



The Sentinel

Newsletter of
the Florida State
Agricultural
Response Team



Florida SART wishes you and your family a safe and healthy holiday season!

Florida Department of Health Encourages Proper Food Safety this Holiday Season

Food traditionally plays a large role in holiday festivities. With (Covid-friendly) gatherings right around the corner, the Florida Department of Health (DOH) is encouraging Floridians to keep safe food preparation and handling practices in mind.

As you make plans to enjoy Thanksgiving with family and friends, be sure to focus on preparations for healthy eating. Safe food handling and Fresh from Florida fruits and vegetables are essential ingredients for a healthy holiday.

Florida DOH recommends the following for reducing the chances of food contamination:

- **Clean.** Wash hands, utensils and surfaces before and after food preparation, especially after preparing meat, poultry, eggs or seafood. Be sure to keep all countertops and work areas clean with hot, soapy water;
- **Cook** to Proper Temperature. Read the cooking directions on packaging before preparing. The safest thawing method is in the refrigerator at 40 degrees. Make sure the food is cooked at the proper internal temperature and check for doneness with a food thermometer;

See *Holiday Food Safety*, page 2

Special Features of this Issue:

- *Florida SART Sponsors Incident Command System 300 & 400 Combo Course for ESF 17 Responders*
- *Cleaning & Disinfecting Infographic*
- *FDACS COVID-19 Farmworker Testing Initiative*

“Ensuring farmworkers have access to COVID-19 testing is essential to their health and safety, the well-being of their families, and the security of our food supply.”

— Nicole “Nikki” Fried
Commissioner of Agriculture
Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
Story on Page 7



Holiday Food Safety (continued)

- **Chill** – Refrigerate Properly. Refrigerate or freeze perishables, prepared food and leftovers within two hours. Make sure the refrigerator is set at no higher than 40 degrees and the freezer is set at 0 degrees; and
- **Separate** – Don't cross contaminate. Keep raw meats, poultry, eggs and seafood and their juices away from ready to eat food. It is recommended that leftovers be heated to 165 degrees.

For more information on how to keep your family safe from foodborne-illness this holiday season, visit: <http://www.foodsafety.gov>

THAWING YOUR TURKEY SAFELY

Keep your turkey in its original packaging and thaw 4 lbs. of turkey per 24 hours in your refrigerator (at 40°F or below).



ALLOW YOUR TURKEY THE FOLLOWING TIMES TO THAW:

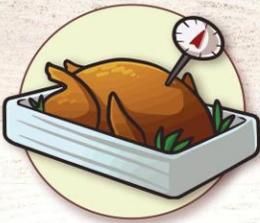
- 4-12 pounds 1-3 days
- 12-16 pounds 3-4 days
- 16-20 pounds 4-5 days
- 20-24 pounds 5-6 days



COOKING

Always wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds before and after handling your turkey to prevent foodborne illness. Cook your turkey to 165°F. Use a food thermometer to check the temperature in several areas of thickness to ensure it is thoroughly cooked for safety and quality.

Keep hot foods above 140°F. Refrigerate all cold foods until ready to serve (40°F).



STORING AND REHEATING LEFTOVERS

Put away your leftovers within two hours to help prevent foodborne illness. Store large quantities in shallow containers to allow rapid cooling.

Eat or freeze leftovers within 3-4 days. Eat or freeze gravy within 2 days.

Reheat your holiday leftovers to 165°F.

Division of Food Safety

1-800-HELP-FLA (435-7352) or
1-800-FL-AYUDA (352-9832)

FDACS.gov



SPECIAL SECTION: COVID-19 Resources



Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services General Information

- ESF17 and SART partners have provided animal and pet resources on FDACS' dedicated COVID-19 page: <http://www.fdacs.gov/coronavirus>

CDC Releases Interim Guidance for Disaster Sheltering/Pet-Friendly Sheltering During COVID-19

- Due to the COVID-19 outbreak overlapping with the 2020 hurricane season, plans to prevent transmission of the COVID-19 virus in disaster shelters are being created. Guidance released by the CDC recommends "collocated" sheltering for pets in (animal areas) separate from the human sheltering area, and to separate animals 6 feet, if possible, to reduce human-to-human transmission in the animal area. [Click here](#) to read the interim guidance document.

