

Garden Centre Canada - Guidelines
Best practice suggestions to guide you during COVID-19

There are many steps to best practices during a time of limited staff, social distancing and overall safety. Below you will find a suggested guide to best practices. Use what suits your business best. It's always best to go beyond then not have enough measures in place.

#1 You are Required

- Understand your local provincial and federal requirements. For example; If you are open for business, make sure you know the maximum allowed count of people in a closed environment. These range from Province to Province. Links are provided to your government website lists on the last page of this document.
- In many cases, if your business is engaged in retail and/or wholesale sale of pet food and supplies, you would be listed as essential (at least this portion of your store).

#2 Communication is key!

- Your entire team needs to know each of their responsibilities and emergency procedures. It includes understanding stay at home protocols if not feeling well.
- Involve your team in feedback by having daily check-ins and debriefings.
- Your customers want to know everything you are doing to keep them safe, have strong social media messaging in place, and website updates.
- Encourage shoppers to order online for delivery or curbside pickup.
- This is not the time for seasonal special, customer appreciation days, etc.
- Set up a chart to/checklist of established services which may need to be suspended during different phases of being open, example.

Service	Online	Phone-in	Open Air	Curb Side	Full Service
Free Repotting	N	N	N	N	Y
Washrooms	N	N	N	N	Y
Plant Return	N	N	N	N	Y
Accept Cash	N	N	N	Y	Y

- If you do decide to take returns at this time, have a holding return area where plants and products are in isolation for at least three days. Ideally, communicate to customers that you will address replacement after May.

#3 Cleaning and Sanitation Supplies

- Take stock of what you have and what you need, be prepared that if you do not have enough supplies, you cannot open. If you do have enough supplies and are diligent, know where they are to illustrate to authorities that you are abiding by all COVID-19 Health and Safety requirements.
- Know your Provincial Health & Safety COVID-19 guidelines.



#4 Your Team

- During work hours, a check-in team should be checking their temperature and recording date and time is taken, this is reported in their health report which would ask specific questions. You can develop one for your staff.
- Protect tills with social distancing marked locations.
- Use plexiglass at tills, map out and illustrate social distancing wait lines, including distance from cashier to the customer, and customer traffic flow.
- No cash exchange, you should have a signage at the front door to illustrate the changes.
- One staff per cashier station, only they can use this phone and till during their shift.
- Supply cashier with latex gloves and/or sanitization pumps.
- Sanitization wipes to be used to clean payment machines and counters after each use.
- Staff must be fluent with all hygiene and safety guidelines.
- Staff room signage with clear cleaning guidelines and minimal seating to allow social distancing while on break.
- Team to be aware of guidelines when bringing out goods to drop off areas.
- Have a social distance hand signal and kind verbiage to be used by all.
- Have limited hours to allow thorough cleaning and debriefing opportunities.
- If you have the staff capacity, have them a team per shift work specific days, for example, Team A works M, W, F, S etc. This will limit any exposure "if" a staff was to get sick.
- If a team member presents as ill during the day, have an emergency plan in place to get that person home, and store areas sanitized.

#5 The Outside of the Store – Keep messaging Positive and Informative!

- Have visible pickup areas for online sales and pickup with traffic arrows and signage.
- All shopping carts and baskets to be cleaned after each use, limit the amount available, if you can only have 15 people in the store at once, they only have 15 carts available.
- Have signs alerting people to social distancing, sanitization, sneeze into elbow etc
- Have more than one disinfection area in front of the store and throughout the store.
- Limit your parking stalls in your lot, use cones on every other stall, this helps keep numbers down as well as distancing.
- DELIVERIES to your STORE– have one person delegated to receive deliveries, these should all be wiped down, instruct staff not to sign paperwork, but instead record delivery person name, time of delivery etc.
- DELIVERIES to your CUSTOMER – contact the customer prior to delivery to ensure customer still wants their delivery, the customer has paid, NO cash upon delivery, the staff does have a place to put their delivery. NO physical contact, i.e. hand shake and social distancing, must be followed. Staff double checks the order and takes a picture with their phone at drop off, for your record if you feel necessary.

#6 The Inside of the Store – Keep messaging Positive

- Have signage everywhere to make people aware of social distancing, sanitization, sneezing/coughing.
- Have signage about the benefits of plants to your well-being.
- Block off items that have multiple touchpoints such as giftware, clothing, shoes and furniture; this would include large decorative containers etc. The goal here is little to know staff to customer interaction, if possible, also helps when staffing is limited.
- Have customer traffic flow arrows on signs and floor; the goal is to get in get the essential products you need and exit in a timely, organized manner.

#5 Customers in the Store – Keep messaging Positive!

- Have a store ambassador at the front of your store, with the task of allowing the allotted number of people in the store at one time and to field questions.
- Have sanitization pumps at the door.
- Doors should be automated or left a jar, minimal door touch.
- Have traffic floor lines established in the store with 2-meter social distancing spots.
- All café and restaurant options are to be closed.
- Keep an eye on washrooms if they are open a staff person will have to clean after each use, it has been suggested to close all public washrooms, and strict guidelines for staff wipe down after each use.
- No workshops or demonstrations are to take place. Develop some Youtube clips for your customers for reference.
- Children’s play areas are closed *make this note on your social media, front signage and website.
- Urge customers to not bring their children and keep family units to no more than 2
- Offer special hours to seniors should be shadowed by a family member to assist with lifting etc
- Consider shopping by appointment with time limits in the store
- If you have space and can have cars drive through and shop, time to be creative.

Keep Well, Keep Safe, Keep Positive

THANK YOU!

Thank you to our members who have had input into this list and to the following organizations, whom we have borrowed information from:

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| • Tuinbranche Nederland | AmericanHort | Chinahorti |
| • Landscape Ontario | Landscape Alberta | BCLNA |
| • CNLA | RCC | BallHort |

Provincial Government Links:

BC - <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/essential-services-covid-19#non-health>

AB - <https://www.alberta.ca/essential-services.aspx>

SASK - <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/-/media/files/coronavirus/public-health-measures/critical-public-services-to-address-covid-19-and-allowable-business-services.pdf>

MB – <https://globalnews.ca/news/6750116/coronavirus-monday-update-from-manitoba-health-officials-2/>

ON- <https://www.ontario.ca/page/list-essential-workplaces#section-1>

QU- <https://www.quebec.ca/en/health/health-issues/a-z/2019-coronavirus/essential-services-commercial-activities-covid19/>

NS - <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/>

NB - <https://www2.gnb.ca>

PEI - <https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/health-and-wellness/essential-and-non-essential-services-covid-19>

NL - <https://www.gov.nl.ca/aesl/feature/covid-19-information-about-aesl-programs-and-services/>

Provincial Association Links

BC - <https://bclna.com/covid-19-news-update/>

AB - <https://www.landscape-alberta.com/covid-19-industry-updates/>

SK - <https://www.snla.ca/industry/news.html?news=covid19-special-briefing>

MB - <https://mbnla.com>

ON - <https://horttrades.com/covid-19-resources>

NS – <https://landscapenovascotia.org/covid-19>

NB & PEI - <http://www.landscapenb-pe.ca>

NL - <http://www.landscapenl.ca/covid-19-resources.html>