

# Information and Tips for Canadian Farms on COVID-19

Source: *Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council*

<https://cahrc-ccrha.ca/programs/emerging-agriworkforce-issues/information-and-updates-coronavirus-covid-19>

## How Do You Manage on the Farm?

- Ensure your workers have access to information about proper protocol (e.g. hand washing, see list in Employee section below) to limit transmission. Fact sheets to post in the work environment can be found here:
  - [Handwashing Poster - Public Health Agency of Canada](#)
  - [About Coronavirus Fact Sheet - Public Health Agency of Canada](#)
- Ensure your workers are 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.
- Communicate clearly with your workers about your expectations regarding sick leave.
- Remind them of your HR policies during this pandemic, specifically around sick leave. If you do not have formal policies in place, templates are available in the [AgriHR Toolkit](#).
  - Depending on the existing policy, it may be required to extend sick leave beyond the current policy to ensure workers with symptoms of or exposure to COVID-19 are not stressed by a financial burden when needing to self-isolate. Such an environment where employees have this comfort will encourage self-reporting and reduce potential exposure to other employees.
- Ensure that workers with symptoms of or exposure to COVID-19 are supported to self-isolate.
- Do not provide information regarding the name, date of birth, or other identifiers of any workers diagnosed with the COVID-19 virus. Your workers are entitled to privacy under Canadian privacy legislation. There are special circumstances when you may have to have to share this information (e.g. life-threatening reasons). Consult with legal counsel before sharing any personal medical information of your workers.
- Do provide information to your workers if they have been exposed to COVID-19 in the workplace.

If known provide:

- date(s) of their potential exposure; and the extent and circumstances of their potential exposure (i.e., incident indirect contact vs prolonged direct contact).
- Continue to monitor and follow recommendations provided by public health agencies (links provided above). <https://www.osler.com/en/resources/regulations/2020/managing-the-coronav...>

## Information for Your Employees

- 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
- 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 lined waste basket
  - wash your hands afterwards
- avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands
- clean the following high-touch surfaces frequently with regular household cleaners or diluted bleach (1-part bleach to 9 parts water): toilets, phones, electronics, door handles, tables, farm/business equipment and tools.
- wash clothes at the end of each workday before returning to work the next day.

## Managing the Risk to the Work Environment

- Limit or restrict visitors to the farm or business 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 including office, scale, workshop or feed mill.
- Implement a hand-washing regime for all employees.
- Clean frequently used surfaces with hospital grade disinfectant.
- Ensure employees are informed of the risks, symptoms, steps to self-isolate.
- Consider restricting travel (business or leisure) and ask employees to self-isolate upon returning home from international travel.
- Businesses that are receiving foreign workers should monitor advisories from the government departments responsible for the [Temporary Foreign Worker Program](#).
- Continue to follow recommendations provided around maintaining biosecurity and food safety standards.
- Businesses that provide housing for their workers 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 for HR management. Having a risk management plan in place for dealing with events that may cause a crisis to the staff available to work will ensure that when/if that happens there is a structured, controlled response to it. These types of plans should include identifying decision makers, roles and responsibilities, access to medical care, plans for both quarantine and transportation to medical facilities. They should also include communications planning such as who is the point of contact, medical contacts, internal and external communication plans, contact information for all staff, suppliers, community services. The risk management plan should also identify what to do if staff are not available to conduct time sensitive work (e.g. cattle feeding) when not enough

employees are available to do the work because of sickness. This may include having agreements with surrounding farmers for back up support.

### **Latest COVID-19 information & Resources**

- [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](#)

### **Where can I find links to reputable public health authorities?**

- [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](https://canada.ca/coronavirus)

✉ [phac.info.aspc@canada.ca](mailto:phac.info.aspc@canada.ca)