

# General Safety Tips for Your Farm and Garden

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Agriculture Safety and Health

Farming and gardening are fun and satisfying activities. They can increase your family's food security and can have many physical and mental health benefits. However, they also have the potential to be very dangerous to you and your family. Thus, here are some essential farming and gardening safety and health tips.

## COVID-19 Safety and Health Tips

1. **Social Distancing:** Continue to practice social distancing by keeping a safe distance of 6 feet, even in the garden, on the farm, or at markets.
2. **Wear gloves:** Wear gloves when interacting with others and try to avoid direct contact. Replace your gloves often.
3. **Wear a mask:** Wear a face mask when interacting with others and still keep your proper distance.
4. **Wash your hands!** Wash your hands with soap and water often. Viruses are lipid in nature and the hydrophobic tails of the free-floating soap molecules will wedge themselves into the lipid envelopes of the viruses, prying them apart and rupturing the membranes into the surrounding water, rendering the viruses useless.
5. **Avoid Visitors:** Reduce the traffic in your garden or on your farm. If possible, it is a good idea not to allow anyone on your farm or in your garden.

## General Safety Tips

1. **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** Wear protective clothing. It is imperative that you wear protective clothing to reduce your chances of harm, sunburn, and injuries.
  - Examples include: Long sleeves, safety goggles, long pants, hat, and boots.
  - Utilize safety gloves to help protect you from cuts and skin irritation.
  - If you are around loud machinery or noises in general, use hearing protection.
  - Use Insect Repellent to repel ticks or insects.
  - Wear long sleeves, high rubber boots, wide-brimmed hat with pants inserted in your socks.
  - Apply sunscreen with at least a sun a protective factor (SPF) 15 to protect from sunburn and skin cancer.
  - Use a mask that will protect your nose and mouth when working around dust and dirt.
2. **Consider temperature:** Temperatures and weather can change drastically from morning to afternoon. It is a good idea to check the temperature and weather for the day and then plan your day. Decide how long can you tolerate being outside.
  - Try to do your job under the shadow.
  - Drink plain water.
  - Leave the workplace if you feel ill effects such as a bad headache, dizziness, or nausea.
  - Always eat healthy food to recover your energy.
  - Bring proper rain gear
  - Follow severe weather protocol immediately if there is bad weather

3. **Warm up:** Farming and Gardening involve a lot of physical labor. This can be hard on your body. It is important to first warm up and stretch. This will prevent injuries.
4. **Tools choice and safely:** The tool you choose can help reduce the amount of stress you put on your body. Choose economic tools that are designed to reduce the stress but on your body. Keep sharp tools away from children and animals. Keep electrical cords, ropes, and hoses out of walkways
5. **Focus on your posture:** Chores on a farm often include a lot of bending and kneeling. Heavy jobs can cause injuries if not conducted properly with the right posture. Take the time to ensure you keeping the right posture. You should never feel uncomfortable. Kneel using knee pads instead of bending over when possible. Also, avoid jobs where the item is very heavy. When possible use equipment or more than one person to lift heavy items.
6. **Drink water often:** Drinking water is critical to your health and productivity. As the days get longer and hotter, you become at increased risk for dehydration.
7. **Take a short break:** Farm and garden work is hard work. Remember to take breaks often. As the days get longer and hotter take more breaks. This will greatly improve your ability to work.
8. **Avoid chemicals:** There are a lot of chemicals and harmful materials used in farming and gardening. When you chose to use items such as fertilizers, insecticides, herbicides, paints, sprays, and other chemicals, it is important that you read the labels and ensure that you are using the product in the correct way and how it is intended to be used. Storing the chemical is just as important. Make sure you read the instructions on how to properly store the chemical. This will avoid the risk of children and animals getting into them and the chemical leaching and causing health and environmental issues.
9. **Response to an injury:** Injuries will occur when you work on a farm or in the garden. If the injury is small, tend to it immediately. Always use clean water and clean rags and bandages. If the injury needs to be tended to by a doctor, go immediately to a facility that can see you. Waiting to respond to an injury can cause secondary injuries and you could end up needing more medical attention and time away from the farm or garden.