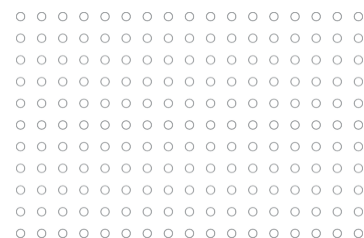# Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)

Safety Plan Guidance

As of April 3, 2020

The United States and Canada are enduring a pandemic with significant implications for communities and workplaces. Public health agencies in both countries continue to closely monitor the situation and issue frequent updates and guidance.

Farmers, ranchers and processors can incorporate the following 3 steps to position themselves for sustainability:

1. **Update expectations to address COVID-19 risks**
2. **Develop plans to minimize exposures**
3. **Prepare for project delays and potential shutdowns**

Update Expectations to Address Risks Presented by COVID-19

A. **General Concerns**
   - Provide means and methods to increase hygiene levels onsite.
   - Provide COVID-19 awareness training & orientation covering relevant safety material.
   - Conduct trainings and status meetings without creating large gatherings of people.
       i. Consider remote meetings, if practical.
       ii. Conduct multiple sessions in smaller numbers to facilitate social distancing.
       iii. Use posters in common areas and signs in washrooms as reminders of safe behaviors.
   - Ensure all employees have received training on COVID-19 awareness.

B. **Department Manager/Shift Supervisor/Foreman**
   - Communicate that all employees must be well to come to work.
   - Communicate that any employees feeling ill or exhibiting symptoms will be sent home.
   - Ensure handwashing stations, washrooms and hand sanitizers are well stocked.

C. Safety Professionals/HR Staff

- Communicate and implement recommendations from Center for Disease Control (CDC), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS), the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), World Health Organization (WHO), and other sources as they become available.
- Ensure all employees have received awareness training on COVID-19, including training on how to limit the spread.
- Review hygiene and Non-Pharmaceutical Intervention (NPI) policies.

D. All Employees

- Report to work only when well and in accordance with CDC and PHAC guidance.
- If an employee becomes ill while at work, notify the supervisor and go home/seek appropriate medical attention.
- Adhere to hygiene practices (see below) & follow NPI policies.

Develop Plans to Minimize Site Exposures

A. "Well" Employees Only Policy

- Require sick employees to stay home – if employees are showing COVID-19 symptoms they should be seen/tested by a healthcare professional.
- Separate and send home sick employees who appear to have acute respiratory illness symptoms – e.g.: cough, shortness of breath – upon arrival to work, as well as those who become sick during the day.
- Consider financial restitution for an employee staying home.
    - i. Ensure there is not a personal financial obligation to work while ill.
    - ii. Provide Sick Leave in accordance with the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) and the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

B. Site Sanitation Policy

- Develop a hand washing / hand sanitizing schedule.
    - i. Upon entry to project.
    - ii. Before & after any breaks.
    - iii. Before ingesting food, eating, drinking, or smoking.
    - iv. After touching common surfaces or shared tools.
    - v. Whenever other NPIs are not effective.
- Enforce sneezing and coughing etiquette, and 6 feet (2m) social distancing.
- Provide multiple hand sanitizing stations throughout the workplace.
- Ensure adequate soap/sanitizer is stocked.

C.   Project Housekeeping Policy

- Sanitizing of commonly touched surfaces must be completed throughout the day.

    i. Establish frequency -Ongoing for larger operations/locations, several times per day for smaller projects.
    ii. Establish common surfaces – Doors, railings, offices, phones, stair rails, etc. to be cleaned.
    iii. Establish other common touch points – Shared tools or equipment, hoses, cords, vehicles/tractors/loaders, ATVs, etc.

- Use of suitable disposable wipes is encouraged. A 10% bleach solution in water is an acceptable disinfectant if disposable wipes are unavailable

D.   Practice Non-Pharmaceutical Intervention

- Communicate and practice Non-Pharmaceutical Interventions
- Social distancing – keep 6 feet (2m) whenever possible

    i. Schedule trades to stagger work when they would normally be in the same space simultaneously
    ii. Consider running "skeleton crews" of only essential employees

- Avoiding personal contact (handshakes, touching, etc.)
- Avoid sharing equipment or vehicles, tools, hoses, cords, or other common items
- Avoid touching eyes, nose & mouth
- Wash hands frequently
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue, and then throw away the tissue.
- Eliminate all non-essential interactions with sales reps, vendors, and 3rd parties

Prepare for a Pandemic that Delays or Stops Work

A. Anticipate Project Delays

- Anticipate projects being delayed due to a shortage of workers

    i. Workers may be unavailable due to illness, caring for ill family members, school closures and the need for childcare or other restriction.

