

# COVID-19 Retail sale of fresh produce

## Advice regarding fruit & vegetable taste testing

This circular provides guidance about control measures to help reduce the transmission of Novel coronavirus (COVID-19) in relation to fresh produce.

While current scientific information indicates there is no evidence the virus can be transmitted through food or food packaging, there is concern around potential surface contamination given COVID-19 is known to be spread through respiratory droplets.

To assist in containing the spread of COVID-19 within the community, the Chief Health Officer public health direction, *Restrictions on Businesses, Activities and Undertakings Direction (No. 5)* prohibits buffet self-service at retail food businesses. Guidance provided in support of this direction includes restricting access to self-serve foods and utensils which may be touched by multiple people.

Following on from this advice, the safety of pre-cut fruit and vegetables provided for people to taste has been raised as an issue of concern, as samples and containers may be touched by many people. In line with the intent of the directive, it is recommended that **food businesses cease the practice of providing portions of fruit and vegetables for tasting by consumers.**

Other precautions food businesses could introduce to ensure staff and customers reduce the risk of contracting COVID-19 include:

- request customers sanitise their hands before and after leaving a fruit and vegetable shop or fresh produce area in a supermarket
- request customers use an inverted bag over their hand when selecting and packing loose produce
- encouraging customers not to touch loose produce and buy what they touch
- encourage customers to be aware of their physical distancing
- remind customers to wash their fresh produce before use under running water
- remind customers of the importance of washing hands regularly.

These precautions are in addition to other public health controls that apply to their business including occupant density and compliance with COVID Safe frameworks.

## Further information

For the most up to date information and resources, visit [www.qld.gov.au/health/conditions/health-alerts/coronavirus-covid-19](http://www.qld.gov.au/health/conditions/health-alerts/coronavirus-covid-19)