



**March 31st, 2020**



Hello everyone,

I am sending you this note so as to keep you informed as to what CFA is doing to help minimize the impact on farmers of this quickly evolving COVID-19 pandemic. Please visit [CFA's COVID-19 Resource Page](#) which is frequently updated with information relevant to farmers.

CFA's main priority right now is working to avoid any kind of food security issues that could arise from the containment measures put in place by Canada and countries around the world. To that end, we are lobbying to have the *entire* Agri-Food system, from farm to processing to retail, deemed an **essential service** nationwide. Every link in the Agri-Food chain needs to continue to function to provide food to Canadians across the country. Our weekly surveys have shown us that many farmers are worried not only about their own operations, but also what happens if their local processors shut down. We hear you, and we are working on these issues.

We have also been lobbying to get Temporary Foreign Workers onto Canadian farms ASAP. While we have had success in getting these important workers approved to enter the country, we are still in talks with the Government to get details and logistics worked out in terms of new processes and protocols that need to be undertaken. Obviously, things will be different from previous years. For example, TFWs will need to be isolated for 14 days on arrival, and extra protective precautions will need to be taken during the workterm. Our staff, executive and board have all been working determinedly to minimize the financial burdens of these new processes for farmers. We are also working to develop clear, effective communication so that every farmer will know exactly what is expected of them and their workers.

Another potential source of agriculture labour is domestic workers, many of whom have been displaced from their usual jobs. Unemployment rates are expected to reach almost 15%. Many Canadians will be looking for work, and CFA is working with government to help launch a campaign to incentivise Canadians to seek work in agriculture. It is early days in this process, and we hope to be able to share more details with you on this soon. The pandemic has certainly changed the pace at which government is responding to issues.

We know these are difficult and stressful times. CFA is currently focusing all our resources on this, striving to ensure all Canadian farmers get through this pandemic with minimal impact. We urge you to continue to take part in our weekly surveys, found on the [front page of our website every week](#). These surveys are integral to making sure we are aware of any issues, current or upcoming, related to COVID-19.

I will continue to send an update like this each week in an effort to keep you up to speed on new developments.

Take care and stay well,  
Mary Robinson, CFA President

