

COVID-19 Updates for Maryland Farmers

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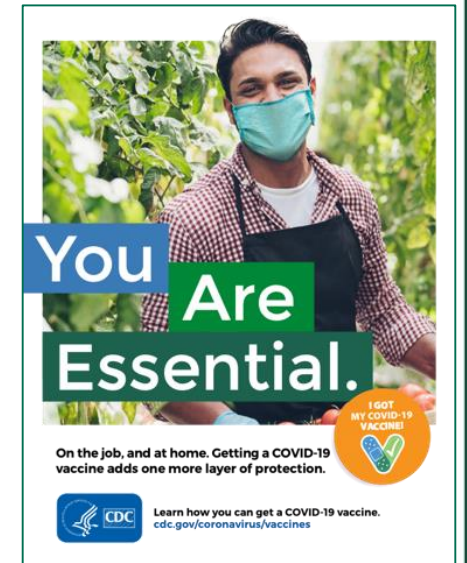
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COVID-19 in 2021

- Likely going to impact growing season
- Likely to impact markets
- Many lessons learned last year; use this information
- Focus on communication
 - Communicate farm priorities and processes to all employees
 - Do this often!
 - Make certain everyone knows about COVID-19 transmission and prevention strategies
 - Actions both inside and outside of work matter!



Overview on COVID-19 Transmission

- COVID-19 **most commonly** spreads during close contact.
 - “Infections occur mainly through exposure to respiratory droplets when a person is in close contact with someone who has COVID-19.” (Maryland.gov)
- COVID-19 **can sometimes** be spread by airborne transmission.
 - “There is evidence that under certain conditions, people with COVID-19 seem to have infected others who were more than 6 feet away within enclosed spaces that had inadequate ventilation.” (Maryland.gov)
- Touching surfaces is **not thought to be a common** way that COVID-19 spreads, but could be possible.
 - Respiratory droplets on surfaces could infect someone if a person touches a surface with virus on it and then touches their mouth, nose, or eyes. (CDC)
- COVID-19 is **not** known to spread from food.
 - “...we have not seen epidemiological evidence of food or food packaging as the source of SARS-CoV-2 transmission to humans.” (FDA Statement, Feb 2021)

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-covid-spreads.html>

<https://covidlink.maryland.gov/content/faqs/#trending>

www.fda.gov/emergency-preparedness-and-response/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/covid-19-frequently-asked-questions



COVID-19 Actions



- Vaccinations will be an option
 - Encourage employees to get vaccinated
 - Help and support employees who want to get vaccinated
- Many will be vaccinated but must maintain:
 - Wearing face coverings (nose and mouth)
 - Social distancing
 - Sanitation practices
 - Isolating sick employees
- Take advantage of testing options





cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html

fda.gov/food/food-safety-during-emergencies/covid-19-vaccination-food-and-agriculture-sector

Vaccinations in Maryland

Maryland.gov [State Directory](#) [State Agencies](#) [Translate](#)

Why should you get the vaccine? <https://covidlink.maryland.gov/content/vaccine/>

			
<p>Protective</p> <p>The vaccines provide protection from serious COVID-19 illness.</p>	<p>Promising results</p> <p>Early clinical trials show the vaccines are highly effective in preventing serious illness.</p>	<p>Pandemic-ending</p> <p>The vaccines are the best path forward to ending the pandemic.</p>	<p>Minimal side effects</p> <p>Most of the participants in clinical trials had minimal side effects. The most common were soreness at injection site, fever, or body aches.</p>

Vaccine Locations: <https://coronavirus.maryland.gov/datasets/md-vaccination-locations/data>

CDC Myths and Facts about Vaccination: [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/facts.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/facts.html)



COVID-19 Actions

- Important to review your whole operation and think about how you will manage COVID-19 on the farm
 - Incoming workers; testing; quarantining
 - Development of cohorts for living, working, transportation
 - Housing; How to manage ill workers and those under quarantine; reducing risks in housing
 - Sanitation practices
 - Getting necessary resources