Animals, Pets, and COVID-19

- [ESF 17 Information packet Regarding Animal Shelters, Mosquitoes, and Food Safety](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions for Veterinarians and Pet Owners](#) (American Veterinary Medical Association)
- [Important COVID-19 Information for Animal Shelters](#) (University of Florida Maddie's Shelter Program)
- [Protecting Yourself, Your Pets, and the Community from COVID-19](#) (Florida Veterinary Medical Association)
- [HSUS COVID-19 Information Webpage](#) provides information for Pet Owners
- ESF 17 Posts Information about [Caring For Your Horses During COVID-19](#)
- New CDC FAQs now available for ["How can I safely run my equestrian facility?"](#)
- Caring for pets from COVID-19 Exposed Homes:
<https://sheltermedicine.vetmed.ufl.edu/2020/05/21/watch-caring-for-covid-19-exposed-pets-in-shelters/>
- Interim Infection Prevention and Control Guidance for Veterinary Clinics Treating Companion Animals during COVID-19 Response:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/veterinarians.html>

Food Safety and COVID-19

- FDA COVID-19 Food Safety Webpage: <https://www.fda.gov/food/food-safety-during-emergencies/food-safety-and-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19>
- The University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) has released COVID-19 resources for Florida's shellfish growers: <http://shellfish.ifas.ufl.edu/news/covid-19-resources-for-shellfish-growers/>
- FDA COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions: <https://www.fda.gov/emergency-preparedness-and-response/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-frequently-asked-questions>
- Association of Food and Drug Officials Coronavirus Resources:
<http://www.afdo.org/coronavirus-resources>

SART Partner COVID-19 Webpages

- The UF/IFAS COVID-19 Webpage provides information resources for agricultural producers and consumers: <https://ifas.ufl.edu/covid19-information-updates/>
- Florida Department of Health Coronavirus Webpage: <https://floridahealthcovid19.gov/>



IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR ANIMAL SHELTERS AND CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

[FDACS.gov/COVID19](https://fdacs.gov/COVID19)

WASH YOUR HANDS OFTEN WITH SOAP AND WATER FOR AT LEAST 20 SECONDS.

Protect Employees and Volunteers

There is no evidence that companion animals can spread COVID-19 or that infection would be serious for them. The virus spreads primarily from person to person. The health and safety of employees/volunteers should be the focus of every animal shelter.

- Employees and volunteers who are sick or show signs of respiratory illness should not work until they are symptom free.
- Wash your hands frequently for at least 20 seconds with soap and warm water before eating, after using the bathroom, coughing or sneezing, and touching surfaces. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available and there is no visible dirt on your hands.
- Frequently sanitize common areas with EPA registered antimicrobial products for use against COVID-19 that are safe to use in and around the animals and shelter.
- [Click here](#) for the CDC's interim guidance for businesses and employers.

Support and Inform Your Community

Remind community members to have a plan in place for pets.

- Identify a family member/friend who can care for pets if needed.
- Have crates, food, and extra supplies on hand for quick movement of pets.
- Keep all animal vaccines up to date and document all medications and dosing.
- Pets should have ID: collar with ID tag and microchip (best practice is microchipping).

