

Branding / Processing Time COVID-19 Information and Tips for Canadian Beef Operations

Source: *Canadian Cattlemen's Association*

Before you Start

- Familiarize yourself with your local public health guidelines and exemptions, if any, for agriculture in your province
- To minimize crowd size, restrict participation to the branding/processing crew only
- Have each crew member sign a sign-in log for future reference if needed
- Remind your branding/processing crew about the dangers of COVID-19 and outline the safety measures provided below
- Ensure your crew is aware of their responsibility to properly notify you if they are feeling unwell or of any risk of exposure to COVID-19 they may have encountered prior
- If symptoms are observed by a crew member, they are to go home immediately and follow the guidance provided by their local health authority for assessment and testing
- If a crew member is subsequently diagnosed with a COVID-19 related illness, the local health authorities will be advised, and an investigation will be initiated
- Ensure your crew has access to information about proper hygiene protocol (i.e. hand washing) to limit transmission. Fact sheets can be found here:
 - [Handwashing Poster - Public Health Agency of Canada](#)
 - [About Coronavirus Fact Sheet - Public Health Agency of Canada](#)
 - [Canadian Cattlemen's Association](#)
- Ask crew to wash their hands thoroughly before starting

While Branding and Processing

- Tasks (vaccination, castration, dehorning, branding, etc.) should stay assigned as much as possible to the same people – if possible, avoid switching tasks
- Equipment and supplies (vaccination guns, scalpels, implant guns, etc.) should be cleaned and disinfected often, especially if they are to be handled by more than one person (diluted bleach – 9-parts water to 1-part bleach – is also an effective disinfectant)
- If a 2-metre distance between people cannot be maintained for certain tasks, try to have people from the same household assigned to these tasks
- Provide hand sanitizers and encourage your crew to use often throughout the day – recognizing organic matter on hands will compromise the effectiveness of the sanitizer
- Provide soap, water, and single use towels for your crew and encourage them to wash their hands often throughout the day and especially prior to any breaks, lunch, or dinner

Mealtime

- Ensure those preparing food have washed their hands thoroughly using soap and water
- Avoid buffet style serving where utensils are touched by everyone, assign people to fill plates for crew members
- Consider individually wrapped food/drinks prepared off site that can be eaten with disposable utensils
- Avoid multiple people touching or handling containers, water jugs (consider bottled beverages), utensils, etc. – have one person assigned to this distribution role – again ensuring they have washed their hands thoroughly using soap and water

- Consider staggered mealtimes to reduce crowd size
- Ensure people eat with the minimum 2-metre distance between each other

Socializing

- Branding and processing is a practice steeped in tradition and is a time when local friends and families come together to help and spend time together – however, during this COVID-19 pandemic, it is critical to eliminate social interactions as much as possible
- Community spread is now the number one means by which the virus is spread – you must do your part to reduce this risk to you, your family, and your friends

Personal Hygiene Information

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after using the washroom and when preparing food
- Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available, ensure hands are as free of organic matter as much as possible before using sanitizers
- When coughing or sneezing: cough or sneeze into a tissue or the bend of your arm, not your hand
- Dispose of any tissues you have used as soon as possible in a plastic garbage bag, and wash your hands afterwards
- **CRITICAL** – avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands
- Clean high-touch surfaces frequently with regular household cleaners or diluted bleach
- Assign someone to clean washrooms or porta-potties on a regular schedule

