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## PRODUCTION GUIDE

# WINERY PREPARATION FOR COVID-19 MITIGATION

## COVID-19 MITIGATION PRACTICES

Mitigation practices are those efforts put in place operationally as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic to prevent the rapid transfer of the virus. A mitigation strategy includes a plan of mitigation practices that are implemented at the winery, cidery, or alcohol-producing facility that are practiced by all employees. It should be noted that mitigation practices (*e.g.*, wearing facial cloth coverings/masks, sanitizing high-touched surfaces) are **not** a replacement for social distancing practices as the virus spreads through person-to-person interaction.

Please remember that state and local recommendations also vary in relation to COVID-19. This document will primarily focus on federal recommendations, but it does not replace the need for wineries to double check local and state guidance.

## A CHECKLIST TO IMPLEMENT A COVID-19 MITIGATION STRATEGY

The following is a checklist for you to gauge how prepared your winery is during the COVID-19 pandemic while also providing recommendations on how wineries can implement mitigation practices within the wine production facility.

While businesses may not be able to implement all mitigation strategies, a best effort is in the interest of the business to operate as safely as possible as preparation will guarantee greater efficiency during high intensity periods of time, such as harvest.

## PERSONNEL PRACTICES

COMPLETED	MITIGATION PRACTICE
	Identify essential and non-essential (those that do not need to physically be in the work facility to complete their job) employees within the business. Outline a plan to address how employees should report to work now and through harvest. Identify how to address employees that are not able to physically attend work (e.g., have a disease that makes them immune compromised, are needed at home to attend to childcare, are in a high-risk population, etc.) and how the business plans on working with those individuals.
	For those employees that must physically be in the workplace, initiate policies for wearing facial masks, protective eyewear, and gloves during the workday. <b>Note:</b> <i>Some states require employers to provide some or all of these materials to their employees.</i>
	Implement daily wellness checks (e.g., start of shift and/or daily temperature readings, daily health questionnaire) for all employees. ( <b>Note:</b> <i>Recommendations for this practice vary from state-to-state. Denise Gardner Winemaking highly recommends reviewing information related to this optional practice and potential implications for how this practice is documented. Refer to your state's Department of Health guidance. You may also want to review this practice with your insurance company and legal counsel.</i> )
	Develop company-wide policies on how to handle employees that exhibit symptoms associated with COVID-19, employees that test positive for COVID-19, and employees with potential exposure to COVID-19. You can use the <a href="#">CDC information</a> to help guide your policy details. Communicate this policy with all employees.
	Develop a plan for how employees who are returning to work after being sick can integrate back into the workplace. You can use the <a href="#">CDC information</a> to help guide your policy details. Communicate this policy with all employees.
	Review work shifts and evaluate if it is possible to stagger shifts throughout the day to minimize the number of people working together at a given time. Shifts should include at least 2 people as a physical safety precaution for working within a production space. If shifts are created, communicate this plan to employees and how the teams can best communicate with everyone in the company.

## SANITATION OF HIGH-TOUCHED SURFACES & COMMON AREAS

COMPLETED	ACTION STEP RELATED TO FSMA
	Identify high-touched surfaces in the production space and create a list of those surfaces. This could include heavily used objects like door handles, handles, tables, writing utensils, light switches, or keys, but it may also involve equipment that is used in the winery and exchanges hands frequently. It is recommended to revisit this list on a periodic basis as operations in the winery change.

	Identify and acquire a sanitizer/disinfectant <a href="#">recommended by the EPA</a> that could be used to sanitize high-touched surfaces. <b>Note:</b> <i>Wineries are encouraged to avoid chlorine-based sanitizers due to the TCA-development risk.</i>
	Add to an existing or develop a <a href="#">sanitation standard operation procedures (SSOP)</a> for sanitizing (disinfecting) those high-touched surfaces. As these surfaces fall outside the routine produce space sanitation practice, it is recommended that they have their own SSOP.
	Develop a sanitation log to be kept daily to ensure the high-touched surfaces are regularly sanitized according to your SSOP. <b>Note:</b> <i>Each surface (or group of surfaces) should have its own log.</i>
	Evaluate high-traffic areas such as bathrooms and break rooms. Design a plan to maintain lower room capacity, single-file movement when possible, 6 feet of distance between individuals, and routine sanitizing described above. Create a plan to implement these procedures and train employees on this new practice.
	Ensure an appropriate stock of soap and disposable towels are available in all hand washing spaces and/or bathrooms. Purchase extra supply prior to harvest. Include these areas in the daily high-touch surfaces to get cleaned and sanitized.

