

# TIPS & GUIDELINES

## for Feedlot Operations in the Face of COVID -19

ACFA has compiled a number of tips and guidelines to help ensure safety on Alberta's feedlots during the COVID 19 pandemic and into the future. These guidelines are not an exhaustive list of activities, but serve as a resources as you prepare your on farm policies. Please visit your local health care website for the latest health information.

### GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Ensure staff are aware of their responsibility to properly notify you if they are feeling unwell

Ensure staff notify you of any risk of exposure to COVID-19 they may have encountered prior to arriving to work each day

Create daily health checklist protocols for staff to complete daily prior to arriving onsite [GOA Health Checklist](#)

If staff are symptomatic, they are to go home immediately and follow the guidance provided by their local health authority [Alberta Health Services](#)

Employers are not to 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. The local health authorities are to be advised and an investigation will be initiated by them

Update sick leave policies. If you do not have a sick leave policy please use the attached [HR Tool Kit](#); and use the code COVID-19 for full access

Develop and implement procedures for employees who becomes symptomatic on the work site and communicate these procedures with staff frequently.

Ensure staff have access to information about proper hygiene protocol (i.e. hand washing, wearing masks) to limit transmission. Fact sheets can be found here:

[Handwashing Poster - Public Health Agency of Canada](#)

[Proper Mask Use](#)

### GENERAL GUIDANCE FOR EMPLOYERS

[Risk Mitigation Template](#)

### CONTINGENCY PLANNING

Feedlot operators are strongly encouraged to have a contingency plan in place in the event a large number of on farm employees are required to self isolate or quarantine due to a COVID 19 exposure. This plan will be essential for uninterrupted work to continue on farm should an outbreak occur

- » Once a confirmed case is identified, AHS will look at the close contacts of that confirmed case to assess the risks to others.
  - Anyone who has been within 6 feet of a confirmed case of COVID 19 for a cumulative total of more than 15 minutes in a day without adequate protection is consider to be a close contact and could be asked to isolate for 14 days.

- » AHS may trace back 3 days prior to the confirmed case becoming symptomatic. This could be catastrophic if employees have not been following social distance protocols or if the virus starts to spread throughout the operation. Please consider the following when preparing your contingency plans:
  - Establish critical positions on farm that need to remain in place should the operation need to quarantine. AHS will look at these roles and potentially allow non operation staff on site to perform these essential tasks if enhanced PPE is in place for the temporary relief workers
  - Coordinate with other feedlot operators for staff assistance in the event your operation is asked to quarantine

## RAPID RESPONSE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SYMPTOMATIC OR CONFIRMED COVID EXPOSURE

Each feedlot should be prepared to respond to symptomatic workers or confirmed cases of COVID 19. It is necessary that operators develop a detailed written Rapid Response Plan to assist AHS in their worksite investigation. Areas to focus on include but are not limited to the following:

- » Schematics or drawing of the entire operation including lunch rooms, offices, washrooms and processing barns.
- » Daily cleaning and disinfecting logs
- » Written protocols of how physical distancing is maintained throughout the operation as well as procedures for areas that workers may not be able to maintain 6 feet apart at all times particularly in high exposure areas such as processing barns, lunch rooms, and washrooms.
- » Visitor and employee logs are updated and readily available
- » Written protocols in place for a COVID exposure on the work site including:
  - Tracing potential exposure to other employees
  - Communication plan for notifying potential close contacts of the confirmed case on the operation
  - How isolation and quarantine guidelines will be implemented

[Outbreak Management Plan for Large Production Facilities](#)

