

Food Safety of California Table Grapes

COVID-19

According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#)¹ and [the Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\)](#):²
“There is currently no evidence to support transmission of COVID-19 associated with food or food packaging.”

COVID-19 is a respiratory illness. The CDC states that coronaviruses, like COVID-19, are generally thought to be spread from person-to-person through respiratory droplets. Therefore it is unlikely to be associated with ingestion of a food. Further, according to the FDA, [fruits and vegetables have not been identified as a risk factor](#) in the transmission of other respiratory virus outbreaks.³ With respect to COVID-19, the [FDA notes: “The U.S. food supply remains safe for both people and animals. There is no evidence of animal or food packaging being associated with transmission of coronavirus.”](#)⁴

Food Safety on the Farm

Under the Food Safety Modernization Act Produce Safety Rule, [the FDA requires](#)⁵ farmers and farming companies to comply with regulations that are designed to prevent fruits and vegetables from becoming contaminated with microbes from the environment, including viruses.

The Produce Safety Rule established mandatory science-based standards for the safe growing, harvesting, packing, and holding of fruits and vegetables grown for human consumption. These FDA regulations include “requirements for agricultural water quality, employee health and hygiene, animals, biological soil amendments and equipment, tools, and buildings.”

Food Safety Steps for Consumers: Washing and Preparing Fresh Grapes

Experts are advising food preparations should continue as normal, which includes [washing fruits and vegetables under running warm or cold tap water](#).⁶ The CDC and FDA advise consumers *not* to use added soaps or detergents when washing produce since they are not approved for use on food and not meant for ingestion. Some additional recommendations:

- If you use a colander for washing fresh grapes, make sure it has been cleaned with soap and water first and dried with a clean dish towel or paper towel.
- Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds and dry them using a clean towel prior to washing and preparing fresh grapes or any produce item.

Staying Healthy, Boosting Your Immune System

Boosting your immune system helps prevent illness. In addition to adequate sleep and hydration, a healthy diet that includes lots of fruits and vegetables is an important factor in supporting immune function. Fresh grapes of all colors are a natural source of beneficial antioxidants and other polyphenols, including the stilbenoid resveratrol, which studies have shown positively influence immune function. In addition, health studies have shown that grapes may also benefit heart and cognitive health.

California Table Grape Commission, 392 W. Fallbrook Avenue, Suite 101, Fresno, California 93711-6150
Phone: 559-447-8350 • Fax: 559-447-9184 • Email: Info@grapesfromcalifornia.com

¹ Food Safety and Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), Centers for Disease Control Website

² Food Safety and the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), Food and Drug Administration Website Q&A

³ [“Is Coronavirus A Concern On Fresh Produce,”](#) Fact, Sheet, North Carolina State Extension

⁴ FDA Efforts Against COVID-19, YouTube Video

⁵ FSMA Final Rule on Produce Safety, FDA website

⁶ Food Safe Shopping, Storage and Meal Prep, FDA Downloadable Fact Sheet