

Basic Food Safety Training For Contracted Employees at Mushroom Farms Employee Commitment Form

Whenever you perform any work at a mushroom farm, you need to follow the basic food safety rules and procedures listed below. Please review the poster and listen carefully to the person explaining the information. As a contractor on a mushroom farm, you are expected to help protect the quality and integrity of the farm's products and to reduce the potential risk of contamination in the facility. Food safety is a serious matter to the mushroom industry. It is your responsibility to follow the rules at all times; otherwise, your employment may be at risk.

1. Personal Hygiene

Contracted employees should follow good personal hygiene practices when moving from one area to another and before starting any tasks at a mushroom farm. You must wear proper attire at all times, and you must bathe daily. Proper attire means a shirt with sleeves (no cut-off shirts or tank tops), long pants (no shorts, capris, or cut-offs), and work boots (no open-toed shoes such as sandals). Personal items are not allowed in mushroom growing & handling areas or near the equipment. Leave your personal items in your car or at a designated area before starting to work.

2. Hair Restraints

If required, you must wear a hair restraint provided by the company at all times when you enter designated mushroom growing & handling areas.

3. Jewelry

No jewelry of any type is allowed in any mushroom growing & handling area. Medical alert bracelets and plain wedding bands are the only permitted exceptions.

4. Eating, Drinking & Smoking

All contractors must eat, drink, and smoke ONLY in designated areas away from mushroom growing & handling areas. This includes chewing gum, eating candy, and using tobacco products. Contractors should either eat in their vehicles or in an area where there is no active mushroom production. Put all trash in a trash container and never throw it on the ground. Remember to wash your hands before returning to work. Spitting is strictly prohibited in mushroom growing & handling areas.

5. Restrooms & Soiled Toilet Paper

ALWAYS use the restrooms provided by the company and put soiled toilet paper in the toilet, not in a trash can or on the floor. Urinating or defecating outdoors is prohibited.

6. Personal Health

You cannot have direct contact with mushrooms or mushroom equipment if you have any of the following symptoms: diarrhea, hacking cough, fever, vomiting, jaundice, sore throat with fever, an infected sore, or a bleeding wound. [Note to instructors: Please turn the poster over and review the pictures on the back that illustrate the following conditions.]

7. Wounds & Blood

If you have a cut or an open sore and are bleeding while at work, you should report it to your supervisor and company representative. The farm must do an assessment to make sure contamination with blood or a body fluid did not spread. Individuals are allowed to protect minor cuts and scrapes on the arms, wrists, and forearms with appropriate protective medical aides such as bandages.

8. Glass on the Farm

Do not take any glass objects, such as bottles, drinking glasses, watches, or glass thermometers, into areas where mushrooms are grown or handled. Tell your supervisor if you see an unprotected or broken glass light or object. If you ever see glass on a mushroom bed or box or in an active mushroom growing & handling area, you must report the incident to your supervisor and to the company representative for which you are providing services.

9. Packaging Materials & Baskets

Packaging materials, such as boxes and baskets, must not be used as storage bins to ensure they do not become a source of contamination. Unless marked for other uses, baskets and boxes should only be used to store mushrooms. They should never be used for storing nails, food, cans, glasses, tickets, chemicals, or other items.

10. Tools & Equipment

Contracted employees should not leave tools in mushroom growing & handling areas. You should make sure all tools and parts are accounted for before leaving the area. Remove any pieces of wood, nails, screws, or wire before you leave. These items, if left behind, can be a potential source of physical contamination to the product. Always leave your working area clean before you finish up for the day.

11. Chemicals

Remember to ALWAYS follow the proper procedures when handling chemicals at work. No chemicals can be left behind; they must be stored at a designated place. If you see any chemicals that are used incorrectly or not stored properly, report it immediately to the company representative for which you are providing your services.

12. Traffic Patterns

Mushroom farms are designed to keep mushrooms away from raw compost or unpasteurized substrate. Therefore, compost storage and preparation areas are usually well separated from mushroom growing and storage areas. Following foot traffic patterns can help prevent workers from carrying contaminants from one area to another.

DO NOT go to areas where unpasteurized compost is held unless this is part of your job. When walking around the farm, always use the route your supervisor tells you to follow. If you do not know which way to go, ask your supervisor. DO NOT TAKE SHORTCUTS! Remember, it is easy to carry harmful microbes from a DIRTY area to a CLEAN one.

Contractors are a key part of helping mushroom farms prevent contamination to the mushrooms. If employees follow the policies and procedures mentioned above in good faith, they will be following the mushroom industry's food safety basic rules.

I _____ (Employee Name) received and understood the basic food safety training of _____ (Contractor's Company Name), on _____ (date), and I am making a commitment to follow the food safety rules at all times.