
GUIDELINE FOR MINIMISING SPREAD OF COVID-19 ON KIWIFRUIT ORCHARDS

This guideline is applicable for Covid-19 Alert Level 4. Updated 30 August 2021 - Amendments highlighted in yellow

Level 4 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 have processes in place to ensure that workers are protected.

Under alert level 4, the kiwifruit industry has been classified as an essential business. What you could do yesterday, you can do today **HOWEVER ALL PROTOCOLS MUST BE FOLLOWED**.

Important Notes:

- ⦿ Essential services are limited to seasonal activities which are required to ensure the health and productivity of your orchard. This does not include activities such as orchard development.
- ⦿ Travelling between alert levels presents a higher level of risk to people and our communities. Transit between level 4 and 3 regions will be strictly limited. Those wishing to move between boundaries will need to apply for a permit from MBIE. You can apply for a permit [here](#).
- ⦿ Application of Hicane is mid-season and while ongoing application is permitted, there will be an increased number of people staying at home or walking in rural areas. Extreme caution is to be applied. Additional measures can be found [here](#).
- ⦿ MPI have confirmed the use of masks by all staff and visitors at all times at work. This includes on orchard and in postharvest facilities. Refer to the section 6 for additional guidance.
- ⦿ MPI have confirmed there is no requirement to register as an essential business under level 4
- ⦿ All orchards are required to display the official QR codes for the NZ COVID Tracer app at all alert levels. While not mandatory, signing into each orchard using the COVID Tracer app at all alert levels is strongly encouraged.
- ⦿ Staff with high temperatures must go home. Regular temperature checks of staff in postharvest facilities are highly recommended. On orchard temperature checks are encouraged and should be carried out where possible.

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 site. Please update your orchard hygiene rules, onsite registers, policies and protocols and any signage on the orchard for your workers.

This guideline is provided to help growers and contractors meet their requirements as an essential business.

1. The Delta Variant

The current strain in New Zealand is the Delta variant which has a number of differences compared to earlier iterations of the virus. These differences mean that the Delta variant is a greater threat to the health of individuals who contract the infection and a greater challenge to contain the spread of the virus in an outbreak. For example:

- Delta can cause people to develop more serious COVID-19 illness than other variants of the virus
- People with a Delta infection are at higher risk of needing hospitalisation.
- The chance of infecting others such as within your household or other contacts is very high because Delta is so transmissible. It is estimated that on average, one person infected with Delta may infect 5 or 6 other people. This is how Delta outbreaks in places overseas have grown so rapidly.
- Experts believe that Delta can travel in the air as far as 8 metres.
- People with Delta infections seem to carry much more virus (have a higher viral load) and for a longer period of time than with the original virus.
- The time from exposure to the virus until first symptoms is shorter for the Delta variant. Some people may have no symptoms (asymptomatic) when infectious. More information on the Delta variant can be found <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-health-advice-public/about-covid-19/covid-19-about-delta-variant>

While anyone can get Covid, vulnerable people are more at risk. You should agree with any vulnerable employees what measures will be put in place to manage their health and safety. If you and your employee agree that they should not come to work during this period, and they cannot work from home, then you and your employee should discuss and agree what leave from work and pay arrangements apply. This could be a mixture of paid leave types (e.g., annual leave, special paid leave) or unpaid leave.

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.

If workers disclose health issues that may increase their vulnerability, either for them or for anyone they live with, seek medical advice before permitting them to remain at work.

2. Pre-employment protocols

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>).

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. The use of temperature monitoring devices is encouraged to help determine health status of workers. If workers arrive for work presenting any of these symptoms or have a recorded temperature of 38 degrees or above 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 unwell, they should be prevented from entry.
- The wearing of face coverings/masks is mandatory for all staff working on orchard. Refer to section 6.
- Staff should be checked regularly for signs of illness and information recorded in 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/posters/COVID-19_poster_protect.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, workers should not be onsite 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/posters/COVID-19_poster_wash-hands_A4.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 and get tested for covid. 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.
- Records must be kept for a period no less than 8 weeks after entering COVID-19 Alert Level 1.

6. Distancing and the use of Masks

The government requires all people operating during COVID-19 Level 4 to maintain at 2 metres distance between themselves and other people and to wear face coverings to reduce the chance of transmission.