Prepare Shelter for Increased Intake

While mass intake is not likely, people who contract the virus and are hospitalized may not have someone to care for their pets. Steps to prepare include:

- Free up shelter capacity with increased adoption efforts, rescue partners, and foster homes for animals already at the shelter.
- Prepare a facility plan with your shelter veterinarian on intake and isolation protocols.
- Be prepared to identify, isolate, or divert animals that may have been exposed to COVID-19. This includes securing disinfectants and personal protective equipment that may be used safely around animals. Identify locations available for fostering, identify capacity needs, and maintain updated list.
- Have a written protocol in place to follow and provide regular staff updates to staff.
- Secure additional food/supplies for increased intake, including foster network needs.

Prepare for Staff Illness:

- Strongly encourage your employees and volunteers to stay home when sick.
- Check availability of volunteers who can assist in a staff shortage.
- Connect with local boarding facilities, surrounding shelters and rescues and communicate plans.
- [Click here](#) for the CDC's interim guidance for businesses and employers.

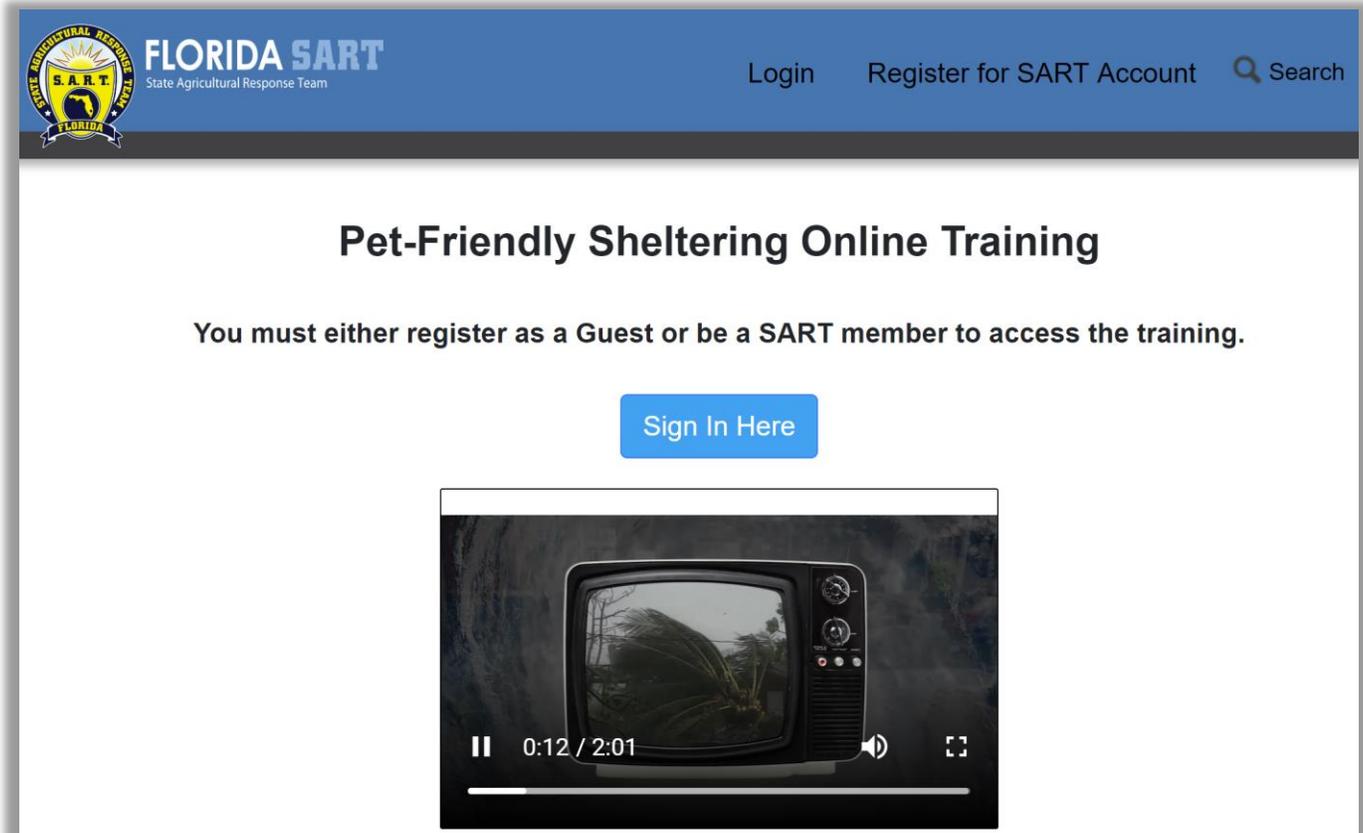
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For more information, visit
[FDACS.gov/COVID19](https://fdacs.gov/COVID19) or [CDC.gov/Coronavirus](https://cdc.gov/Coronavirus).