Protective Business Practices

Available here: news.maryland.gov/mda/category/covid-19/

- Mask Policy
- Social Distancing
- Handwashing
- Enhanced Cleaning and Disinfection Practices
- Best Practices for transport and delivery
- Best Practices for worker housing and bunk areas
- Screening for Symptoms
- Leave and Absence policy
- Best practices for quarantining sick workers
- Signage to encourage these good practices



COVID-19 Facility/Site Compliance: Agricultural
SAFE BUSINESS PRACTICES, FACE COVERING
& SOCIAL DISTANCING COMPLIANCE CHECKLIST

This checklist will help agricultural businesses including farms to implement best practices to prevent COVID-19 in the workplace. It can be used as a self-assessment tool by agricultural businesses or as a tool for the Maryland Department of Agriculture, Maryland Department of Health and/or the local Health Departments to evaluate COVID-19 safe business practices for facilities. All recommendations for signage and communications should be made available in the written and spoken languages of the employees. Simple language and infographics are strongly encouraged.

Business name: _____ Date: _____
Business address: _____ Time: _____

Signage (Preferably at worksite entrances, main work areas, break rooms, rest rooms)
Signage (in appropriate languages for population) is posted that:
Informs employees not to enter farm or worksite areas if they have symptoms of COVID-19, such as fever, cough, and/or shortness of breath/difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, nausea or vomiting diarrhea.
Informs employees that they must wear face coverings in all areas in which interactions with other staff are likely, as is practicable.
Informs all employees to maintain a minimum six-foot distance from one another, as is practicable.
Restricts all non-essential visitors from entering the facility.

Employee Health, Communications, and Leave and Absence
All employees have been informed not to come to work if sick or have symptoms of COVID-19, such as fever, cough, and shortness of breath, chills, and muscle pain, new loss of taste or smell, headache, vomiting, diarrhea, and/or sore throat.
Facility has an established screening process, and symptom checks are conducted before employees may enter the work space.
Protocols are in place to maintain a written list of full names and accessible phone numbers of employees. This information is critical in case a worker tests positive or is placed in quarantine and will allow required health care provider follow-up, conduct contact tracing and back to work approval.
Protocols are in place to monitor and maintain records of employee illness and absenteeism, and data are reviewed for potential patterns or spread within the workforce.
Protocols are in place for a worker who becomes ill during the work shift.
Protocols are in place that clearly define return to work requirements for exposed or previously sick employees.
Established protocols for face coverings, social distancing, etc. are followed and enforced by management throughout the facility.
Relaxed requirements for medical documentation are in use in the event of COVID-19 illness (best practice).
Employees have received training in proper handwashing and other relevant COVID-19 topics.

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COHORTING OF WORKERS

WORKERS CAN BE GROUPED/COHORTED BY HEALTH STATUS TO REDUCE THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 TO HEALTHY WORKERS.

- Consider creating groups of workers that house, transport, and work together, but stay apart from other groups of workers.
- Consider keeping migrant farm workers who live on the farm's labor camp, migrant workers who live in off-farm housing, and local workers separate from one another to limit potential spread to and from the farm and community.
- **Group 1:** Workers that are COVID-19 positive, whether they have symptoms or not, can be isolated together.
- **Group 2:** Workers exposed to COVID-19, but do not show symptoms, tested negative or have not yet been tested, can be quarantined together away from positive cases.
- **Group 3:** Workers not exposed to COVID-19 and not showing symptoms can remain together with no need of isolation or quarantine.

RETURN TO WORK

WORKER WHO HAD COVID-19 SYMPTOMS IN ISOLATION CAN BE RELEASED FROM ISOLATION AND RETURN TO WORK ONLY UNDER THE FOLLOWING CIRCUMSTANCES

Workers with symptoms who test positive for COVID-19 must remain in isolation until after:

- at least 3 full days (or 72 hours) have passed without a fever, without the use of fever-reducing medications AND
 - other symptoms are greatly improved and
 - at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first started.
- Workers with laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 who have not had ANY symptoms may discontinue isolation when at least 10 days have passed since the date of their first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test and if they continue to have no symptoms.
 - Possible exceptions when large number of asymptomatic positive workers: have them work together with face coverings and/or social-distancing