## PRODUCTION PROCESS ALTERATIONS

COMPLETED	MITIGATION STEPS
	Purchase supplies for harvest earlier than normal to accommodate potential availability and shipping delays.
	Review the current winery <a href="#">SSOPs</a> . While wine production SSOPs <b>do not</b> need to be altered in terms of chemical selection and application, the <b>frequency</b> in which sanitation procedures are implemented will likely need to be increased ( <i>i.e.</i> , daily or at the end of each shift). Alter your plans as necessary and create a daily schedule for sanitation operations.
	Consider the addition of hand sanitizer at every entrance and exit within the production space. Make sure to stock these areas with hand sanitizer as needed.
	Develop a <a href="#">standard operating procedure (SOP)</a> on fruit sampling [in the vineyard and at the winery] and wine tasting under COVID-19 restrictions. Train your employees on these new procedures.
	Evaluate how winery personnel can maintain 6 feet of distance and avoid congregation during production operations including during harvest operations. Create a plan for how to implement these new procedures and train employees.

	Create detailed delivery procedures for when raw materials ( <i>e.g.</i> , grapes) arrive to the winery. This should include where grapes will be delivered, requirements for the driver to deliver, and how employees should handle the material upon delivery. Train employees on these new procedures.
	Evaluate areas that cross over between the tasting room and production area. Create new procedures for minimizing human traffic in between those two spaces. Can entering and exiting spaces get streamlined in a single-file flow? Train your employees on these new procedures.
	Develop physical barriers for those operations ( <i>e.g.</i> , bottling) that require multiple people to operate at one time. Please see the <a href="#">CDC image under “Controls” here that show adequate divisions or human separation under production conditions</a> . Any physical barriers should get sanitized daily, at minimum. Train employees on these new procedures.

## EMPLOYEE TRAINING

COMPLETED	MITIGATION STEP
	Display signage at hand washing stations as reminders of proper hand washing techniques.
	Train employees on proper hand washing techniques. <a href="#">This video</a> is useful as a training tool. Record this training for your FSMA and COVID-19 records: <a href="#">Individual Training</a> , <a href="#">Group Training</a>
	If using gloves in the production (cellar) space, train employees on proper glove usage. <a href="#">This infographic</a> is useful as a training tool. Record this training for your FSMA and COVID-19 records: <a href="#">Individual Training</a> , <a href="#">Group Training</a>
	Train employees on proper mask wearing techniques and methods for removing and storing masks during breaks. <a href="#">This infographic</a> is useful as a training tool. Record this training for your FSMA and COVID-19 records: <a href="#">Individual Training</a> , <a href="#">Group Training</a>
	Train employees on all new production procedures that emphasize social distancing, single-file movement, and physical separation. Record this training for your FSMA and COVID-19 records: <a href="#">Individual Training</a> , <a href="#">Group Training</a>
	If you do not have a standardized employee training program or system, create one. Using a computer program like Excel, create a log spreadsheet that documents employee training. This is your <b>Employee Training Log</b> . Each spreadsheet should be titled with the training, the employee’s first and last name, the date the training was received, the supervisor’s name that oversaw the training, and the expiration date of the training. Further instruction can be found in <a href="#">FSMA Documentation for Wineries: Module 4</a> .

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

The information in this document are suggestions, only. For sensitive practices, employers should review recommendations from their state's Department of Health and to discuss details with legal counsel.

DG Winemaking also offers one-on-one consulting for wineries and other alcohol-producing facilities to prepare the facility and production staff under COVID-19 restrictions. The [Darn Good Winemakers membership](#) offers group consulting at a low monthly cost and meets twice per month to discuss issues pertaining to members. Mini-Consults and hourly services are available for all of those not in a contractual agreement with DG Winemaking. All DEMI, STANDARD-V, STANDARD, and MAGNUM clients are eligible for this service. You can find out more about [consulting services, here](#). Inquire about the current rates for each consulting package at [info@dgwinemaking.com](mailto:info@dgwinemaking.com).



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