

# COVID-19 (Coronavirus) and Your Dairy

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# Leadership

- This is a very stressful time for everyone, people are looking to their leaders for help
- Dairy owners and managers are experienced in dealing with stressful conditions and operating under sudden constraints
- Lead by example
- Encourage questions
  - All questions are good questions
  - Just because something seems obvious to you, do not assume it is obvious to everyone else



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# Disclaimer

- We are not health care professionals, all recommendations regarding health should come from health care professionals
- We are not attorneys, all information is for education purposes only
- This information is intended to help dairy management think about and organize daily farm operations through the lens of COVID-19 guidance, we do not have all the answers
- Information and recommendations are changing daily, so let's keep the communication going throughout this emergency
- Specific company mentions are not intended as endorsements. They are examples highlighting the level of engagement exhibited across our industry



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# Ground Rules and Agenda

- Ask questions in the chat box
- Agenda
  - Why this is important
  - Protecting your employees
  - Prevention and social distancing
  - What to do with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19
  - Managing in a disease-altered business environment

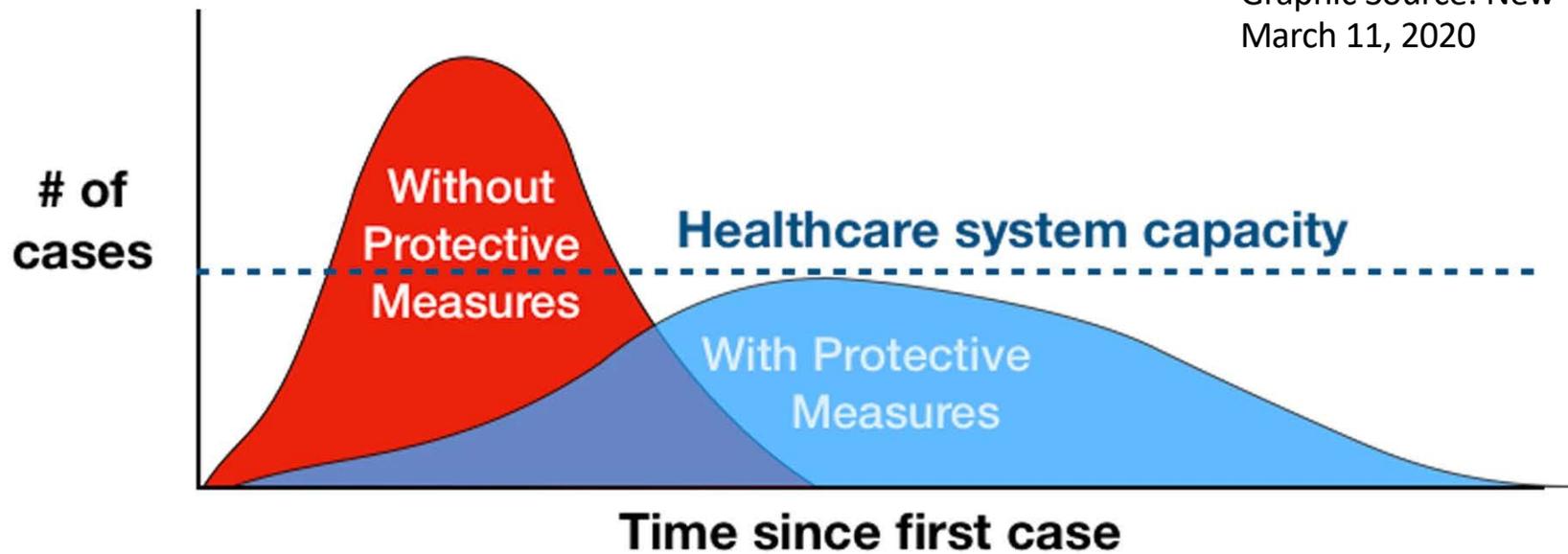


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# Flattening the Curve

Graphic Source: New York Times,  
March 11, 2020



*Adapted from CDC / The Economist*



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# Protect Your Employees



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# Prevention & Control Resources

- Talk with employees about coronavirus, how it spreads, and how to prevent infection
- New York State Department of Health has a [Coronavirus Website](#) with [English](#) and [Spanish](#) posters for preventing coronavirus infection
  - (<https://health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/coronavirus/>)
- U.S. Centers for Disease Control and prevention (CDC) provides clear guidance about preventing infection in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#).
  - CDC [printable factsheets and posters](#)
  - Download at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/factsheets.html>
- Post information in your workplace and employee housing.



