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## Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) and the Food Supply Chain

### What is Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19):

According to the [current information](#) from the United States (US) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) COVID-19 is a new disease and “we are still learning how it spreads, the severity of illness it causes, and to what extent it may spread in the U.S.”

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), [coronaviruses](#) are a large family of viruses that cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases. Now this family of viruses includes the 2019 novel coronavirus (nCoV); a new strain that has not been previously identified in humans.

Viruses seen in past years such as the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome named “MERS-CoV,” and the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome named “SARS-CoV” belong to this family of coronaviruses. The 2019 novel coronavirus causing COVID-19 has been named “[SARS-CoV-2](#).”

### How COVID-19 spreads:

[Person-to-person spread](#) is the **main** mode of the virus ([SARS-CoV-2](#)) transmission identified by CDC for COVID-19. CDC reported that, like other respiratory viruses such as influenza, the virus can spread between people who are in close contact with one another or through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

### COVID-19 virus and community spread:

According to CDC, the coronavirus that causes COVID-19 seems to be spreading easily. In some affected areas, this virus has a “[community spread](#),” meaning “people have been infected with the virus in an area, including some who are not sure how or where they became infected.”

### COVID-19 and the Food Supply Chain:

On February 27, 2020 the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued a [Fact Statement](#) informing the public that “FDA is not aware of any reports at this time of human illnesses that suggest COVID-19 can be transmitted by food or food packaging. However, it is always important to follow [good hygiene practices](#) (i.e., wash hands and surfaces often, separate raw meat from other foods, cook to the right temperature, and refrigerate foods promptly) when handling or preparing foods.”

Similar to FDA, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) is not aware of any reports at this time of human illnesses that suggest COVID-19 can be transmitted by food



or food packaging. CDPH reiterates the importance of good hygiene and encourages practices and behaviors that can help prevent food handlers from spreading contaminants including viruses to food.

### **How to protect yourself and others from COVID-19:**

Please review the [COVID-19 prevention tips](#) on CDPH's website. In short, wash your hands regularly, avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands, cover your cough or sneeze, avoid close contact with people who are sick, and stay home if you become sick.

### **Stay informed on COVID-19:**

Please visit the CDPH dedicated [COVID-19 website](#) for the latest updates. CDPH continues to work on addressing this issue with the White House, CDC, FDA, state agencies, local governments, health facilities and health care providers across the state, and other partners.