

Hidden Harvest Ottawa
Draft 2020 Fruit Donation Protocols

Hidden Harvest Ottawa (HHO), recognizes the gravity of the current context of COVID-19, and is taking the following steps to ensure the health and safety of our volunteers, neighbourhood leaders, home owners, food agency staff and volunteers, and the general public during this summer's harvest season.

We are hearing from food agencies that a lot has changed for their neighbours, and that there is now much more need in their communities. We also recognize that there are significant challenges this year for food agencies to serve their clients safely, and that agencies may not be able to accept the same kinds of fruit, the same amounts, or offer the same window of donation time. We aim to do our best to lessen the administrative burden to food agencies, while still donating fresh fruit that is in need in our community.

Below are our Fruit Donation Guidelines as well as our Fruit Picking Guidelines, for your information.

This document has been developed in consultation with fruit picking and sharing organizations across North America, with information from local and national health authorities. It outlines minimum standards to be followed. More detailed protocols will be provided to all fruit pickers and tree owners, and are available upon request.

FRUIT DONATION GUIDELINES

1. All volunteers must wear a mask at all times and have clean, sanitized hands, when handling fruit¹
2. This year we will only be donating to Food Agencies that have agreed to accept donations from Hidden Harvest in 2020, and also completed our “**Information Required**” form (below). The goal of this form is to ensure we are helping and not hindering Food Agencies. Donations will be made at a time that is convenient for the Food Agency, as per prior agreement.
3. Only 1 person will deliver fruit to the Food Agency, and they will wear a mask during delivery and are to sanitize their hands before and after making the delivery.
4. HHO will track the source of the donation, the amount donated, the date of the delivery, and the individual who delivered the fruit.
5. Food Agencies will direct us to an area where we can drop off the fruit while maintaining 6 ft distance from any staff or clients. If the individual delivering fruit cannot enter the building while maintaining this distance, they will drop the fruit off at the door, and notify the Food Agency contact so that contactless curbside pick up can occur.
6. Food Agencies are to sanitize their hands and wash the fruit after receiving the delivery.
7. HHO will not accept returns of tote bags from Food Agencies. They are to be washed or disposed of.

FRUIT PICKING GUIDELINES

The following principles must first be met in order for a Harvest Event to be planned:

1. All tree owners and fruit pickers must sign an agreement to abide by COVID-19 Guidelines in order to participate in the 2020 season. Children under the age of 16 will not be allowed to attend.
2. No more than 9 individuals are allowed to participate in a Harvest Event.
3. Physical Distancing efforts must be in effect at all times. The site of the fruit pick must have enough space for a minimum of 2 and no more than 9 individuals to maintain at least 2m, or 6ft, between them at all times.

¹ Outside of health care settings, the Public Health Agency of Canada says, “Gloves are only recommended when workers will come into contact with an ill person, or a contaminated object or environment.”
https://www.whsc.on.ca/Files/Resources/COVID-19-Resources/WHSC_Pandemic_Gloves-at-Work_Safeguards-for-workers.aspx

4. Prior to Events, both homeowners and fruit pickers will need to declare that they have reviewed the **Ontario Government self-assessment tool** and they “do not seem to have symptoms or be part of an at-risk group”. Upon arrival, anyone displaying symptoms will be asked to leave.

If the above principles are met, the Harvest Event can be planned to proceed. Individuals involved then must follow the guidelines below for controlling the spread of COVID-19:

During the Harvest

1. Before picking, the Neighbourhood Leader must consider the containers that the fruit will be donated in and either collect cardboard boxes in advance or gather and wash tote bags. Fruit will be donated in sanitized containers. The virus has been detectable up to 24 hours on cardboard and up to two to three days on plastic and stainless steel².
2. All fruit pickers must:
 - a. Wear a face mask or face cloth at all times to prevent droplet spread.
 - b. Sanitize their hands upon arrival on site and practice proper hygiene practices (avoid touching their face, sneeze/cough etiquette, proper hand washing/sanitizing).
 - c. Bring and use their own gloves, if required, for cleaning the site of compost materials. If gloves are used, hands should be sanitized before and after using gloves, and proper glove removal techniques should be followed.
 - d. Bring their own bags or boxes, as needed, for carrying their share of fruit. There is to be no sharing of bags between volunteers.
 - e. Not access to the tree owner’s home under any circumstances. Volunteers will be reminded of this, and encouraged to use the bathroom prior to attending a pick. They will also be reminded to bring their own water and snacks.
 - f. Agree that attendance at harvest events will be taken, and that their contact information may be shared with authorities should contact tracing need to occur at a later date.
3. Equipment use:
 - a. Each equipment set will include soap and water and/or hand sanitizer, tissues, sterilizing spray for equipment, and a touch-free garbage disposal location. Spare masks and gloves will also be on hand.
 - b. Fruit picking equipment provided must be sterilized before each pick AND after each pick. The Neighbourhood Leader will ensure proper sanitization of equipment has occurred.
 - c. Proper methods of hand sanitizer use, and glove removal will be posted within each equipment bin.
 - d. There is to be no sharing of equipment between pickers. The Neighbourhood Leader will oversee equipment to ensure there is no sharing between pickers.

2020 Survey for Participating Food Agencies:

Food agency:

Representative:

After reviewing our COVID-19 protocols, is your organization willing to receive fruit donations from Hidden Harvest this year?

What fruit are you willing to receive this year?

- a) Apples and pears: fruit that is shelf stable for a week and easy to wash
- b) Plums and grapes: fruit that is shelf stable for a few days and more fragile to wash
- c) Serviceberries and cherries: fruit that must be used same-day or refrigerated immediately after washing
- d) Crabapples, chokecherries, elderberries: fruit that requires cooking or processing
- e) All of the above

What is your preferred method of communication, and who should be our contact point this year?

Would you like us to contact the above person prior to every fruit donation to confirm delivery details?

What days and times would you be willing to receive fruit?

What is the maximum amount of fruit you would be able to receive in one delivery?

Do you have a location where our volunteer can drop off fruit while maintaining 6ft physical distancing? If so, please provide directions to this location.

Anything else we should know at this time?

Thank you for your time & all of your good work!!

Key Resources Used in the Development of HHO COVID-19 Guidelines

Ministry of Health

[Safe Food Donation Reference](#)

Ottawa Public Health

[Guidelines for Food Banks, Donation Centres and Volunteers](#)

Volunteer Ottawa

[Safety Protocols and Volunteer Resources](#)

Government of Canada

[How to wear a non-medical mask or face covering properly \(video, 1 min\)](#)

[Non-medical masks and face coverings: Sew and no-sew instructions](#)

[How to Use Hand Sanitizer](#)

[How and When to Wear a Mask](#)

Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association

[Resources for Growers and Workers](#)

Work Safe BC

[Glove removal procedure](#)

Workers Health and Safety

[Gloves at Work - Safeguards for workers for confronting COVID-19?](#)