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# CDC Posters in English and Spanish

## STOP THE SPREAD OF GERMS

Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

 [cdc.gov/COVID19](https://www.cdc.gov/COVID19)

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## DETENGA LA PROPAGACIÓN DE LOS MICROBIOS

Ayude a prevenir la propagación de enfermedades respiratorias como el COVID-19

- Evite el contacto cercano con las personas enfermas.
- Cúbrase la nariz y la boca con un pañuelo desechable al toser o estornudar y luego bótelos a la basura.
- Limpié y desinfecte los objetos y las superficies que se tocan frecuentemente.
- Evite tocarse los ojos, la nariz y la boca.
- Quéédese en casa si está enfermo, excepto para buscar atención médica.
- Lávese las manos frecuentemente con agua y jabón por al menos 20 segundos.

 [cdc.gov/COVID19-es](https://www.cdc.gov/COVID19-es)

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# Some quick reminders

- Cows cannot catch COVID-19, therefore people will not give it to cows or catch it from cows.
  - The coronaviruses we manage in livestock are different than COVID-19
  - No evidence that companion animals, including pets, can spread COVID-19
- Currently there is no evidence that suggests that COVID-19 is transmitted through food consumption, according to the FDA, CDC, and European Food Safety Agency (EFSA).
  - Institute for Food Safety at Cornell: <https://instituteforfoodsafety.cornell.edu/coronavirus-covid-19/>
- Just because you think you will not get "that sick" if you catch the virus, remember the goal is to prevent the virus from spreading throughout the community which has vulnerable people in it.



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# Actively Manage Cleaning and Disinfection in the Workplace and Employee Housing

- Set up regular weekly and daily schedules with assigned responsibility
  - CDC guidance for cleaning homes: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/home/cleaning-disinfection.html>
  - [OSHA COVID-19 resources](#), including [guidance on preparing workplaces](#): <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/>
- Cornell employee housing resources
  - [CAWD Worker Housing page](#) ([agworkforce.cals.cornell.edu](http://agworkforce.cals.cornell.edu))
  - [Cornell Farmworker Program Housing Quality Checklist](#), includes household visuals to support good communications
- Provide cleaning supplies (cleaning solutions, buckets, mops, brushes, etc.)
  - (CDC list of approved antimicrobial cleaning products: [https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2020-03/documents/sars-cov-2-list\\_03-03-2020.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2020-03/documents/sars-cov-2-list_03-03-2020.pdf))
  - Review mixing directions, required contact times, and worker safety when handling



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# Sick Leave

- What is your sick leave policy?
  - All recommendations call for sick people to stay home! Toughing it out is a great way to turn an individual problem into a workforce disaster.
- Will employees feel financially or otherwise obligated to come to work even if they are sick?
- Instruct sick employees to stay home.
- CDC provides posters in [English](#) and [Spanish](#) covering symptoms of novel coronavirus.



# Governor Cuomo Executive Order – Mandatory work force reductions

- New York State has **not imposed any travel restrictions** and all industries essential to the food supply chain, including grocery stores, gas stations, retail food stores, food processors and related food businesses, etc., are **exempt** from the workforce reduction guidance
- Farms are definitely exempt as part of the food supply chain

[NYS Executive Order 202.6](#)



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# Governor Cuomo Executive Order – Mandatory work force reductions

- Requires non-essential businesses to implement work-from-home policies effective today, Mar 20, to reduce their in-office workforce by 75%, and a full 100% by the evening of Mar 22.
- [List of New York essential businesses](#)
- Just because food production is exempt, allied businesses are, and will continue, to work-from-home whenever possible and are taking additional precautions when farm visits are required

[NYS Executive Order 202.6](#)



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# New Federal Sick Leave & PFL Policies

U.S. House and Senate passed and President signed [Families First Coronavirus Response Act](#). The Act:

- Applies to businesses with <500 employees. Businesses with <50 employees may get exemptions if the Act will make nonviable.
- Will be in effect for the next 1 year.
- Provides 80 hours of sick leave: full pay for sick or quarantined employee, 2/3 pay if caring for another.
- Expands FMLA, up to 12 weeks of job-protected leave to care for the employee's child if the school or other provider is unavailable, at 2/3 pay.
- Employers can take tax credits against the social security tax to cover the benefits provided. If costs exceed SS then the government will send employer a check.
- [New York Farm Bureau summary](#)



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# New York State Sick Leave Policies

- Info from [NYFB summary document](#)
- Two parts: temporary provisions for COVID-19 and a permanent change to the law. Affects all NY employers.

