

Seed is the starting point of the food system. Farmers everywhere depend on access to quality seed in order to grow healthy crops. Part of the variety decision making process for farmers is the evaluation of data supplied by seed companies. As the planting of field demonstrations begin, CSTA has worked with our members to develop industry best practices, which are recommended to help reduce exposure risk for staff and customers during safe during this COVID-19 pandemic high risk period. Recognizing the difficulty to have one protocol covering all situations is very difficult, it is recommended to communicate with the co-operator producer well in advance on how to best conduct the trial.

Guidance to reduce the risk of exposure and infection with Covid19 for staff and customers during field demonstration planting:

1. Prioritize plots/demonstration sites and keep these to a minimum.
2. Utilize electronic transfer of forms rather than paper copies.
3. All participants should travel separately in their own vehicles to the work site.
4. Upon arriving at the site all personnel should wear a complete set of protective clothing including: disposable Tyvek coveralls, respirator masks, eye protection, and disposable protective gloves – all if deemed necessary.
5. A sign should be posted at the edge of the field asking visitors to not engage the participants and with a cell phone number listed in case they have any
6. The co-operating producer be asked and notified in advance to remain in or on the tractor during the entire plot planting procedure.
7. Reduce the number of persons handling equipment or seed bags to a minimum.
8. At no time should personnel remove protective clothing or work in a proximity closer than 3 m from a colleague where multiple people are involved at the site.
9. Surfaces contacted on the farmer's equipment during planting will be cleaned with an antiseptic wipe including hopper lids, edges of seed boxes, etc. The team member coordinating the plot will be responsible for providing needed cleaning materials at the work site.

10. All materials brought to the farm including remaining plot seed, all parts of plot seed bags including strings, tear strips and protective clothing and cleaning wipes will be removed and disposed of offsite by the staff member responsible for the site.
11. In-person customer interaction in a high-risk area: it is important to familiarize the “high-risk” areas in your geographical territory prior to making business critical customer visits. “High-risk” areas within Canada, can be found on the NA Coronavirus Portal.
  - a. If either you or your customer reside in a “high risk” area, these additional precautions must be met; go directly to and from the customer site without making additional stops in the high-risk area. Avoid using washrooms and eating while on the road, especially in high risk areas.