Managing the Risk on Ranch/Farm

- Continue to follow recommended biosecurity and food safety best practices
- Limit or restrict visitors to the operation Request all visitors, customers and individuals delivering or picking up feed, fuel, animal health supplies, commodities and cattle use hand sanitizer located at key locations on the operation. A similar strategy should be used for service providers, e.g. utility companies or others doing on-site work.
- Eliminate entry of visitors into the home
- Implement hand-washing protocols for employees and post this information
- Clean frequently used surfaces with disinfectant
- Provide adequate washroom facilities that are sanitized regularly
- Ensure employees are informed of the risks, symptoms, and steps to self-isolate
- Consider restricting travel (business or leisure) and employees must self-isolate for 14 days upon returning home from international travel
- Businesses receiving foreign workers should monitor advisories from the government departments responsible for the [Temporary Foreign Worker Program](#).
- Businesses providing housing for their staff will need to ensure their risk management plan considers large numbers of employees being quarantined or requiring health care
- Ensure risk management and operational plans include pandemic plans
- A risk management plan should identify what to do if staff are not available to conduct time sensitive work (e.g. feeding cattle) when not enough employees are available to do the work due to sickness. This may include having agreements with surrounding neighbours for support. Information to have available could include:

- Carrying capacity of fields for grazing and field rotation plan
- Barn layouts and functions
- Animal inventory and age, including major tasks by age for each (e.g. hoof trimming, vaccinations, etc.)
- Breeding records location (computer, gestation wheel, etc.) and plans
- Location of AI materials or contract with AI and other animal services
- Health records location and veterinary relationship record (including vet contacts)
- Feeding and nutrition records, feeding plan by age group and life stage
- Processing and hygiene programs and supplies
- Biosecurity plan / visitor plans for farm
- Key staff, including part-time, who work on farm (relief staff with contacts)

COVID-19 information & Resources

- [National Biosecurity Standards](#)
- [Resources for Canadian Business - Trade Commissioner Service](#)
- [British Columbia Government Online COVID-19 Self-Assessment](#)
- [Alberta Government Online COVID-19 Self-Assessment](#)
- [Saskatchewan Government Online COVID-19 Self-Assessment](#)
- [Manitoba Government COVID-19 Information Page](#)
- [Ontario Government Online COVID-19 Self-Assessment](#)
- [Quebec Government COVID-19 Information Page](#)
- [New Brunswick COVID-19 Information Page](#)
- [Nova Scotia COVID-19 Information Page](#)
- [Prince Edward Island COVID-19 Information Page](#)

Public Health Information

- [Public Health Agency of Canada](#)
- [Employment and Social Development Canada](#)
- [Public Health Agency of Canada - Travel Advice](#)
- [World Health Organization](#)

ABOUT CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19)

WHAT IT IS

COVID-19 is an illness caused by a coronavirus.

Human coronaviruses are common and are typically associated with mild illnesses, similar to the common cold.

HOW IT IS SPREAD

Coronaviruses are most commonly **SPREAD** from an infected person through:

- ▶ respiratory droplets when you cough or sneeze
- ▶ close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands
- ▶ touching something with the virus on it, then touching your eyes, nose or mouth before washing your hands

These viruses are not known to spread through ventilation systems or through water.

IF YOU HAVE SYMPTOMS

If you have **SYMPTOMS** of COVID-19 — fever, cough, or difficulty breathing:

- ▶ stay home to avoid spreading it to others
 - if you live with others, stay in a separate room or keep a 2-metre distance
- ▶ call ahead before you visit a health care professional or call your local public health authority
 - tell them your symptoms and follow their instructions
- ▶ if you need immediate medical attention, call 911 and tell them your symptoms.

SYMPTOMS

Symptoms may be very mild or more serious. They may take up to 14 days to appear after exposure to the virus.



FEVER



COUGH



DIFFICULTY BREATHING

PREVENTION

The best way to prevent the spread of infections is to:

- ▶ wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- ▶ avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth, especially with unwashed hands
- ▶ avoid close contact with people who are sick
- ▶ when coughing or sneezing:
 - cover your mouth and nose with your arm or tissues to reduce the spread of germs
 - immediately dispose of any tissues you have used into the garbage as soon as possible and wash your hands afterwards
- ▶ clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces, such as toys, electronic devices and doorknobs.
- ▶ stay home if you are sick to avoid spreading illness to others

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON CORONAVIRUS:

☎ 1-833-784-4397

@ canada.ca/coronavirus

✉ phac.info.aspc@canada.ca