Handwashing and Personal Hygiene Practices



- Handwashing stations encourage good hygienic practices.
- Place the stations strategically.
 - At the entrance of work area, at entrance of customer areas.
- Good handwashing stations have soap, single use paper towels, running water, and a place to store the grey water.
- In addition to hand washing stations, you can provide hand sanitizers with **at least 60-95% alcohol** in various locations such as in the field, cooking and eating facilities and sleeping areas.
- Best practice: schedule handwashing breaks every hour

Request a
handwashing
station

Example Worker Training Items to Emphasize

What this document covers

- Definition of COVID-19
- How COVID-19 Spreads
- Symptoms of COVID-19
- Workplace Prevention

Example discussion questions to address with your workers

- Can you name some ways that the virus spreads?
- What are some ways you can protect yourself from COVID-19?
 - While working with customers
 - While on break eating lunch
 - After work



The image shows a red barn with a white fence in front of it. In the top left corner, there is a logo for the Maryland Department of Agriculture, featuring a yellow and red shield with a white cross. The text "Maryland" is written below the shield. In the top right corner, there is a map of Maryland with the words "MARYLAND STRONG" written across it. The title "COVID-19 Guidance: AGRICULTURAL WORKFORCE TRAINING" is written in bold, black, uppercase letters. Below the title, there is a section titled "All training should be provided in the native language of workers. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has guidance and signs available in multiple languages." followed by a section titled "Definition of COVID-19; How it Spreads; Symptoms". This section is divided into four numbered parts: 1. Introduce the topic, 2. Discuss how the virus spreads, 3. Discuss the symptoms of the virus, and 4. Review. Each part includes a "Say:" prompt and a "Possible responses:" list. The final section is titled "General Prevention; Workplace Prevention" and is divided into two numbered parts: 1. Introduce the topic and 2. Discuss personal prevention methods. Each part includes a "Say:" prompt and a "Possible responses:" list.

**COVID-19 Guidance:
AGRICULTURAL WORKFORCE TRAINING**

All training should be provided in the native language of workers. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has guidance and signs available in multiple languages.

Definition of COVID-19; How it Spreads; Symptoms

1. Introduce the topic
Say: Today we are going to talk about the new coronavirus, also called COVID-19, how it spreads, symptoms, how you can stay safe, and how we will keep you safe at work.

2. Discuss how the virus spreads
Say: COVID-19 is a virus that mainly affects the lungs and spreads from person to person. When someone with the virus breathes, talks, coughs, or sneezes, droplets with the virus can be breathed in by people nearby (within 6 feet or 2 meters). Droplets can also land on surfaces like tables, handles, or tools. If you touch a surface and then touch your mouth, nose, or eyes before washing your hands, the virus can enter your body.

3. Discuss the symptoms of the virus
Say: COVID-19 can look and feel like the flu. The most common symptoms of the virus are fever, cough, and/or shortness of breath/difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, nausea or vomiting diarrhea.
Say: Symptoms may occur 2-14 days after you've been close to someone who has the virus or touched a surface that had the virus on it and touched your face with unwashed hands. Some people may never show symptoms.
Say: If you have any of these symptoms or have been around someone who is sick:
• Call your healthcare provider first for instructions, before you go to the clinic, doctor's office, or hospital. Call emergency services (9-1-1) if you have difficulty breathing. Consider providing numbers for local health centers or share this link as a resource: <https://health.maryland.gov/mdpcp/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx>
• Do not come into work. If you start to feel symptoms while working, tell your supervisor immediately.
• Isolate yourself from other people as much as possible.
• Thoroughly clean and sanitize all surfaces in your bunk, living area and/or home.

4. Review
Ask: Now to review, can you name some ways that the virus spreads? Wait for responses.
Possible responses:
• When someone with the virus: breathes, talks, coughs, sneezes
• When droplets land on a surface and I touch the surface and then my face without washing my hands.
Ask: What should you do if you have symptoms? Wait for responses.
Possible responses:
• Call your healthcare provider, do not come to work, isolate yourself, clean and sanitize
Say: Scientists are learning more everyday about how COVID-19 spreads. As information changes, we will update you.

