



Government of Canada-Information updates related to Covid-19

As of April 3rd, 2020

We would like to share with you a few updates related to COVID-19 that you may find of interest. Please do not hesitate to share this information with your networks.

1) [Temporary Wage Subsidy](#) for employers is a three-month measure that will allow eligible employers to reduce the amount of payroll deductions required to be remitted to the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA). The subsidy is equal to 10% of the remuneration you pay from March 18, 2020 to June 19, 2020, up to \$1,375 for each eligible employee and to a maximum of \$25,000 total per employer. You can find more information on the Temporary Wage Subsidy on [Canada Revenue Agency's website](#).

2) [Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy](#) will cover 75 per cent of salaries for qualifying businesses, for up to 3 months, retroactive to March 15, 2020. Employers of all sizes and across all sectors of the economy will be eligible with the exception of public sector entities. Organizations that do not qualify for the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy may qualify for the Temporary Wage Subsidy of 10 per cent of remuneration. You can find more information on the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy on the [News Release](#) and the [Backgrounder](#).

You may also note the below new additions to the Information to Industry AAFC webpage.

- Reference and link to [Public Safety Canada's guidance on essential services and functions in Canada](#) during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- New Qs&As on [Temporary Foreign Workers](#) outlining responsibilities and Government of Canada resources.
- [Local Food Infrastructure Fund](#) announcement.
- Reference and link to [CFIA's new guidance documentation](#) aimed at the meat processing sector.
- New link under Trade infrastructure to include [24/7 Border Information Service line](#).

As of April 6th, 2020

Please see the following links, outlining additional guidance from Employment and Social Development for employers of Temporary Foreign workers (TFWs).

First, the Temporary Foreign Worker Program has now posted new FAQs online. These FAQs provide new and updated guidance to employers regarding the payment of wages during the 14-day self isolation period, and should be used by employers and stakeholders to complement the Guidance to Employers shared with you last week.

EN: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/foreign-workers/employer-compliance/covid-faq.html>

FR: <https://www.canada.ca/fr/emploi-developpement-social/services/travailleurs-etrangers/conformite-employeurs/leccovid-faq.html>

Important note to SAWP employers: *The FAQ linked above notes clearly that Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program employers must pay their workers 30 hours a week for each of the two-weeks of mandatory self-isolation upon TFW arrival. This is a change from previous guidance, which merely stated that employers must adhere to the terms of their contracts.*

Second, a joint letter from the Honourable Patty Hajdu, Minister of Health, and the Honourable Carla Qualtrough, Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, outlining the Government of Canada's expectations of employers seeking to bring in temporary foreign workers to Canada.

EN: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/notices/minister-letter-foreign-workers.html>

FR: <https://www.canada.ca/fr/emploi-developpement-social/ministere/avis/lettre-ministres-travailleurs-etrangers.html>

Additional information on new measures under the Temporary Foreign Worker Program can also be found at:

EN: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/notices/coronavirus.html>

FR: <https://www.canada.ca/fr/emploi-developpement-social/ministere/avis/coronavirus.html>

Thank you for your continued cooperation and please continue to check the AAFC website for updates.

As of April 9th, 2020

1. Canada Emergency Business Account

The new Canada Emergency Business Account will provide interest-free loans of up to \$40,000 to small businesses and not-for-profits, to help cover their operating costs during a period where their revenues have been temporarily reduced. Through [EDC](#), the program will provide Canadian financial institutions with additional funding to support micro enterprises. This program will roll out in mid-April, and **interested businesses should work with their current financial institutions.**

To qualify, interested businesses will need to demonstrate that they paid between \$50,000 to \$1 million in total payroll in 2019. Repaying the balance of the loan on or before December 31, 2022 will result in loan forgiveness of 25 percent (up to \$10,000). The objective of this program is to support covering non-deferrable costs of very small business, such as payroll, rent, insurance and utilities.

This tool will help farmers and food processors access the capital they need, at a zero-per-cent interest rate. This will help them cover extra costs over the next number of months if their revenues are temporarily reduced due to the COVID 19 situation.

2. Temporary Foreign Workers

We would like to remind you that the Temporary Foreign Worker Program has now posted new [FAQs](#) online. These FAQs provide new and updated guidance to employers regarding the payment of wages during the 14-day self isolation period, and should be used by employers and stakeholders to complement the Guidance to Employers that we previously shared with you.

