonstrating compliance and/or schedule an inspection of the alternative housing following the procedures outlined in the Regulations.

*(U.S. Department of Labor, ETA, OFLC COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions Round 3 April 9, 2020)*

A person wearing a hat is walking away from the camera on a dirt path that curves through a field. The background shows a line of trees and a fence under a hazy sky. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent yellow band in the center and a solid orange band above it.

# WG Members' Stories



# Implementing COVID-19 Protocols

- Susan Quale, Vice President of Human Resources, Sierra-Cascade Nursery
- Lorraine Ingram, Senior Director of Human Resources and Payroll Services, Tanimura & Antle



# Q&A Session

**Moderator:** Jason Resnick, Vice President and General Counsel, Western Growers

**Panelists:**

- ❖ Dr. Richard Stup, Agricultural Workforce Specialist, Cornell University
- ❖ Susan Quale, Vice President of Human Resources, Sierra-Cascade Nursery
- ❖ Lorraine Ingram, Sr. Director HR & Payroll Services, Tanimura & Antle



# Thank you!

Please note, you can expect to receive an email containing the slides and resources used in today's presentation in addition to the recording of the webinar before the end of the week.