## SUGGESTIONS ON HOW TO MITIGATE RISKS ON FARM WORK SITES

- » Triage responsibilities and activities so critical roles are always filled. Examples: animals fed, essential products ordered, manure managed, etc.
- » Ensure you have an up-to-date risk mitigation and management plan  
Include operations, communications, and [HR Tool Kit](#): (use code COVID-19) for full access
- » Staff should avoid contact with each other where possible, if contact is required they should maintain a distance of 6 feet from each other at all times
- » Create designated teams or pods who only interact with each other and still, only when necessary, these pods must adhere to social distancing requirements
- » Where possible, move to shift work or stagger start, break, lunch and end times
- » Limit equipment to single worker(s); or specific team/pods of workers. When not possible, have PPE and sanitizer available
- » In cases of high-risk personnel (immunodeficient; pregnant, etc.) provide work isolation practices  
Example: limit equipment or job to 1 person where possible

- » Clean frequently used surfaces with disinfectant including;  
Fuel pumps, door handles, truck cabs, heavy equipment interiors, squeeze equipment, tools, computers, phones, tables and shared bathrooms, etc.
- » Print and post all farm protocols on every entrance way and all communal areas  
Example: The safety of our supplies and staff is one of our top priorities and we are committed to: cleaning regularly, especially high traffic areas
- » Provide personal hand sanitizers and encourage staff to use often throughout the day and have sanitizer stations readily available and disinfectant in all equipment and traffic areas
- » All staff must adhere to Alberta Health Services recommendation to practice social distancing while at work and encourage them to do so off site
- » Implement and enforce the use of masks in daily operations. Even when distancing is maintained, mask use mitigates transmission
- » Carpooling: Be aware of how employees are arriving to and from the work site each day. Create protocols for those who are ride sharing

## PROCESSING & TREATING RECOMMENDATIONS

- » Create zones with 6 feet distance between workers within in processing areas and assign staff to work within their zone at all times  
Examples of zones: Left side squeeze zone and head, Right side squeeze zone, S-curve zone, tub zone
- » Enforce mask use protocols in these areas at all times
- » Limit handling of vaccine and medication bottles as well as implant packets to one employee. All bottles, container and equipment should be disinfected at the end of the day before returning them to the refrigerator or storage area
- » Reinforce general hygiene practices: avoid touching face, don't come to work with symptoms, maintain social distancing, clean and sanitize often, wear a mask
- » Create barriers within these areas where possible

## LUNCH ROOM PRACTICES

- » Avoid as much as possible multiple people touching or handling containers, water jugs, coffee pots, utensils, etc.
- » Sanitize common touch points after each use
- » Ensure people eat with the minimum 2-metre distance recommendation between each other
- » Encourage staff to eat in shifts or with there designated team and disinfect between shifts
- » Restrict the use of lunch room area to the absolute minimum time required for eating
- » Remind staff they **MUST** wash hands with soap and water **OR** clean hands with alcohol-based hand rub before **AND AFTER** eating
- » Create barriers where possible in areas where social distancing is difficult. If this is not possible request that staff wear masks at all times in these locations. <https://www.alberta.ca/masks.aspx>
- » Stagger break and lunch times and isolate those times to specific pods of workers consistently

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ESSENTIAL VISITORS ON FARM

- » Create mask use protocols for all visitors and request the completion of a daily health checklist prior to arriving onsite
- » Limit or restrict visitors to the business operation as this is an increased risk of outside exposure to the farm
- » Develop check in and check out procedures for all visitors including names and phone numbers. This information must be kept for 14 days.
- » Ensure protocols are posted on entry ways and doors
- » Request all visitors, customers and individuals delivering or picking up feed, fuel, animal health supplies, commodities and cattle remain in their vehicles and have staff available to load and unload deliveries
- » Visitors should have no physical contact with staff and should be masked
- » Establish operational leniencies to encourage further social distancing  
Example: allowing truckers to roll back tarps and then return to their truck

---

**For the latest up-to-date COVID-19 information as it relates to cattle feeders, farms, and agribusiness, follow our web page <https://cattlefeeders.ca/covid-19/>**

---

*\*This document is not to be considered official health regulations. It was compiled based on suggestions from peers in the cattle feeder industry. For official health care and legal policies, please visit your local healthcare website for resources\**