General Prevention; Workplace Prevention

1. Introduce the topic
Say: Now we are going to talk about how to prevent COVID-19 and how we will reduce your risk at work, and also reduce the risk to your family, friends, and co-workers.

2. Discuss personal prevention methods
Say: The best way to prevent getting sick is to avoid being exposed to the virus.
Some ways you can stay safe are:
• Wash your hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds (or the time it takes you to sing "Happy Birthday" or "Las mañanitas" twice). Wash in between your fingers and on the backs of your hands. Soap and water are best, but if they are not available, use hand sanitizer and rub hands until dry.
• Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
• Avoid close contact. Stay at least 6 feet/2 meters away from others when possible. This includes locker areas, break areas, rest rooms areas, areas where product is sorted/boxed up or palletized.

Guidance for Customer Interfacing

Plan ahead to protect your farm, your employees, and the public.

Check with county health departments before offering your planned activities this season.

- [Contact numbers](#)
- coronavirus.maryland.gov/pages/lhd-resources

COVID-19 Guidance:
FARMS AND ON-FARM DELIVERIES AND PICK-UPS

The following guidance and recommendations for farms has been developed to assist farms in limiting exposure and risk related to COVID-19 (novel coronavirus). As always, it is critical to practice biosecurity for the safety of animals, workers and the public. It is now critical to also consider ways to limit person-to-person contact and if necessary -congregating safely while maintaining social distance.

CORONAVIRUS DISEASE **COVID 19**
Coronavirus Disease

Maryland Farmers Markets Operations During COVID-19 State of Emergency

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

UPDATE (June 24, 2020): All patrons, vendors and staff are required to wear face coverings at indoor markets. The use of face coverings is also encouraged for outdoors markets, especially in areas where it is not possible to maintain six feet

Maryland Agritourism Operations During COVID-19:
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION

As an agritourism operator...

Am I able to operate my agritourism operation?
Agritourism is a broad term (defined in Md. Code, Land Use Art. Section 4-212) that can encompass many types of activities on a farm. This guidance is meant to highlight some of the concerns and restrictions agritourism operators may face. Depending on the nature of the operation, however, there may be state or local Orders, restrictions, recommendations, and/or guidance documents that are more appropriate for the operation or portions of the operation.

On September 1, 2020, Governor Hogan signed a revised Order to authorize the reopening of recreational and entertainment attractions subject to the current guidance from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) regarding social distancing, including, without limitation, avoidance of large gatherings and crowded places. Political subdivisions in Maryland, however, may determine it is necessary to prevent exposure to COVID-19 by restricting

Guidance for Customer Interfacing

General Best Practices for this season:

- Utilize online shopping platforms / call ahead if possible
- Minimize customer touching product
- Separate customer interaction from the rest of farm activities
- Wash hands after interfacing with customers



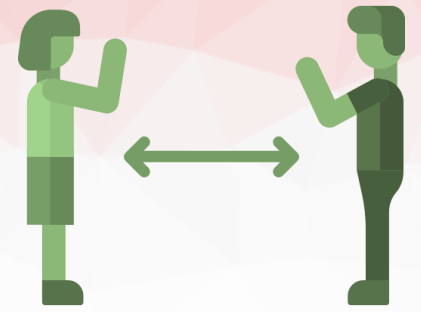
Thank you for Wearing your Mask!



Properly wearing a mask is the best defense against infectious COVID-19 droplets.

- Have your mask policy clearly posted online and at customer areas.
- Have masks available for those who forgot.
- Make a plan for servicing those who cannot wear a mask due to a disability (online pre-order, curbside pickup, etc.).
- Ensure all your workers are trained on the mask policy and how or when to enforce it.

Separate, but Together: Social Distancing



- Use directional arrows to encourage flow of customers.
- Provide signage that urges customers to keep a 6-foot distance away from others.
- Discourage groups of 10 or more from assembling together in one area.
- Separate work tasks among workers
 - Ex: one person handles customers, one person stays at the register / packing area



<https://cstoredecisions.com/2020/04/03/free-social-distancing-floor-graphics/>

Farmers Market Resource: Best Practices to Action

- **Farmers Market Food Safety Risk Reduction Checklist.**
- Use the checklist to help you organize implementation of food safety best practices.
- The checklist will help you track important information to communicate prior to and throughout the market season.