- Anticipate projects being delayed due to a shortage of materials

    i. Supplies from areas severely affected by the virus may be unavailable or delayed

    - Look to source from other, readily available material suppliers.

- Anticipate projects being delayed due to social distancing and NPI practices

    i. Fewer employees in the workplace

    - May need to coordinate multiple, staggered shifts.

  ii. Increased hygiene and necessary cleaning schedules may impact production.

B. Develop a Disaster Plan That Includes Pandemic Preparedness

- Be aware of and review federal, regional, and local health department pandemic plans, and integrate into your plan.
- Prepare and plan for operations with a reduced workforce.
- Identify business-essential positions and people required to sustain business-necessary functions and operations. Prepare to cross-train or develop ways to function in the absence of these positions.
- Develop a sick leave policy that does not penalize sick employees, thereby encouraging those who are sick to stay home. Recognize that employees with ill family members may need to stay home to care for them. Ensure these policies comply with FFCA and FMLA.
- Post the FFCRA Awareness Poster from the Department of Labor by April 1, 2020: https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/WHD/posters/FFCRA_Poster_WH1422_Non-Federal.pdf https://www.agsafe.org/cms/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Employee-Rights-Under-FFCRA_Spanish.pdf
- Recognize that, in the course of normal daily life, all employees will have non-occupational risk factors at home and in community settings.
- Provide employees and projects with easy access to infection control supplies.
- Develop policies and practices that distance employees from each other, customers and the general public.
- Work with employees & their union(s) to address leave, pay, transportation, childcare, absence & other human resource issues.
- Provide employee training, education and information on safely performing business-essential job functions.
- Work with your insurance companies and state/provincial and local health agencies to provide information to employees and customers about medical care during a pandemic.
- Developing emergency communications plans. Maintain open communication and address employees' concerns.
- For office staff, communicate to employees what options may be available to them for working from home.
- Work with your employees to designate a person(s), website, bulletin board, or other means of communicating important pandemic information.
- Ensure employee personal contact information is current so that company-wide communications are received by all.

Additional Resources:

- The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's guidance on employer management of employees suspected to be ill during the COVID-19 pandemic can be found here:
  https://www.eeoc.gov/facts/pandemic_flu.html
- Information on Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) leave stipulations:
  https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/pandemic/ffcra-employer-paid-leave
  https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/pandemic/ffcra-questions
- Information on H-2A workers:
  https://www.farmers.gov/manage/h2a
  USDOL Office of Foreign Labor Certification COVID-19 FAQs
  US Department of Homeland Security: Essential Travel to the US from Mexico Includes H2A Workers
  US Department of Homeland Security Guidance of the Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce
  https://mx.usembassy.gov/status-of-u-s-consular-operations-in-mexico-in-light-of-covid-19/
- More information about pandemic planning as well as protecting employees and their families can be found at: www.pandemicflu.gov.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website has multiple topics, including "What You Should Know", "Situation Updates", and information for communities and travel guidance.
- The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has guidance on Control and Prevention measures an employer can undertake. Further OSHA information is also captured in the following guides and awareness posters:

- The Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS) has guidance on Control and Prevention measures an employer can undertake.
- HUB International has setup a Coronavirus Resource Center which has additional guidance to mitigate business impacts.

Summary:

At this time, there is no vaccine for COVID-19 or any natural health products that are authorized to protect against it. All agencies strongly advocate for non-pharmaceutical interventions stressing social distancing and enhanced hygiene.

Following recognized NPI practices to avoid exposures common to any respiratory virus will help to keep this threat in check. Proper planning can help protect both your employees and your business.

Get the latest information, guidance and resources on Coronavirus (COVID-19) to help you protect what matters most at hubinternational.com/coronavirus. For additional support, please reach out to your local HUB office.