- 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 it is best practice that all workers maintain a safe 2 meter distance while working.
- Ensure any essential visitors to the orchard check in with the site supervisor for instruction on where they can go. Keep them at least 2 metres distance from any other people.
- Please note that the 2-metre distance assumes every person is wearing a mask. If wearing a mask is not possible the separation of people should be beyond the 8-metre airborne travel of DELTA.

7. Site registers

All businesses, including orchards, are required to display the official QR codes for the NZ COVID Tracer app at all alert levels. Growers must ensure each orchard has a QR code prominently displayed. Get your QR code here: All visitors including contractors should be

encouraged to scan in using the tracer App. Information on QR Codes and using the app can be found here: <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-resources-and-tools/nz-covid-tracer-app/nz-covid-tracer-qr-codes>

People who cannot sign in using the tracer app must manually sign in before entering the site

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.
- Time sheets can be used to meet this requirement, or you can 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. This can be done using a visitor register or the checklist in Appendix 3
- Record details of anyone leaving the site due to illness, including the time they left.
- Registers must be kept for a period no less than 8 weeks after entering COVID-19 Alert Level 1.

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 equipment. Make sure each person has their own equipment for the full day.
- Clean and sanitise all equipment at the end of each day or before another staff member uses the equipment.
- 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.

Travel will only be allowed for specific reasons and within specific parameters. Workers involved in food and beverage production, processing and supply, and freight are permitted to travel. In order to travel you will need to have proof that you either fit into a permitted activity or have a specific exemption to travel. The Business Travel Document is one form of accepted evidence. Further information on Business Travel Documents are here: <https://www.business.govt.nz/covid-19/business-travel-across-alert-level-boundaries>.

Workers operating during COVID-19 Level 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 or call on 0800 549 440.

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).

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.

11. Travelling between Alert Levels

Travel into or out of regions at different alert levels is restricted. Getting the official Business or Personal Travel Document will make the process of crossing a boundary much quicker and easier.

It's important to note that exemptions for travel will only be allowed for specific reasons and within specific parameters. You must adhere to the conditions under which your exemption was granted.

Businesses must have systems and processes in place to minimise travel across the boundary or between regions within an alert level area. Everyone should work remotely if they can. Travel across an Alert Level Boundary will be very limited.

What to do.

- You won't be able to re-use the travel documents that you applied for during previous Alert Level changes.
- Nominate a single person from your business to make the application for your staff
- Apply or re-apply for the Business Travel Documents, [here](#).
- The horticulture industry will need to go through MBIE system under the Food and Beverage sector.
- To apply you will need your NZ Business Number and a Real Me login
- If your application is declined and you require support, contact the NZKGI office [here](#).
- When travelling, carry your ID, the letter outlining your essential worker status and the exemption. Place both of these on the windscreen of the vehicle so Police can have contactless access to your details
- List all the essential works within your business who will need to travel
- List all the essential works within your business who will need to travel
- A separate document will be issued by e-mail once approved for each applicant - unique code given, i.e. QR code will be on document
- When moving from Level 4 to Level 3 you take the business requirements for Level 4 with you

For a map of New Zealand's current alert level, click [here](#).

Appendix 2: Handwashing

Reference: Zespri GAP on Orchard Food Safety Requirements

TOILET AND HANDWASHING FACILITIES

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

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.

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

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:

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	<i>Contact supplier for batch residue analysis verification</i>	Safesan	Octanoic acid & Bitter Orange extract
BioWash		Scitex NZ Ltd	Chlorine dioxide
Citrox PWT	<i>Contact supplier for batch residue analysis verification</i>	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
Envirolyte ANK-Neutral Anolyte		Envirolyte 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	<i>Contact supplier for batch residue analysis verification</i>	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
Southern Defence			Chlorine dioxide
Southwell AC		Southwell Products Ltd, Eketahuna	Chlorine dioxide

COMPOUND	Comment	Distributor	ACTIVE INGREDIENT
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.

Appendix 4: Staff declaration

All staff should complete this declaration form or equivalent before commencing employment during a COVID-19 Level 3 and 4. Existing staff should complete this declaration form before commencing work after an alert level has been initiated.

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 GUIDELINE 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: _____