Farmers Market Food Safety Risk Reduction Checklist

	Yes	No	N/A
Market Facilities			
Potable water is used for all purposes at the market (produce washing, cleaning, etc.)			
If municipal water is not used, microbiological testing is conducted prior to each market season opening and as often as may be warranted.			
A handwashing station with soap, single use paper towels, running water, and a place to store the grey water is at the market entrance.			
Production			
Vendors are encouraged to use Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs).			
Signage is clearly posted informing customers of proper handling and washing of produce before consumption.			
All water used in post-harvest handling of market products is potable.			
Sanitizers used in post-harvest washing are labeled for produce use.			
Transportation to Market			
Vehicles used to transport products to market should be visibly clean before loading products.			
Products are covered during travel to prevent road contamination.			
Coolers or other insulated containers are used to maintain the proper temperatures during transportation.			
During transport, potentially hazardous foods, such as raw meats and eggs, are kept separate from other foods such as fresh produce.			

drive.google.com/file/d/1hYBKo6SWK5-OhDkpNoIADi8W1c3D4Jqh/view?usp=sharing 18

Signage for Customers



Request resources today!

Draft



Follow the Science as it Evolves

- Research and epidemiologic data will continue to be gathered.
- Find trusted sources of information, stay engaged, and make necessary changes.
- Many people working to keep you informed!
- All Executive Orders are still in affect!
- Keep your employees informed!
 - Their actions are key to prevention!
- Sign up for CDC email updates
tools.cdc.gov/campaignproxyservice/subscriptions.aspx?topic_id=USCDC_2067



Institute for Food Safety at Cornell University (IFS@CU)



Institute for Food Safety
at Cornell University

Institute for Food Safety at Cornell University

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) | Trainings | Services | Programs | Resources | News & Events | Contact Us

The Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Food Industry Resources

[Resources by Commodity](#)

[Minimize Personnel Risks](#)

[Food Industry FAQs](#)

[Templates & Trainings](#)

[Info for Facilities](#)

[Producing Hand Sanitizer](#)

Food Industry Resources

[Home](#) / [The Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#) / Food Industry Resources

COVID-19 is already changing the way we interact with and produce food. As we each look to control the spread and impact of COVID-19, there are many questions around the risks associated with food production and to our employees to ensure that a safe and robust food supply is maintained for the public. Below you can find useful links to expert resources to help address your specific questions. We will continue to provide updates to these resources as the situation changes and new information becomes available.

<https://instituteforfoodsafety.cornell.edu/coronavirus-covid-19/food-industry-resources/>



Up-to-date Information

- New training materials
 - COVID-19 Training for Fresh Produce Farms and Packinghouses
- Industry office hours for asking questions
 - Every other week
- “COVID Boosters”
 - Short weekly video updates
- New CDC recommendations/Research





FoodCoVNET

- Based at NCSU
- Follow at foodcov.net;
On social @foodcovnet

FoodCoVNET Resources

COVID-19 Basics Home and Community
Resources Retail and Foodservice
Resources ...

NC State

[Home](#) » **COVID-19 Basics**


COVID-19 Basics

About the SARS-CoV-2 Virus

- SARS-CoV-2 Virus Transmission [Infosheet](#) 📄
- Hand Hygiene [Infosheet](#) 📄 | [Social Media](#)
- Cleaning and Disinfection [Infosheet](#) 📄 | [Social Media](#)
- Basic Food Safety [Infosheet](#) 📄 (4.08.20) | [Social Media](#)
- Cleaning, Sanitizing and Disinfecting [Infosheet](#) 📄 | [Social Media](#)
- Disinfectants, UV Light, and Heat for Virus Inactivation [Social Media](#)


Cloth Face Coverings

- Facemasks and Cloth Face Coverings [Infosheet](#) 📄 | [Social Media](#)
- Do-It-Yourself Cloth Face Coverings [Infosheet](#) 📄 | [Social Media](#)
- Bandanas as Cloth Face Coverings [Infosheet](#) 📄 | [Social Media](#)

have 
a QUESTION

Tweets from @foodcovnet

Tweets by [@FoodCovNET](#)

