

## Keeping Essential Employees Safe

Ensuring employees have a safe and healthy place to work is an everyday part of doing business. In every business health and safety requires constant vigilance under normal circumstances, now when the threat can't be seen or detected it becomes even more critical.

How do we work together with employees, who do not know that they have COVID -19, to minimize the risk of spreading the virus to their coworkers? As turkey producers and part of the critical food supply chain we must continue to work as an essential business. In turkey production most jobs certainly can't be done from home and many tasks can't be done from six feet apart. Working on farms and hatcheries requires that people work closely together. The challenge becomes finding ways to establish "social distancing" and keep employees safe.



FIGURE 1 ADDITIONAL PPE - FACE MASKS AND SHIELDS

### Biosecurity = Employee Safety

We are fortunate that many of the things that we do every day for biosecurity will also help to keep our employees safe. Our normal procedures include showering, changing clothes, washing hands, using hand sanitizers, getting a flu shot, and staying home with a fever or flu symptoms.

All of these will help to reduce risk. In addition, face masks are now standard when working close together to help prevent spreading the virus and are supplemented with face shields where it makes sense. Also, in addition to asking employees to monitor symptoms at home, conducting a symptom and temperature check before employees enter the workplace is now common place. *See Figures 1 and 4*



FIGURE 2 MARKING TABLES AS "CLEAN" OR "DIRTY"

Cleaning procedures have also been expanded and now include spraying frequently touched surfaces with an alcohol spray. A good option for areas with storage shelves and many frequently accessed items is a disinfecting fogger. Surfaces, such as breakroom tables, are marked as "dirty" after use providing a visual indicator that they need to be cleaned before being used again. *See Figures 2 and 3*

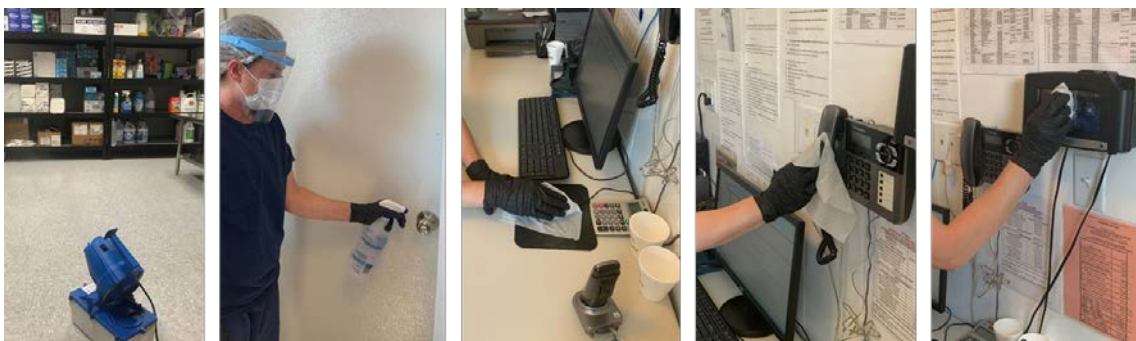


FIGURE 3 DISINFECTING FOGGER, ALCOHOL SPRAY, AND CLEANING FREQUENTLY TOUCHED SURFACES

## Assessing and Removing Risks

The biggest risk is an employee coming to work that has been infected with COVID-19 and doesn't know it. Without a test, all we can do is screen employees for symptoms or for potential contact with a symptomatic person. Many operations have started checking employee temperatures before entering the workplace. *See Figure 4* A no-touch thermometer is preferred and if it provides a suspect reading it is followed up with an ear thermometer with a disposable cover. Infrared walk through temperature scanners may be another option for sites with high employee numbers such as processing plants and hatcheries.

A typical screening program includes the following:

1. If an employee reports to work and has a temperature of 100° or more
  - a. Employee will be sent home for self-quarantine
  - b. Employee may return to work after 48 hours of no fever and if no other symptoms develop
  - c. If the fever persists for 48 hours and further symptoms develop the employee is considered symptomatic
2. If an employee is symptomatic (*fever, cough, body aches, shortness of breath, etc.*) and meets testing requirements
  - a. Employee is quarantined and sent for testing
  - b. Employees that have worked closely with him/her over the 3 days prior to showing symptoms are quarantined until test results returned. This may include quarantining a group of non-symptomatic employees working together at a site away from others.
  - c. All may return to work upon negative test result
3. If an employee tests positive,
  - a. Employee is quarantined until released by the Health Department
  - b. All employees that have worked closely with him/her over the 3 days prior to showing symptoms are quarantined for 14 days.
  - c. They may return to work 14 days after the last person in household starts showing symptoms and if they do not show symptoms
4. If someone in an employee's household tests positive,
  - a. Employee is quarantined for 14 days or until released by the Health Department
  - b. All employees that have worked closely with him/her over the 3 days prior to showing symptoms are quarantined for 14 days. This may include quarantining a group of non-symptomatic employees working together at a site away from others.
  - c. All may return to work 14 days after the last person in household starts showing symptoms and if they do not show symptoms

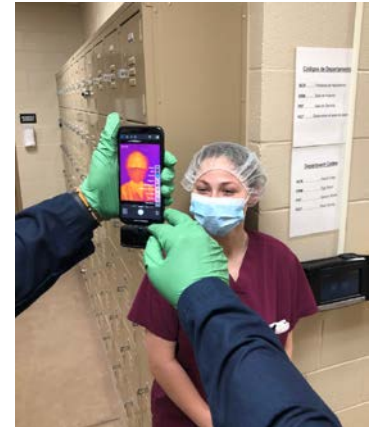


FIGURE 4 CHECKING TEMPERATURES

## Creating Separation and Barriers

### Ways to Limit Contact

- Spread out work stations
- Stagger start times
- Split up working crews
- Stagger breaks and lunches

Typically, we try to encourage people to work together and break down barriers in the workplace, but when you're trying to keep germs from spreading you need to establish "social distancing".

One way to create distance is by limiting the number of employees working in the same place at the same time. This can help prevent disease spread and also may lessen the number of employees who come in contact with someone who becomes symptomatic. Analyze floor plans and work flow to identify opportunities for limiting contact. *See Figure 5*

FIGURE 5 LIMITING CONTACT



FIGURE 6 CREATING PLEXIGLAS BARRIERS

For employees that must work closely together, barriers can be created with personal protective equipment (PPE) such as disposable coveralls, gloves, masks and face shields. While physical barriers can be difficult on farms, hatcheries have come up with some clever ways to “put up walls” between employees. Plexiglas shields have been mounted between workers for hatch pull and on service wheels. They have also been placed on break room tables to create separation during lunch and while on breaks. This is especially important because PPE such as masks and gloves can’t be worn while eating and drinking. *See Figure 6*

It is important to maintain contact with the operations team, but it certainly is not the time to bring them together. Holding video and phone meetings is an important way to exchange information and to maintain a sense of working together even when we are apart.

## Staying Safe on the Road

Traveling to offices, farms, hatcheries, feed mills, processing plants, etc. is a necessary part of farming operations. Every day employees are on the road driving crew trucks, picking up eggs and making deliveries of poults, feed, turkeys and supplies.

- Minimize traffic in truck garages and crew centers
- Keep team drivers together and limit rotations
- Wipe down every surface in the truck cab with disinfectant between drivers
- Minimize stops and exiting the vehicle
- When stops are required, don’t enter buildings unless necessary
- Wear disposable gloves and masks to enter buildings, dispense fuel, and while using keypads. Dispose of gloves and masks before re-entering cab
- Drivers should limit interaction at farms and hatcheries according to biosecurity protocols either by
  - Loading or unloading their own vehicle *or*
  - Drivers staying in the truck and onsite staff loading and unloading
- When loading or unloading wear appropriate PPE, e.g. Disposable Coveralls, Shoe Covers, Hairnets, Masks, and Gloves
- Feed truck drivers are not to enter the control room for their paperwork
- Avoid group meetings and look for alternative methods of communications



FIGURE 7 WEAR APPROPRIATE PPE

## We’re in this Together

The turkey industry is known for working together. We have dealt with poultry health challenges through the years and have worked together for the best interest of the industry as a whole and the consumer. This human health challenge is no exception. People across the industry are sharing ideas to help keep employees safe allowing us to continue to provide healthy nutritious turkey protein for consumers throughout the world.

Two good resources for more information on COVID-19 and for keeping employees safe are:

- The Centers for Disease Control - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- OSHA Guidance on Preparing a Workplace for an Influenza Pandemic - [https://www.osha.gov/Publications/influenza\\_pandemic.html](https://www.osha.gov/Publications/influenza_pandemic.html)