



THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT LIVESTOCK AUCTIONS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Maintaining the integrity of the agri-food supply chain during an emergency is essential for all Canadians. In part, the Government of Ontario deemed the following as essential services: Businesses that support the food or agricultural products supply chains and the health and safety of food, animals and plants. To learn more about how the Government Ontario is working to stop the spread of COVID-19, please visit their [webpage](#). For further information about the Government of Canada's response to COVID-19 as it pertains to the agriculture and agri-food sector, please visit their [webpage](#).

FIVE-PERSON LIMIT EXEMPTION

On March 28, 2020, the Government of Ontario issued a ban on gatherings over five people. As confirmed by the Minister of agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, the five-person limit does not apply to livestock auctions as they are deemed an essential service. However, livestock auctions have been advised to implement measures to limit attendance and personal contact in order to minimize the risk and spread of infection and to protect staff, buyers, sellers and transporters.

LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH MEASURES

Local public health units do have the autonomy to implement enhanced measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Livestock auctions should post a document outlining the steps taken to limit attendance and person-to-person contact inside the auction facilities. Livestock auction staff should also provide this document to any public health authority or local law enforcement agent if they visit the operation.

ADDITIONAL MEASURES

Before attending a livestock auction, check the facility's website or call the facility for changes in policies or procedures and restrictions to usual business. Depending on the facility, varying limits are in place for the number of attendees allowed at the sale at one time.





RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PURCHASING CATTLE OR ATTENDING A SALE

The Livestock Auction Markets Association, Canadian Cattlemen's Association, and the Canadian Beef Breed Council have released recommendations for those hosting cattle sales or those purchasing cattle during the COVID-19 pandemic.

When hosting cattle sales, it is recommended that:

- The cattle be made available for viewing prior to the sale;
- The bidding be moved to online or phone platforms where available;
- The public be restricted from access;
- The number of handwashing locations be increased; and
- The space required for social distancing be maintained.

It is recommended that you only attend a cattle sale if:

- You are seriously considering a purchase;
- You are feeling well;
- You have not travelled in the past 14 days; and
- You can maintain the required physical/social distance.



Beef Farmers of Ontario will continue to monitor the COVID-19 situation and provide necessary updates to our grassroots members. This document will continuously be updated as information becomes available. We encourage you to visit the Government of Canada, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, and the Ontario Federation of Agriculture websites for other pertinent industry information and updates as they relate to the COVID-19 situation in Ontario. If you have further questions, please reach out to a BFO staff member.

Lastest update - April 2, 2020