



# MADISON COUNTY DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE Release:**

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### **Madison County discusses Positive Cases related to Green Empire Farms**

**Wampsville, NY** – Madison County is working closely with the all of the members of our community who have tested positive for COVID-19. According to the Madison County Health Department (MCDOH) as of 8:30 AM on May 6, 2020, the total number of positive cases are at 257, active positive cases 127, recovered 124 cases and unfortunately 6 deaths.

Madison County, after recently seeing a number of positive cases in connection with workers at Green Empire Farms, contacted the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) to do large scale targeted testing of the workers. Together a testing site was set up to provide testing to all of the workers at the greenhouse and those in close contact with them. On the first day of testing, we were able to test 186 people, with 75 positive cases, residing in Madison County as a direct result of conducting this targeted testing. A second round of testing was conducted on Tuesday, May 5, 2020, we were able to test 151 people. Madison County will begin receiving those test results 48 hours after the tests were taken. If Madison County had not taken action and asked for the targeted testing the spread of this virus would have been exponentially higher.

“By doing targeted testing we are better able to understand how far this virus has spread, and we are able to isolate those individuals that have tested positive, and put into quarantine, those individuals who were potentially exposed to a positive case,” said Madison County Health Director Eric Faisst. “We have conducted thorough contact tracings with all of the individuals who tested positive. We have issued public health orders requiring them to isolate and remain in their residences, our health department nurses are in contact with them monitoring their symptoms. This is what we do with every positive case. Likewise, for everyone put into quarantine, our staff contacts them daily to see how they are doing.”

Madison County is working with Green Empire Farms, MAC Contracting, and the hotel management to make sure the needs of the workers are met. Also, to make sure individuals understand that they should remain home and isolated from others.

On March 22, 2020 Madison County had its first positive case of COVID-19. That individual indeed did work at Green Empire Farms, but does not live in one of the hotels. The individual was isolated, a thorough contact tracing investigation was done, it was not identified that the greenhouse was an issue. Anyone in direct contact with this individual was asked to quarantine. It has been well over a month since that case, indicating that this current outbreak is not related to that initial positive case. Upon notification of the first case the MCDOH contacted the greenhouse to ensure that they had protocols in place; like taking your temperature upon arrival, social distancing, and additional cleaning.

“We understand that there is a concern among our residents about potential exposure to people who test positive, so all along we have been asking people to social distance, do not go out in public unless



you have to, wear a face mask, and practice good hygiene,” continued Faisst. “We need your help. This virus is here and has been for a while, it spreads quickly, and you should act like it is everywhere. It does not know color, race, sex, age or borders. If you feel that you may have been exposed please monitor your symptoms, if you become sick please contact your health care provider or call the Upstate Triage Line at 315.464.3979, if it is an emergency please call 911.”

For more information please visit <https://www.madisoncounty.ny.gov/2479/Coronavirus-COVID-19> or call the Madison County non-medical COVID-19 Hotline at 315-366-2770.

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