

Preparing for Coronavirus (COVID-19) on Farms

The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) has brought the need for business continuity planning to the forefront. China's influence in agriculture is wide-ranging. In the case of the COVID-19 public health situation, there will almost inevitably be some unexpected consequences as supplies become limited or unavailable.

A farm business continuity plan will help pinpoint contingencies in critical areas related to employees/staff and could include backup plans for work practices, transportation, communication, service and supply chain, and cash flow.

Farms could involve suppliers and customers in developing these plans, where appropriate. Farms may consider running outage scenarios to assess the possibility of unforeseen impacts. This is also a good time to review important community contact information including your county Emergency contacts and Public Health Department.

Supply chain effects

According to the American Veterinary Medical Association as of March 10, 2020, the COVID-19 outbreak has raised concern about potential medical supply issues, including both pharmaceuticals and medical products such as personal protective equipment. No current shortages are reported by any of the 32 animal drug companies that make finished drugs or source active pharmaceutical ingredients in China for the U.S. market, according to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). However, six of the firms have indicated that they see supply chain disruptions that soon could lead to shortages. The FDA is working with these firms to identify interventions to mitigate potential shortages and has done similar work on the medical product/device side.

Farm Businesses Resources

Healthy Farms Healthy Animals - <https://www.healthyagriculture.org/>

A biosecurity resource supported by USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)

ReadyAg Workbook - <https://extension.psu.edu/readyag-workbook>

A detailed planning guide to help farmers better prepare for general disasters.

Business Resources:

Ready Business - <https://www.ready.gov/business>

A general business preparedness planning resource, by Federal Emergency Management Agency/Dept. of Homeland Security

Business Resources (cont'd):

Extension Disaster Education Network - <http://extensiondisaster.net/>

1. Epidemic Preparedness for Community Organizations
A resource for organizational/business preparedness specific to epidemics (factsheets, templates and online course).
2. Preparedness, Response, Recovery Plan
A template tool for organizational/business preparedness for epidemics.

General Resources

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS), and local health departments have compiled information for the general public to learn more about COVID-19. Please visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html> and <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/disease/covid-19.htm> for these helpful resources.

- Learn the facts about COVID-19. (CDC)
- Find general information about COVID-19 (CDC)
- Get Your Workplace Ready for Pandemic Flu - A workbook (set of factsheets), on workplace preparedness for flu pandemic (CDC)
- Find Wisconsin-specific information about COVID-19 including fact sheets in English, Chinese, Spanish, Hmong (DHS)
- Information for specific audiences:
 - Individual protection from respiratory illness
 - Businesses (CDC, Public Health Madison & Dane County) - <https://www.publichealthmdc.com/documents/Preparing%20Your%20Workplace%20for%20Coronavirus.pdf>
 - Travelers
 - Pregnant Women and Children

As an individual, there are things you can do to help prevent the spread of illness.

- Wash your hands often with soap and water.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Cover your cough and sneeze.

**EXTENSION
AGRICULTURE
AGENTS /
AREA OF FOCUS**

Dunn County

Katie Wantoch
Farm Financial Management
3001 US Hwy 12 East, Ste 216
Menomonie, WI 54751

Phone: 715-232-1636
katie.wantoch@wisc.edu

Eau Claire County

Lyssa Seefeldt
Dairy and Livestock
227 1st Street W
Altoona, WI 54720

Phone: 715-839-4712
lyssa.seefeldt@wisc.edu

Chippewa County

Jerry Clark
Crops and Soils
711 North Bridge Street
Chippewa Falls, WI 54729

Phone: 715-726-7950
jerome.clark@wisc.edu

Chippewa, Dunn, Eau Claire & Polk Counties

Margaret Murphy
Horticulture

Phone: 715-726-7950
margaret.murphy@wisc.edu

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