BUILDING A HANDWASHING STATION

FREQUENT HANDWASHING CAN PREVENT FOODBORNE ILLNESSES.

Sources of illness-causing germs include animals, soil, and humans. To lower the risk of spreading germs when handling produce, we should wash our hands.

WASH HANDS IN A PLACE THAT HAS CLEAN WATER, SOAP, PAPER TOWELS, AND A TRASH CAN:

- BEFORE HANDLING PRODUCE IN THE FIELDS
- BEFORE HANDLING PRODUCE IN THE PACKING SHEDS
- BEFORE TOUCHING FOOD CONTACT SURFACES
- BEFORE PUTTING ON GLOVES
- AFTER TAKING A BREAK, EATING, DRINKING, SMOKING, CHEWING GUM OR TOBACCO
- AFTER USING THE RESTROOM
- AFTER COUGHING, SNEEZING, OR USING A TISSUE
- AFTER SCRATCHING YOUR HEAD, RUBBING YOUR NOSE, OR TOUCHING ANY OTHER PART OF YOUR BODY
- AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AFTER TOUCHING ANIMALS

WASHING HANDS TO PREVENT GERMS FROM SPREADING

1. USE CLEAN WATER TO WET HANDS. IF YOU CAN, USE YOUR ELBOW OR A PAPER TOWEL TO TURN THE WATER ON AND OFF.
2. APPLY SOAP.
3. SCRUB HANDS FOR AT LEAST 20 SECONDS.
4. RINSE HANDS WITH CLEAN WATER.
5. DRY HANDS WITH A CLEAN PAPER TOWEL.
6. THROW THE PAPER TOWEL IN THE TRASH CAN.
Having an on-farm handwashing station available can make it easy to stop and wash your hands when you need to. Over the next few pages, we will walk through the steps of building a simple on-farm handwashing station with a hands-free faucet.

THE HANDWASHING BASE

**TOOLS**
- Safety glasses
- Measuring tape
- Chalk or pencil
- Saw
- Drill
- Bits to match your screws

**MATERIALS**
- Lumber (3) 8 foot 2x4’s
- Plywood (at least ½” thick)
- 2½” deck screws (at least 32)
- Cooler (water container with a spigot that can be removed)
- Dishpan or container to store soap and paper towels
- (2) 5 gallon buckets
  - 1 for catching waste water
  - 1 for a trash can (this one needs a lid)
- Paper towel holder or clothes hanger

**STEP 1**

Wearing safety glasses, cut and label 2 x 4’s into
- (4) 36” pieces (legs)
- (4) 13⅛” pieces (cross connectors)
- (4) 15” pieces (leg connectors)
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**STEP 2**
- Take (4) 36” pieces and lay them side-by-side. Place one 15” piece across the top and one 15” piece across the bottom of the 36” pair of legs. Do the same for the second pair of legs.
- Make sure the cross connectors are positioned 2” from the top and 2” from the bottom.

**STEP 3**
- To hold the legs and connectors, use two deck screws in each cross connector.
- Repeat this step for the second pair of legs.

**STEP 4**
- Take both pairs of legs from step 2 and stand them up facing each other, leaving about 13 ½” clearance between the two.
- Place one 13 ½” cross connector between the legs so that it rests on top of the 15” leg connector.
- Use four deck screws to connect legs to the cross connector.
- Repeat this step on the opposite side of the table.

**STEP 5**
- Fit the cross connector 6 ½” from top of the leg. Note: you may need to increase this space based on the depth of your dishpan.
- Use deck screws to connect the legs to the cross connector.
- Repeat this step on the opposite side of the table.

**STEP 6**
- Wearing safety glasses, cut a 15”x18” piece of plywood to fit on top of the base.
- Position plywood on top and screw the top on the 2 x 4’s to complete the base. We suggest using 8 screws, 2 screws in each 2 x 4.
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STEP 7
- Place the dishpan or any container of similar size down in the opening.
- This is where paper towels and soap can be stored.

STEP 8
- Use screws to attach a store-bought paper towel holder to the base, or make your own using a wire or plastic clothes hanger.
- To make your own cut the hanger to slide paper towels on the bottom of the hanger. Hook the hanger on the handles of the cooler.
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HANDS-FREE ATTACHMENT FOR WATER COOLER

To prevent hands from becoming re-contaminated after washing, follow these steps to create a hands-free faucet for the cooler. This design was originated by Tuskegee University.

TOOLS
- PVC pipe cutter
- Measuring tape
- 3/4” wrench

MATERIALS
1. ½” x 12” PVC pipe (cut into two pieces: 3 ¼” and 7”)
2. ½” PVC elbow 90-degree elbow
3. ¾” x ½” PVC MPT x “S” male adapter
4. ½” “O” ring (rubber ring to fit adapter)
5. ½” PVC threaded coupling
6. ½” long handle bib tap (water valve)
7. Teflon tape
8. PVC pipe glue
9. Construction adhesive
10. A cooler with a removable valve. We used an Igloo 5 gallon, but you can use any cooler. Be sure to double-check the valve hole size.

NOTE: Valves can be hard to find. Alternative valves can be used. Make sure they are ½” to fit into the cooler. If you use a straight valve, consider adding a 90-degree elbow to aim the water toward the ground.
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ASSEMBLE THE PARTS

**STEP 1**
- A. Place the "O" ring on the "S" male adapter. Wrap the threads with Teflon tape.
- B. Screw the water valve into the "S" male coupling. Make sure the connection is tight.
- C. Place PVC glue on each opening of the 90-degree elbow. Push the 3 ½" PVC pipe into one end of the elbow and 7" PVC pipe to the other end of the elbow. You should have an "L" shape when done.

PUT IT ALL TOGETHER

**STEP 2**
- Use the wrench to remove the water spigot from the cooler by unscrewing it from the inside.

**STEP 3**
- Place the "S" male adapter, with "O" ring in place, in the hole so that the threads extend from the outside of the cooler.

**STEP 4**
- Screw the assembled water valve into the "S" male adapter. Use the wrench to make sure the connection is tight.

**STEP 5**
- Use construction adhesive on the inside of the assembled "L" PVC pipe to attach it to the water valve handle.
- Optional: You can use a screw to connect the pipe to the handle.

**STEP 6**
- Fill the cooler with clean water and place it on top of the base.
- Wash your hands! When washing your hands using the "hands-free" adapter, use your elbow to turn the water valve on and off.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES