

MONTEREY COUNTY
2020 CSAC Challenge Award Entry
Issue Area: Disaster/Emergency Response & Management

Monterey County – Advisory for Agricultural Worker Protection During the COVID-19 Crisis

OVERVIEW: The Agricultural Commissioner’s Office developed best practices operating procedures in collaboration with County elected officials and industry groups to reduce COVID-19 transmission in the agricultural workforce.

CHALLENGE: At the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, the safe and health of the agricultural workforce was a priority. The Covid-19 information coming from different local, state and federal agencies needed to be centralized and bridge to already existing stringent industry best practices. Once this was accomplished, the next goal became how to disseminate this information to the farmers and ultimately to the agricultural employees.

SOLUTION: An “Advisory for Agricultural Worker Protection During the COVID-19 Crisis” was created and continued to evolve to incorporate new information. Proactive measures included employee hygiene, ill employees, perform routine environmental cleaning in high traffic areas, training and changes to processes, limit non-essential visits and travel, transportation for employees and employer-provided housing. Further, an outreach campaign was launched, in both English and Spanish, utilizing social media platforms, community organization groups, direct communication to farmers, farm labor contractors, media outlets and the industry’s own methods of communication to make this advisory available to employers/agricultural employees.

INNOVATION: The forward thinking of Monterey County Supervisors Luis Alejo and Chris Lopez as well as the Monterey County Agricultural Commissioner’s Office in conjunction with the leadership of the Grower-Shipper Association of Central California; Monterey County Farm Bureau; Monterey County Vintners and Growers Association; Coastal Growers Association, and the California Strawberry Commission to create and implement a first in the nation bilingual “Advisory for Agriculture Worker Protection During the COVID-19 Crisis” helped consolidate industry existing stringent best practices with Covid-19 information.

RESULTS: This vision, leadership and collaboration among local elected officials, the agricultural commissioner and the agricultural industry, at the onset of the pandemic, displayed a unique approach to a changing situation. This alliance also showed the Monterey County community, the State of California and the Nation, how an essential industry came together to establish and enhance protective measures to further protect worker health, safety and hygiene.

REPLICABILITY: This “Advisory for Agricultural Worker Protection During the COVID-19 Crisis” has helped other agricultural communities emulate these protective measures to further protect agricultural worker health, safety and hygiene.

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OPTIONAL SUBMISSION:

[Advisory for Agricultural Worker Protection During the COVID-19 Crisis - ENGLISH](#)

[Advisory for Agricultural Worker Protection During the COVID-19 Crisis - SPANISH](#)