



Macon County
Public Health

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Press Release

Macon County Public Health Identifies a Cluster in Farming Community

Macon County Public Health has identified a cluster of 9 people who have tested positive at Norton Creek Farms. Employees who have tested positive are isolated from others. All of the farm workers who have potentially been exposed to these individuals have been contacted and will be tested for COVID-19.

In addition to Norton Creek Farms employees, MCPH is working to identify any additional close contacts of these individuals. The CDC defines close contact as being within approximately 6 feet of a person with an infection with COVID-19 case for a prolonged period of time of 10 minutes or longer. Based on information provided by the individual, county health officials will assess risks of exposure, determine which if any additional measures are needed such as temperature and symptom checks, quarantine and/or testing. MCPH's Medical Director and Norton Creek Farms are working together to limit the spread of COVID-19 among farm workers and the community. Norton Creek Farm owner, Nathan Moss, has said of the farm's precautions for COVID-19, "We have use the strongest precautions possible to keep our farm workers and community safe, and will continue to prioritize the health and safety of our workers and community."

The entire state of North Carolina is under a "Safer at Home" executive order, currently under phase two with masks required to be worn when social distancing cannot be maintained. Older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions might be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19; however, anyone of any age can become infected with this illness. Therefore, we ask that community members **strictly follow** the governor's orders and continue to practice **social distancing**, as well as safe hygiene measures such as hand washing and frequently cleaning touched objects and surfaces. The public can monitor the different phases of re-opening and learn more about the restrictions at <https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/guidance>.

It is important to make sure the information you are getting about COVID-19 is coming directly from reliable sources. For more information, please visit the CDC's website at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus and NCDHHS' website at www.ncdhhs.gov/coronavirus, which also includes future positive COVID-19 test results in North Carolina.

MCPH regularly updates our Facebook page with accurate and current information regarding COVID-19; we encourage the public to check our Facebook page, www.facebook.com/MaconPublicHealth for up-to-date information.

Symptoms for COVID-19 are fever, cough, other lower respiratory illness (shortness of breath). If you believe that you may have COVID-19, please call the Health Department at 828-349-2517. The call center is open Monday through Friday from 8:00am – 5:00pm, until further notice.

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