## Temporary Provisions

- Employers of 99 or less must: notify employees, provide job protected leave, and provides docs to apply for PFL and DBL
- PFL and DBL available after sick leave exhausted

# Employees	Requirements
10 or fewer	Unpaid sick time during employee's quarantine or isolation Employers with >\$1Million net income must provide 5 days paid sick leave
11 to 99	5 day of paid sick leave
100 or more	14 days of paid sick leave

## Permanent Provisions

- Effective Jan 1, 2021
- Sick leave accrues 1 hour/30 hours worked

# Employees	Requirements
5 or fewer	Must provide up to 40 hours of unpaid sick. Employers with >\$1Million net income must provide 40 hours of paid sick leave
11 to 99	5 days of paid sick leave
100 or more	14 days of paid sick leave



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# Unemployment

- For employees of businesses who lose their job through no fault of their own.
  - May include those who are quarantined or sick or directed not to work because of COVID-19
  - Are not being paid by their employer because the work can't be done remotely
  - If the employer temporarily or permanently closes due to no business
- [New York waived](#) the normal 7-day waiting period, out of work employees can now apply for benefits immediately



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# Prevention and Social Distancing



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# Preventing spread among farm workers

- Be sure employees understand the seriousness of this disease: communicate often and provide Spanish-language information
- Minimize face-to-face meetings to only what is business critical
  - Postpone staff meetings
  - Minimize work shift overlaps
- Industry nutritionists, advisors, consultants, suppliers, and extension personnel are all instituting additional precautions and travel restrictions
- Make use of teleconference and web conferencing services
- Farm Visit Log: record names (and contact info if you do not have it already) of those who visit the farm. Indicate if they entered the facility and/or interacted with farm employees or if they only delivered/picked up items and did not enter the facility or interact with farm employees. This will enable future communication if needed



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# Milk Hauling

- To ensure regular milk pick-ups, plants are instituting additional safety measures

*DFA: "We are adamantly following the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines across our locations to ensure a healthy workforce and have business continuity plans in place to handle a variety of scenarios such as supply chain interruption and workplace shortages to name a few. Additional precautions are being taken while collecting milk at member farms and delivering to processing facilities, including ensuring only essential personnel are visiting farms and processing facilities, and limiting hauler access to essential areas of farms and plants only."*



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# Milk Hauling

- Minimize employee contact with your milk haulers
- Include surfaces handled by the hauler in your additional sanitation procedures
- Make disposable gloves readily available if possible
- Highly trafficked sinks, like the milk house, will run out of soap and towels more frequently, keep them stocked



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# Farm Deliveries

- Feed and other supply companies, and delivery services are all instituting additional precautions for their employees
- Minimize delivery personnel access to facilities
  - Dedicate a drop off location
  - Waive requirements for signature upon delivery
  - Deliveries could be left outside
    - Temporary drop-off site protected from the weather
    - Protection for items that should not freeze and cooling for items that need to be kept cold
- WHO and CDC have stated that the likelihood of catching the COVID-19 virus by touching cardboard or other shipping containers is low ([WHO COVID-19 FAQ](#))



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# Dairy Supplies

- Medical supplies

*AmerisourceBergen (MWI): "Our sourcing teams continue to monitor ordering activity and inventory levels and create safeguards on products in high demand to ensure stable availability...In terms of the global pharmaceutical supply chain, we have been notified of a small number of drug shortages due to COVID-19, and all impacted products have therapeutic alternatives available."*

- Have contingency plans should specific supplies come into short supply



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# Sale Barns

- Livestock sale barns remain open and operational

*Empire Livestock Marketing: "As the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak continues to spread across the United States, Empire Livestock Marketing will continue to conduct regular sales at all market facilities; however, we have implemented changes to benefit the health and welfare of our customers and employees."*

- Attendance should be limited to registered buyers and employees
- Check your local sale barn for their specific guidance



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# Semen Delivery & AI Technicians

- Stepped up PPE and personal distancing policies for deliveries and arm service have been instituted
- Communicate semen of product needs prior to their arrival
- Some suggesting advanced semen ordering just in case supply is disrupted in the future (may offer delayed billing for advanced orders)
- Farm personnel trained to AI can fill in as needed



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# DHIA Services

- Testing and lab services will continue

*DairyOne: "In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have implemented a wide range of measures that will minimize risk to our staff and keep our business operating at the highest level possible."*

- Field staff are continuing to service farm customers and are taking precautions as noted by the CDC
- Limiting lab access to essential personnel
- Samples should be left in the reception area



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# Veterinary Services

- Large Animal Veterinarians are included as businesses essential to supply the food chain and exempt from the work force reduction EO 202.6 falling under Essential Health Care Operations ([complete list](#))
- May need to operate with reduced service and/or support staff due to their own health needs
- Consider postponing non-time critical services
- Remote communication for assistance if practical



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# AHDC & QMPS

- Veterinary diagnostic laboratory is open
- Quality Milk Production Services continuing farm services with addition safety precautions
  - Refer to your regional lab for specific guidance
- Any future service disruption will be posted on the [AHDC website](#)



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# On Farm Communications

- Group text
- Free three-way calling (Apple & Android phones)
- Free conference call lines (ex. Go To Meeting)
- White boards and other written forms – avoid common markers/pens
- Cloud stored documents that can be updated in real time (Ex. Google Docs)
- Private Facebook Groups, WhatsApp, etc.



