



CORONAVIRUS PROTOCOL

Everyone who is active in the agricultural and horticultural sectors

Working, travelling and living safely

Working, travelling and living safely is of the utmost importance to the agricultural and horticultural sectors – and now more than ever. As the present situation will continue for a longer period of time, Stigas has partnered up with LTO's Taskforce Arbeid, FNV Agrarisch Groen and CNV Vakmensen to develop a coronavirus protocol. This protocol will be updated whenever current events warrant such an update. The first one of such updates will be issued as soon as the government provides further clarification of the term 'joint household'. We'll also keep an eye out for any matters regarding working conditions and employee benefits, as these are matters for which we, as social partners, bear partial responsibility.

Clear guidelines – basis for custom solutions

This protocol provides employees and employers alike with clear guidelines, while also serving as the foundation for custom solutions for each agricultural sub-sector.

The guiding principles are as follows:

- All RIVM measures
- Keeping 1.5 metres of distance between individuals at all times
- Maximum protection of both employees and employers
- In case of symptoms: please call 0800-1202 to arrange a test and stay at home until the result is received.

Those sub-sectors within the agricultural and horticultural sectors that are part of the nation's food chain are viewed as part of those critical professions that are keeping society afloat during lock-down. As per the RIVM's instructions, employees in these sub-sectors should keep coming to work unless they themselves have flu-like symptoms and a fever (38.0° C and up).

Guiding principles for working safely

The RIVM's current rules are as follows:

- Do not go to work if you've been infected with coronavirus
- Do not go to work if you're running a fever
- Wait to go back to work until you've had NO symptoms for 24 hours

To determine what 'working safely' during the lock-down means, we're using the occupational hygiene strategy, which comes down to the following. First, we determine whether we can mitigate the risk at its source. This would constitute the best solution for everyone's safety. Less direct measures are resorted to only after it has been determined that targeting the source is impossible.

As such, the measures in this protocol have been divided into different levels.

- Higher-level measures are always preferred over lower-level measures.
- Always first attempt to implement higher-level measures. Only if this is absolutely impossible should you switch to a lower-level measure.
- Lower-level measures are only permitted to be used instead of higher-level ones if there is good reason to do so, according to the reasonability principle. This decision-making process must be completed separately for each subjacent level.

(* The following trade unions are actively involved in LTO Nederland's Taskforce Arbeid: Anthos, Glastuinbouw Nederland, KAVB, LLTB, LTO Noord, NFO, Plantum, POV & ZLTO)

More information

[de Werkgeverslijn](#) | [CNV Vakmensen](#) | [FNV](#) | [Rijksoverheid](#) | [Stigas](#)

I – WORKING SAFELY

The main focus should always be to limit physical contact, i.e. keep 1.5 metres of distance.

If this is absolutely impossible, follow the guidelines below instead. These guidelines have been drawn up by Stigas based on an analysis of situations in which keeping 1.5 metres of distance is absolutely not a viable option, such as at sorting lines. In those cases, extra care should be taken with employees with an increased risk of becoming seriously ill when infected. If an employee doubts whether they are able to perform their job safely, they must always have the option of consulting an occupational physician.

Sectors: All sectors
Situation: All activities

Level 1: Working from home, if possible – this is the safest option of all.

Level 2: Collective measures – only permitted if working from home is absolutely impossible.

- Workstations: keep 1.5 metres of distance. For example, staggered produce picking (one row on, one row off), picking while maintaining more distance from one another, working at tables in a checkerboard pattern, fewer employees at each belt, only one person at a time up in the cherry picker. Please put up Stigas safety posters to inform your staff as best you can.
- Break rooms: Staggered entry and exit, place chairs in checkerboard pattern.
- Changing rooms: Staggered entry and exit, instead of everyone changing at the same time.

Level 3: Individual measures – only permitted if collective measures are absolutely impossible

- General personal hygiene measures: washing your hands, sneezing in the crook of your elbow.
- Put up plastic or perspex partitions – provide disinfectants and require that partitions be disinfected during every break.
- Put up partitions in carts.

Level 4: Personal protective equipment – only permitted if individual measures are absolutely impossible, such as when it is impossible to properly assist your colleagues from 1.5 metres away

- Wear non-medical face masks; replace your mask every 3 hours.
To see how to properly put on and take off such masks, view this [instructional video](#).
- If an employee is unable to wear a face mask for medical reasons, he/she will be exempt from work activities that require him/her to wear a face mask.

II – TRAVELLING SAFELY

The main focus here is to limit travel as much as possible. One option is to provide temporary housing on site. Make sure that people do not travel home together. Urge people to use their own mode of transportation or walk to work.

Stigas advises against joint travel by people from different households and/or to/from different sites/employers. This increases the chances of spreading the virus. If travelling alone is absolutely impossible, follow the guidelines in the table below. For more elaborate recommendations, please consult the Stigas website.

Sectors: All sectors
Situation: Travel by car

Level 1: No travel at all is the safest option of all.

Level 2: Collective measures – only permitted if travelling alone is absolutely impossible.

- General personal hygiene measures: washing your hands, sneezing in the crook of your elbow.
- Wear a non-medical face mask
- If a face mask is not possible due to medical reasons, the employee must be transported separately.
- When getting in and out of the car, maintain 1.5 metres of distance.
- Take the utmost care in terms of hygiene: disinfect (with a product free of ethanol) the steering wheel, gear stick, door handles etc. before and after every use of the car.