Florida SART Launches New Pet-Friendly Sheltering Online Training Course

After more than two years in the making, SART's new Pet-Friendly Sheltering Online Training is now live on www.FLSART.org! The training provides guidance to private, local and state entities on how to plan for and operate a pet-friendly shelter to ensure that individuals evacuating from a disaster with their household pets are accommodated. While this training will provide you with basic information and guidance, further training with local or state emergency management programs is essential to fully prepare for pet-friendly sheltering in your community. The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services developed this training collaboratively with SART.



Course objectives include:

- Understand the benefits of and requirements for opening pet-friendly shelters during emergency evacuations.
- Understand the concept of the Incident Command System (ICS) and how it can be applied to pet-friendly shelter planning and operations.
- Identify strategies and planning considerations for writing a pet-friendly shelter plan for all-hazards.
- Understand the benefits of establishing partnerships and Multiagency Coordination Groups with key agencies and organizations to achieve local resource allocation for pet-friendly shelter preparedness.
- Understand the critical role social media plays in emergency communications, and how to develop an accurate and effective message about available pet-friendly shelters in a disaster.
- Apply best practices when setting up a pet-friendly shelter.



Lesson 1: Welcome and Course Structure

Learn about the overall course objectives, the instructions for navigating through the course, how to receive credit for this course, and how to receive the Tool Kit upon successfully completing this course.

