

HORTICULTURAL FIELDS FOR VEGETABLES, FRUITS, SPICES, FLOWERS, PLANTATION CROPS IN THE WAKE OF COVID-19

In the wake of COVID-19, a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is designed for farmers engaged in cultivation of vegetables, fruits, spices, flowers and plantation crops to reduce the risk of spreading the virus while protecting the farming operations in various horticultural fields.

General Procedure

- The farmers including family members should follow the guidelines on COVID-19 issued by central as well as state government including the guidelines issued by the district administration.
- The number of farmers should be kept minimum depending upon the operations to be carried out in the field.
- The farmers should stay at home if one feels sick. If they develop symptoms at work, they should inform/ take them to the nearest hospital/Health Department officials.
- The farmers who travelled to impacted areas/ other states/ other countries in recent days should be asked to self-quarantine as per the guidelines issued by the state health department.
- Farmers should not bring labourers from another place or village but take the services of those available within the jurisdiction.
- The farmers or their dependents who are in quarantine/isolation should not be engaged in any field operation activity.
- Use of Face mask will be compulsory.

Social distancing

- The farmers should avoid shaking hands and other physical contacts with other co-workers in the field.
- Activities which are usually carried out in clusters must be restricted and carried out in a phased manner to avoid crowding.
- Farmers should maintain personal hygiene and restrain from social gathering after work.
- Staggering lunch/Tea breaks should be adopted.

Washing points and other sanitation facilities

- There must be adequate washing points from entry to departure, toilets, temporary shelter for lunch, input/equipment rooms.
- Hand washing procedures must be displayed near washing points.
- The farmers should know the importance of washing hands well before lunch/Tea break, after using toilet, before putting on gloves or after contact with farm animals etc.
- Farmers should do disinfectant spraying at regular intervals around the farm buildings, store room to ensure hygiene and sanitation. Generally, formaldehyde @5% is recommended.
- Adequate personal safety measures to be taken for loading/unloading and transportation of produces to the collection centres or market places.