

# The COVID-19 pandemic according to DUDA employees

We asked DUDA employees to tell us about their COVID-19 experiences, describing what changes have occurred and the challenges and unexpected benefits of their “new normal.” They also shared how their location reached out to its employees and communities, offering support during this international crisis.

## How do you feel about the adjustments your location has made in order for you to continue safely working during the COVID-19 outbreak?

“DUDA’s quantity and quality of adjustments far exceeded those of any other local organizations. Everyone is adhering to the new COVID-19 policies and procedures very well. Additionally, everyone at the plant is very well informed. They can see that workplace safety is our first priority.”

– **Jaime Montiel**, *Duda Farm Fresh Foods, Oxnard*

“I am very proud of the detailed field and office protocols that we have put in place to ensure employee safety through this challenging time. The gratitude shown by various staff members reassures us that we are on the right track.”

– **Chris Leffler**, *Duda Ranches, Cocoa*

“I am grateful that there were adjustments made at our location. We were given all of the tools we need to work from home and keep up the same level of service to our customers.”

– **Noemi Aguilar**, *Duda Farm Fresh Foods, Salinas*

“DUDA has done a great job of working with employees to ease their minds about working outside the home. I feel safe at work and appreciate all that DUDA has done.”

– **Josie Duffy**, *Corporate Office, Oviedo*

“I feel confident in the fact that our location, as well as the entire company, has put the safety and health of our employees first and is striving to maintain a healthy working environment.”

– **Chris Johnson**, *Duda Ranches, Lake Placid*

## What has been one of the challenges you’ve faced, personally or professionally, as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak? Have there been any silver linings during this experience? If so, what are they?

“It’s been fantastic to have a positive and supportive work community. It has really lifted my spirits to be surrounded by a team of people who care about everyone working with them here.”

– **Jessica Fleck**, *Corporate Office, Oviedo*

“The most difficult thing I deal with is loneliness. I love my work family and miss them all so badly! We had a Zoom meeting and that made me so happy to get to see some of my co-workers.”

– **Betty Hodges**, *Duda Farm Fresh Foods, Wellington*

“So far the biggest challenge is having school age children at home, one of those being a high school senior. I find a silver lining in knowing that if we stay the course we will prevail.”

– **Eric Reiter**, *Duda Ranches, Cocoa*

## How are you staying optimistic or positive during these challenging times?

“For me, just the fact that I am able to continue to work is a blessing. I know we will get through this and will be back to ‘normal’ soon.”

– **Mary Barnes**, *Duda Ranches, LaBelle*

“I know the country will come through this as it historically does. The DUDA enterprise has been great in communicating what is upcoming and what is expected. I just keep doing what I do and allow for time to decompress in stressful times.”

– **Ryan Lenz**, *Viera Builders, Viera*

“Lots of prayer! I know that these are hard times, and I worry for everyone’s safety and health, but I lean on God to help keep my mind and heart in a positive state. I love that the Oviedo location has done casual dress days, lunches and that David Duda has been keeping us all informed regularly. This really helps to keep spirits up, and it’s great to know that employees are cared about!”

– **Casey Mansfield**, *Corporate Office, Oviedo*

## In what way(s) has your location shown appreciation for its employees and/or community?

“The greatest way to show appreciation for anyone is to show you care. At Cocoa, we began implementing improved protocols at the onset of the outbreak. This has really been a great opportunity for us to show the employees that we truly do work for them. I feel that they are seeing us, the company, not as managers and supervisors, but as humans working to care for them and protect their families.”

– **Paul Lopez**, *Duda Ranches, Cocoa*

“I feel that the company-provided Thursday lunches are a generous and much-appreciated gesture. I am also grateful for the t-shirts given to us. The COVID-19 weekly updates are reassuring and I appreciate being kept in the loop and hearing how the company is responding to the pandemic.”

– **Carmen Vastola**, *The Viera Company, Viera*

“I appreciate the company keeping us informed through corporate communication. I love the shirt and bandana, which I will be sporting in stores to advertise our company. I appreciate our office staying fully stocked with hand sanitizer, bleach, and other items that are vital for us to keep our area clean.”

– **Mayra Bautista**, *Duda Farm Fresh Foods, Belle Glade*

“The company has provided the proper personal protective equipment. They also posted signs throughout the building to maintain social distance in the dining room, offices, parking lots, and even in the process area. Now they check our body temperature as well. They also gave us a t-shirt with a very emotional message letting us know that we are essential.”

– **Karina Becerra**, *Duda Farm Fresh Foods, Oxnard*