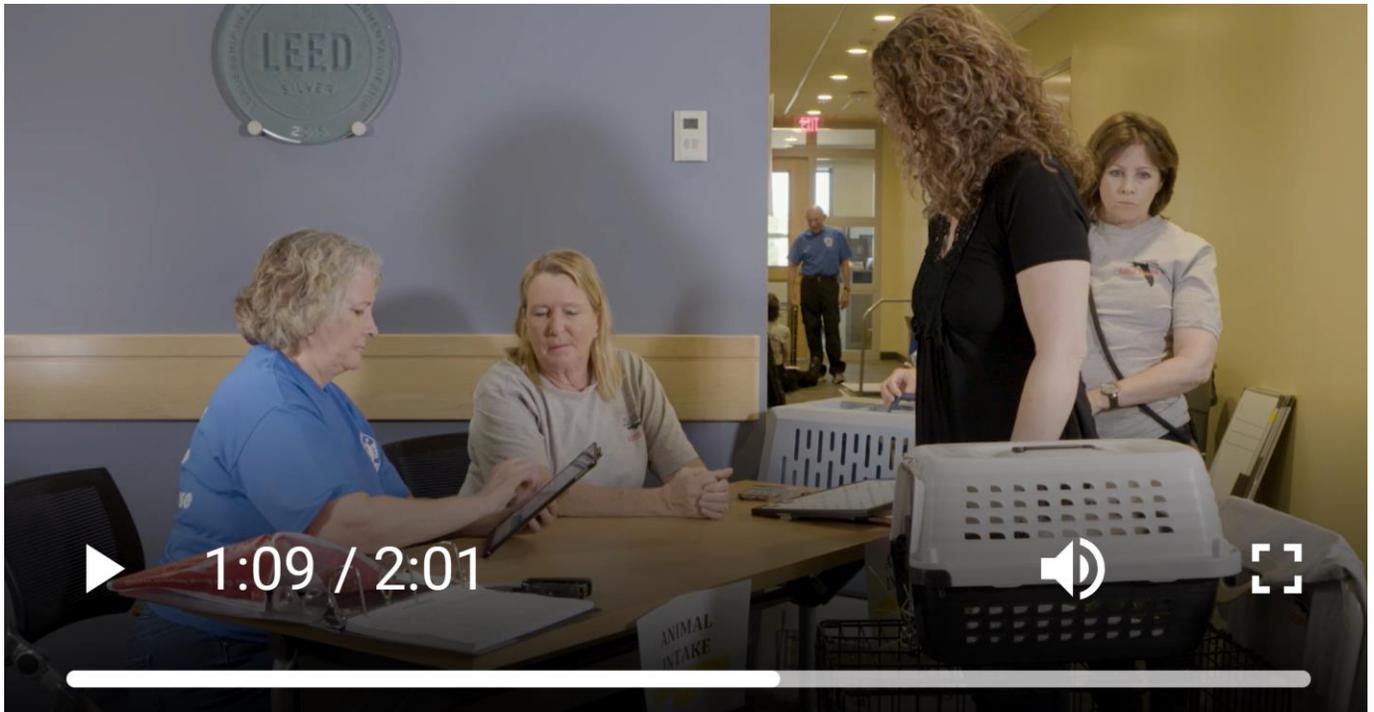


Lesson 2: Opening the Doors to Pet Friendly Sheltering

Lesson 2 is a course background lesson. The question of "Why Pet-Friendly Sheltering?" is introduced and participants will receive numbers and statistics on pet-friendly sheltering from previous disasters.

See SART Online Training, next page...

SART Online Training (continued)



Primary Audience: The target audience includes local and state government agencies, emergency management agencies, county employees, shelter volunteers, veterinary and animal care services, and persons involved with the planning and response for emergency sheltering of individuals and household pets during disasters.

Prerequisites: None

Course Length: Total course length is approximately 4 hours to complete. You will be given 7 days to complete this training from the date you register. If you do not complete the training within 7 days, then your training registration will restart, and you will be required to complete the training from the beginning again.

Course Requirements: Students must pass the Final Exam to receive the certificate of completion.

For more information, please visit: <https://flsart.org/petfriendly/index.jsp>

Counties, Is Your Contact Information Up-to-Date on the SART Website?

Please review your county emergency contact information at <https://flsart.org/resource/countyinformation.jsp>.

If you need to make changes to your county contact information, please send a request to LeiAnna Tucker at LeiAnna.Tucker@FDACS.gov. During an emergency, ESF 17 and SART provides necessary food and water to affected areas to help protect animals, agriculture and pets.



In the News

Short stories and updates from around the State, nation, and globe...



CDC Warns of Multi-State Listeria Outbreak Linked to Deli Meats

As CNN reports, a Listeria outbreak has sickened 10 people across three states, and the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) believes deli meats are the cause. The CDC issued a warning about the outbreak late last month, which has sent ten people from Florida, Massachusetts and New York to the hospital and led to the death of one person in Florida. (CNN) [Read More](#)

Florida SARC Announces New Virtual Trainings Available in November

The Florida State Animal Response Coalition (SARC) trains volunteers, municipal employees, and pet wellbeing organizations how to respond to disasters involving animals. We instruct Level 1 (Awareness) and Level 2 (Operations) Small Animal Emergency Sheltering courses virtually, via Zoom.us over numerous days. To ensure high engagement, class sizes are limited. To see the most current course list, please visit: <https://flsarc.org/training>

FSIS Posts After-Action Review Report for Salmonella Reading Outbreak Linked to Turkey

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) has posted an [after-action review report](#) for the investigation of a 2017–2019 outbreak of Salmonella Reading illnesses associated with turkey. Public health officials in multiple states, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), FSIS, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), and the National Turkey Federation (NTF) investigated an outbreak of 356 reported Salmonella Reading illnesses linked to turkey. In response to this outbreak, NTF published [best practices for reducing Salmonella](#) in turkeys and turkey products. [Read More](#)

UPDATE: FDACS Announces Hendry County Farmworker COVID-19 Testing

Last month, Commissioner Nikki Fried and FDACS announced additional COVID-19 testing sites in Hendry County for farmworkers as the fall harvest season begins. The product of a partnership with the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS), the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM), and local county governments, the announcement follows COVID-19 testing for farmworkers that was [made available earlier this month](#) in Miami Dade, Hillsborough, and St. Lucie County. [Read More](#)

Pet-Friendly Sheltering Online Training Announcement



The Florida State Agricultural Response Team (SART) will soon offer an online, state-certified training on pet-friendly sheltering. The online training will provide participants with guidance on how to plan for and operate a pet-friendly shelter to ensure that individuals evacuating from a disaster with household pets are accommodated.

This training will include useful information on how to:

- Use the Incident Command System in pet-friendly shelter planning and operations;
- Plan for a pet-friendly shelter;
- Understand the Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act (PETS Act);
- Establish partnerships for resource coordination;
- Deliver a unified message to the public before, during and after an emergency, and;
- Set up, operate and demobilize a pet-friendly shelter.

Upon successful completion of the course, participants will receive a downloadable **Tool Kit** that offers functional guidance and plan templates. Students will also receive a **certificate** of completion approved by the Florida Division of Emergency Management and Florida SART.

RELEASE DATE

Summer 2020

COURSE DURATION

4 hours

COURSE FEE

Free

COURSE MODE

100% online at
www.FLSART.org

TARGET AUDIENCE

Emergency Managers

County Employees

Shelter Volunteers

PROVIDED BY

Florida State Agricultural
Response Team, in
partnership with the Florida
State Animal
Response Coalition

POINT OF CONTACT

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Services

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Cleaning & Disinfecting

How are cleaning and disinfecting different?

Cleaning with soap and water removes some germs and dirt from surfaces but it does not kill them

It lowers the risk of spreading COVID-19



Disinfecting kills the germs on surfaces after cleaning

It further lowers the risk of spreading COVID-19



Personal Protective Equipment

What is it?

PPE is a **specialized clothing or equipment** often worn by team members to **protect themselves against health and safety hazards**

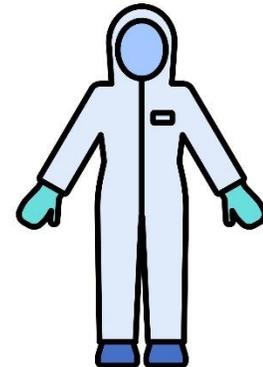
Boots



Respirators and masks



Tyvek clothing covers



Gloves



Appropriate PPE **should be worn at all times** according to established protocols. PPE should be **changed, sanitized, and/or disposed of** according to existing protocols.

Source: www.cdc.gov | UGA Extension
Courtesy of the Georgia Zoo & Exotic Risk Communication Workgroup

Florida SART Sponsors ICS300 & 400 Combo Course for ESF 17



Made possible by the Florida State Agricultural Response Team (SART), Emergency Support Function (ESF) 17 held a week-long combined Incident Command System 300 and 400 combo training for Tallahassee-located FDACS staff who would be tasked to respond for ESF 17. Attendees learned how to use the Incident Command System to size up a disaster, form an Incident Management Team (IMT), and use the IMT planning process to respond to a hypothetical emergency event. Sixteen FDACS staff from Animal Industry, Food Safety, Aquaculture, Agricultural Environmental Services, Agricultural Water Policy, and Agricultural Law Enforcement attended. The classroom allowed for social distancing and face masks were required at all times. SART plans to sponsor another combined ICS 300 and 400 course for FDACS emergency response staff in December.