 **Food CoVNET**
[@FoodCovNET](#)

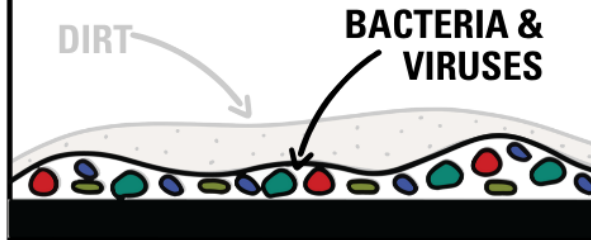
Join us for the first FoodCoVNET webinar, Vaccine Uptake in the Food Sector and Communicating Around Vaccine Hesitancy. Register here go.ncsu.edu/fcn_vaccines and be sure to follow us for more announcements



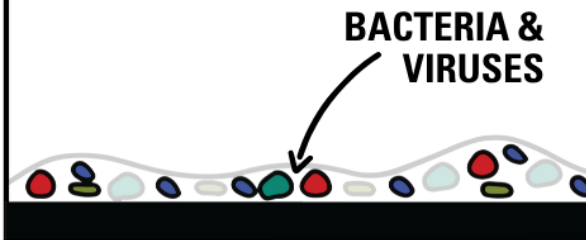
COVID-19 PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

CLEANING, SANITIZING, AND DISINFECTING

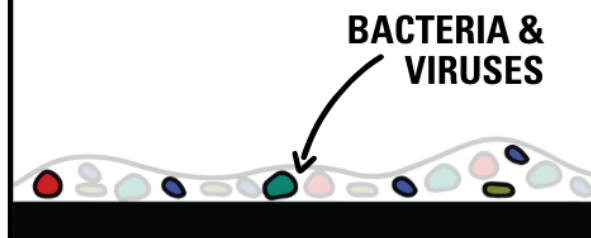
CLEANING REMOVES DIRT



SANITIZING DESTROYS SOME BACTERIA AND VIRUSES



DISINFECTING DESTROYS MORE BACTERIA AND/OR VIRUSES



IMPORTANT INFO

- The virus causing COVID-19 requires disinfecting with compounds found here: go.ncsu.edu/epacovid-19
- Always clean before sanitizing or disinfecting
- Because disinfectants are harsher than sanitizers, they are not always safe for food contact surfaces
- Follow manufacturer's instructions

Take the Time to Find the Right Product for Your Surfaces

cfpub.epa.gov/giwiz/disinfectants/index.cfm

EXAMPLE

Vigorox Liquid Sanitizer and Disinfectant

Food contact surfaces, no rinse.

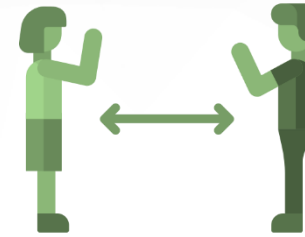
Sodium Hypochlorite from Clorox

Food contact surfaces, requires a rinse!

The screenshot shows the EPA's List N Tool for COVID-19 disinfectants. The header includes the EPA logo and the text "United States Environmental Protection Agency". The title "List N Tool: COVID-19 Disinfectants" is prominently displayed. To the right of the title are two buttons: "More Information" and "Feedback". Below the title is a large image of a hand in a blue glove spraying a disinfectant. On the left side of the image, there is a vertical list of search filters: "EPA Registration Number", "Active Ingredient", "Use Site", "Surface Types" (highlighted in yellow), "Contact Time", "Browse All", and "Keyword Search". On the right side of the image, there is a list of selection options: "All", "Hard Nonporous (HN)", "Food Contact No Rinse (FCNR)" (selected with a blue dot), "Food Contact Post-Rinse Required (FCR)", "Porous (P)", and "Porous (P) (laundry)". At the bottom right of the image, there are two buttons: "Show results" and "Clear results".

COVID-19 Resources for Maryland Farms

- Handwash station
- Distance markers
- Mask signage
- Signage for customers



Order here: <https://forms.gle/Rt5o8k65L3VZw5w76>