

Garden Center Guidance – April 22, 2020

<http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/agriculture/documents/fsma/coronavirus-garden-centers.pdf>

ADDENDUM TO RETAIL GARDEN CENTER GUIDANCE

Retail Garden Center Owners/Managers:

DEM working with DBR is providing additional clarification on issues, scenarios and questions which have come up since release of the attached guidance:

Greenhouses with sides that can be rolled up: The guidance prohibits access to interior spaces but many growers have pointed out that the sides of their greenhouses can be rolled up which is done for climate control. Public access to the interior of greenhouses is therefore allowed only if the sides are rolled up and with customers/employees following applicable social distancing standards.

Use of hand carts: Many growers and garden center managers have asked whether customer use of hand carts provided by the facility is allowable to minimize customer/employee close contact. Such would allow the customer while wearing gloves to place products they choose directly into their cart and then load their own vehicle after checkout. This is acceptable as long as customers do not touch any product they are not going to purchase or return any product to the shelf that was placed in the cart, and the common touch points on the cart are sanitized after each use.

Complaint Process – the following link to the Department of Business Regulation lists COVID 19 resources and the process to file a complaint (see first tab) at:

<https://dbr.ri.gov/covid/covid19updates.php>. You may also call DBR at 889-5550.

Cloth Face Coverings

- Beginning on April 18th, all of your employees must wear a cloth face covering that covers the nose and mouth, unless doing so would compromise the health of that employee.
- Please note that even though required, cloth face coverings are not a replacement for adhering to social distancing protocols. As a general rule, all persons must maintain at least a 6 ft. distance from all other persons, when job duties allow.
- Employees who can easily, continuously, and measurably maintain a 6-foot distance from all other persons are not required to wear a cloth-face covering. However, face coverings must still be worn when in common areas of every workplace including entrances and exits, check-in, registration, reception, waiting areas, hallways and corridors, bathrooms, break rooms, time clock areas, elevators, stairways, etc.
- To ensure all employees have a cloth face covering, businesses must, at their expense, provide their employees with a cloth face covering that covers the nose and mouth, or the materials to create a face covering.
- For information on purchasing or creating face masks, see www.commerceri.com/masks
- Businesses must take steps to remind customers who are over two years of age & health-permitting, to wear face coverings by:
 - Posting the requirement at the entrance of the business.
 - Posting clearly visible signs inside the business to remind customers of the requirement to wear the face covering at all times when in the business.
- At this time, businesses should refrain from prohibiting entry based solely on the reason that a customer does not have a face covering.