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# What To Do With Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19 Cases



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# If You Have Reason to Suspect COVID-19

- In NY, your [local health department](https://www.nyscho.org/directory/) is your community contact for COVID-19 concerns. (<https://www.nyscho.org/directory/>)
- CDC: [What to Do If You Are Sick](#)
  - Stay home, stay in touch with your doctor, stay away from others
- Remember to communicate health issues on the farm with anyone still coming to the farm



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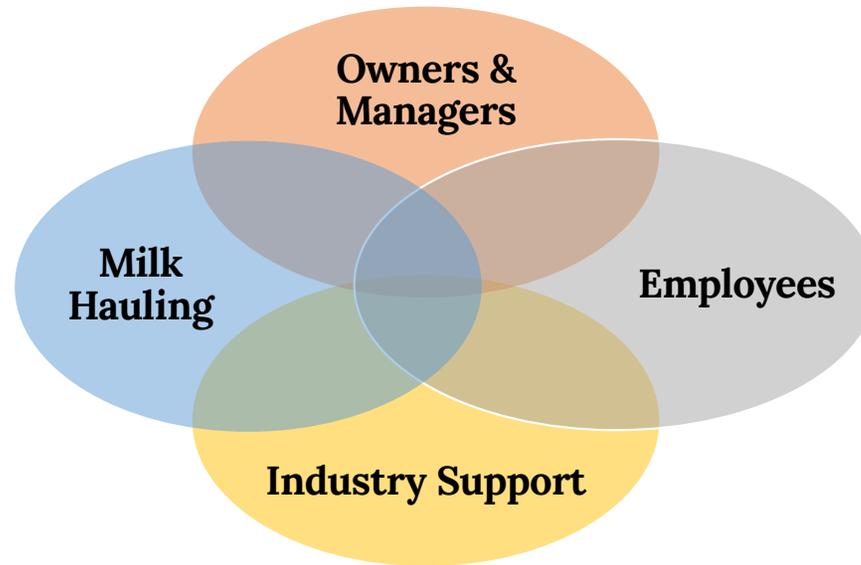


# Dealing With Sick Employees

- What if an employee arrives to work sick?
  - [CDC recommends](#) to separate sick employees and send home immediately.
  - [FisherPhillips](#) law firms advises this is not a violation of the ADA.
- What if the employee lives in farm-provided housing?
  - Consider the possible impact on other employees in the housing.
  - What alternatives exist? How can the employee be isolated? How will the employee receive needed food and care?
- [CDC guidance](#) for caring for someone at home
  - Monitor for worsening symptoms
  - Prevent the spread of germs
  - Provide symptom treatment
  - When to end home isolation



# Managing in a Disease-altered Business Environment



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# Managing with reduced labor force

- Cross training for critical jobs
- Farm chore triage
  - Example

Must continue on current schedule and/or capacity

- Feed delivery
- Milking
- Manure management
- Hoof Trimming

Continue but on a reduced schedule and/or capacity

- Scheduled maintenance\*
- Repro programs?
- 3x to 2x Milking?

Discontinue until practical to start again or needs change

- Team meetings
- Farm tours
- Sales visits

\*that will not lead to an increase in animal health problems, significant impact on herd performance, or significant damage to equipment or facilities



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# What if you or key managers become ill or need to self quarantine?

- Follow [CDC guidelines](#)
- Rely 100% on remote communications
- Assign temporary management responsibilities to next level employees
- Consider an outside manager who could step in if you were too sick to work or even hospitalized



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# CDC Recommendations for Supporting Yourself

- Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including social media. Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting.
- Take care of your body. Take deep breaths, stretch, or meditate. Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, get plenty of sleep, and avoid alcohol and drugs.
- Make time to unwind. Try to do some other activities you enjoy.
- Connect with others. Talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling.
- **Call your healthcare provider if stress gets in the way of your daily activities for several days in a row.**



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# Additional Resources

- [Cornell University Institute for Food Safety](#)
- [New York Extension Disaster Education Network](#)
- [NMPF Dairy Farmer Handbook on Coronavirus](#)
- Alltech Resources (<https://www.alltech.com/dairy-on-farm-support>)
  - What You Need to Know About Coronavirus On Your Dairy: [English](#), [Spanish](#)
  - Visitor Screening Form: [English](#), [Spanish](#)



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# Thanks and Take Care

## Questions?



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