In addition, the [joint letter](#) from the Honourable Patty Hajdu, Minister of Health, and the Honourable Carla Qualtrough, Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, outlines the Government of Canada's expectations of employers seeking to bring in temporary foreign workers to Canada.

3. Additional Details on the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy

The Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, announced changes to the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy. This subsidy would now be available to eligible employers that see a drop of at least 15 per cent of their revenue in March 2020 and 30 per cent for the following months (see Eligible Periods). In applying for the subsidy, employers would be required to attest to the decline in revenue.

The Government of Canada also announced that all employers would be allowed to calculate their change in revenue using an alternative benchmark to determine their eligibility. For more information, please click [here](#).

4. Temporary Changes to the Canada Summer Jobs Program

On April 8, the Prime Minister announced temporary changes to the [Canada Summer Jobs program](#) that will help employers hire young Canadians aged between 15 and 30 years during the summer. Employers can receive up to 100 per cent of the provincial or territorial minimum hourly wage for each employee. For more information, please contact your Member of Parliament.

5. Letter of Employment Confirmation – Essential transportation worker

Following the Government of Canada measures that have been put in place for COVID-19, as well as those of the municipal and provincial legislatures, Transport Canada has worked with industry to identify through a common letter those employed in the commercial motor vehicle and automotive industry in a critical service capacity, as set out in the Government of Canada's [Guidance](#) on Essential Services and Functions in Canada During the COVID-19 Pandemic. To access the letter's template, please click [here](#).

6. Air Freight

Air Canada posted on their [website](#) that Air Canada Cargo will now accept bookings or live animal shipments, with the exclusion of cats and dogs.

7. CFIA's temporary suspension of certain labelling requirements for foodservice products due to COVID-19

The CFIA has temporarily suspended certain labelling requirements for foodservice products that have no impact on food safety during the COVID-19 pandemic. As outlined in the [notice to industry](#), under specific conditions, food businesses may:

- sell food products that are made in Canada and intended for foodservice (such as hotels, restaurants and institutions) to consumers through retail if certain specific labelling information is included
- re-import food products made, packaged and labelled in Canada for foodservice use that are labelled according to U.S. labelling requirements to sell to Canadian foodservice without label changes

Flexibility is also provided for labelling format, language requirements and standard container size requirements. This temporary measure aims to ease potential food shortages in the Canadian retail sector, prevent food waste, and support Canada's economy without compromising food safety.

8. Fertilizer Canada's Template for Essential Services Letter

As you know, Public Safety Canada's [Guidance](#) on Essential Services and Functions in Canada During the COVID-19 Pandemic identifies agriculture and agri-food as an essential sector to facilitate the movement of essential workers within and between jurisdictions. Fertilizer Canada kindly agreed to share their essential services [letter](#), which you may want to use as a template.

9. Updates – International Trading Partners

- **United States:**

We continue to monitor issues arising related to truckers crossing the Canada-U.S. border.

The US Customs and Border Protection office at the NY Buffalo/Lewiston bridge will be reducing their agriculture staffing between midnight to 8 am, but the Peace bridge will remain open.

As of Monday, April 6, 2020, as a result of slowdowns in cross-border traffic, the United States Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) will be reducing hours or closing several port of entries (POEs) in Vermont (reduced hours: Moses Line, North Troy, West Berkshire; closed: Canaan, Derby Rte. 5 and Alburgh Springs). All of these POEs will still have an officer on staff 24/7 to allow for emergency vehicles and essential personnel to cross. Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) has indicated that they are not planning any closures on the Canadian side yet.

Regarding getting physical signatures on the bill of lading, CBSA noted that shipments normally use electronic customs entry and the driver is not required to show the signed bill of lading. If you have any issues related to this, please email the [Roundtable account](#) as soon as possible, with as many details as possible.

- **Mexico:**

Due to the Mexican government's shutdown, Mexico's public health agency, COFERPRIS, is prioritizing import permits for medical supplies to address the COVID-19 emergency, between now and April 30, 2020. Impacted products from this change are limited to fish/seafood products, milk/dairy products, prepared fruit products/jams, and nutritional supplements.

The Mexican National Chamber of Milk Processors (CANILEC) has since clarified that while import permits will continue to be issued, it cannot guarantee that the five business days service standard will be met. As such, CANILEC recommends that permits are requested in advance of shipments arriving at the border and food shipments should be also be flagged as essential.

Thank you for your continued cooperation and please continue to consult regularly the [AAFC website](#) for updates. Please note that new Q&As have been posted on our website under a new section titled 'Resources and recommendations for the agriculture and agri-food sector'.