FDACS COVID-19 Farmworker Testing Initiative



Agricultural farm workers are essential to the security of Florida's food supply. Because of this fact, it is important that these migrant farm workers are protected from COVID-19 during the upcoming fall harvesting season. To protect the health and safety of Florida farmworkers, their families and the community, Commissioner Nikki Fried and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services has formed a partnership with SART partner, University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS), the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM), and local county governments to bring mobile COVID-19 testing sites to several major agricultural farmworker communities in Florida. Currently, ESF 17 is coordinating COVID-19 mobile testing sites for migrant farmworkers in Hendry, St. Lucie, Miami-Dade, Hillsborough, Palm Beach, and Collier Counties. ESF 17 is leading the FDACS COVID-19 Farmworker Testing Working Group with daily coordination virtual meetings. COVID-19 tests are provided at no cost to farmworkers. The locations, dates of operation, and operating times of these testing sites can be found by [clicking here](#).

Food Safety and Food Defense Report

A special section dedicated to feed and food emergency planning and response.

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' (FDACS) Division of Food Safety is responsible for assuring the public of a safe, wholesome, and properly represented food supply through permitting and inspection of food establishments, inspection of food products, and performance of specialized laboratory analysis on a variety of food products sold or produced in the state. The Division of Food Safety monitors food from the farm gate, through processing and distribution, to the retail point of purchase.

The Division of Food Safety has a new consumer resources and outreach webpage! Check it out for more resources on foodborne illness and sanitization in your food preparation areas <https://www.fdacs.gov/Consumer-Resources/Health-and-Safety/Food-Safety-Consumer-Resources-and-Outreach>

While we're at it, don't forget this important message about Thanksgiving food safety:

GOBBLE IT UP!

How long will your Thanksgiving leftovers be safe to eat when stored in the refrigerator?

Prevent foodborne illness during the holidays by learning when to throw away your leftovers.

Learn more specifics about food storage at [FoodSafety.gov](https://www.fdsafety.gov)

Food Item	Safe Storage Duration (Days)
Pumpkin Pie	3-4
Cranberry Sauce/Relish	7-10
Roast Turkey	3-4
Mashed Potatoes	3-4
Gravy	1-2
Cooked Vegetables	3-4
Stuffing	1-2

Division of Food Safety
1-800-HELP-FLA (435-7352) or
1-800-FL-AYUDA (352-9832)
[FDACS.gov](https://www.fdsafety.gov)

Staff Safety Considerations

Safety is the number 1 objective during the COVID-19 response.

These practices shall be implemented to prevent the exposure of COVID-19 to zoo and exotic facility workers, volunteers, visitors, and presumed susceptible species.

Staff scheduling

Split the schedule of staff to facilitate safety practices

Separate individuals who have direct animal contact from those who face the public



Follow all signage

Staff should follow all signage posted for:

- Biosecurity
- Sanitation
- Cleaning Practices
- Social Distancing



Attend safety briefings

Attend all safety briefings conducted daily to reinforce established parameters



Monitoring Protocols

Daily temperature checks prior to entering work site

All staff should self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms



Maintain Communication

Communicate with your supervisor for safety updates and situational awareness

Notify your supervisor immediately if you develop COVID-19 symptoms



Higher-level PPE

All staff providing animal care to species susceptible to COVID-19 shall use a higher level of PPE and follow additional safety protection protocols



Courtesy of the Georgia Zoo & Exotic Risk Communication Workgroup

Please log in and update your membership information online at:

www.FLSART.org

About the SART Sentinel

The *SART Sentinel* is an email newsletter prepared monthly by the members of the **Florida State Agricultural Response Team**. Past issues of the *Sentinel* are archived on the Florida SART website at www.FLSART.org.

If you have a story or photo that you would like to have considered for publication in the *SART Sentinel*, please contact the editors.

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