Sectors: All sectors
Situation: Travel by company van/bus

Level 1: No travel at all is the safest option of all.

Level 2: Collective measure

- General personal hygiene measures: washing your hands, sneezing in the crook of your elbow.
- Please ensure that transport planning is available, as it serves as proof of booking.
- Carry out a health check.
- Wear a non-medical face mask
- If a face mask is not possible due to medical reasons, the employee must be transported separately.
- When getting in and out of the van, maintain 1.5 metres of distance.
- The back row should get on first, followed by the second to last, etc.
- Take the utmost care in terms of hygiene: disinfect (with a product free of ethanol) the steering wheel, gear stick, door handles etc. before and after every use of the van.
- Employees should sit in the same seat every time.
- The same people should travel together every time – no mixing of different van's passengers.

Sectors: All sectors
Situation: Travel by bus

Level 1: No travel at all is the safest option of all.

Level 2: Collective measure

- General personal hygiene measures: washing your hands, sneezing in the crook of your elbow.
- Please ensure that transport planning is available, as it serves as proof of booking.
- Carry out a health check.
- Wear a non-medical face mask
- If a face mask is not possible due to medical reasons, the employee must be transported separately.
- When getting in and out of the bus, maintain 1.5 metres of distance.
- The back row should get on first, followed by the second to last, etc.
- Take the utmost care in terms of hygiene: disinfect (with a product free of ethanol) the steering wheel, gear stick, door handles etc. before and after every use of the bus.
- Employees should sit in the same seat every time.

III – LIVING SAFELY

The main focus here is to limit travel as much as possible. One option is to provide temporary housing within walking distance of the site. Maintain 1.5 metres of distance, and set up the temporary housing in such a way as to enable employees to maintain 1.5 metres of distance at all times even before and after they finish their work for the day.

Sectors: All sectors
Situation: Daily crop assessment/care

Level 1: Living alone

Level 2: Collective measure – only permitted if level 1 is absolutely impossible.

- General personal hygiene measures: washing your hands, sneezing in the crook of your elbow.
- Set up housing in such a way as to enable employees to maintain 1.5 metres of distance at all times.
- Take additional care with all cleaning matters, and door handles and light switches in particular. These should be cleaned several times a day with a disinfecting wipe or agent.
- Report any infected persons (or suspected infections) to your local GGD department.
- Put up Stigas safety posters to inform your staff as best you can.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS / (CALAMITY) LEAVE

General: employees who are sick or are required to stay home by government (RIVM) instruction are entitled to continued pay. Employees may also be entitled to (short-term) filial leave. If they get sick, the regular rules regarding sick leave apply, including the role played by and responsibilities borne by the occupational physician. If you have any questions or are unsure about anything, please contact the Werkgeverslijn or one of the trade unions: CNV Vakmensen, FNV Agrarisch Groen.

Deciding whether or not to come to work pursuant government instruction: the government's current instructions require employees to stay home if they are experiencing mild symptoms or are ill, as well as if someone who lives in the same household is running a fever. Employees with a critical profession are permitted to work when experiencing mild symptoms, even if a member of their household is running a fever, but must stay home if they are running a fever themselves. If you are unsure, contact your employer before coming to work.

[A document has been drawn up containing frequently asked questions regarding employee benefits and \(calamity\) leave.](#)

* Explanation of occupational hygiene strategy

1

Source measures: *We first look at the source of the problem, i.e. preventing infection altogether. If there is no way to prevent it completely, other measures are taken.*

2

Collective measures: *If source measures are impossible, other measures must be taken to limit the risks as much as possible, such as staying home in the case of mild symptoms and keeping a 1.5-metre distance.*

3

Individual measures: *If collective measures are impossible or insufficient, individual measures must be taken, such as putting up partitions in situations where a distance of 1.5 metres is not feasible.*

4

Personal protection: *If the top 3 tiers of measures are not an option, staff must be provided with personal protective equipment. The RIVM currently advises against the use of facemasks, because it is not possible to guarantee that these are used properly, which means that any spores of the virus that come in contact with the mask may be transmitted to your hands.
If there is no other way to aid co-workers while maintaining a 1.5-metre distance, breath protection must be worn. This protective gear must be provided by the employer/hirer.*

ENFORCEMENT OF THE PROTOCOL

Information

The parties are committed to bringing the protocol to the attention of employers and employees in the agricultural sectors as widely as possible. This is done via the website of Stigas, CNV Professionals, FNV, employers' line agriculture and horticulture, LTO Netherlands and the professional organizations. At least the material will be translated into the languages English, Polish and Romanian.

Enforcement

If situations are identified where it is suspected that the protocol is not being followed, the following (corona) procedure is used:

Notification

The parties pass on reports of (possible) violations of the protocol to each other via the advisory committee.

To inform

The party to whom the report is made informs, via the chairman of that association or the designated director, that same day that the employer / employee concerned has been notified that a violation has been received. The association concerned will then act in an advisory manner.

Feedback

Feedback is given to the reporter that the potential offender has been informed and what has been advised. It is then up to the reporter to decide whether a report is to be made to the Inspectorate SZW.

Disclaimer

This protocol was developed with the utmost care, and yet, no guarantees can be made for its comprehensiveness or accuracy, due in part to local policy within the various safety risks. The parties responsible for drawing up this protocol cannot be held liable for the information contained therein or for any consequences of using the protocol. No rights may be derived from the information contained in this protocol.