
MARCH 2020 DAIRY NEWSLETTER

COVID-19 Recommendations

As the world around us is altered by the recent COVID-19 pandemic, the seemingly simple times of only a few weeks past seem like an eternity ago. Times have changed drastically and recommendations on how to contain the spread of this novel coronavirus continue to evolve daily. Despite the ever-changing recommendations from public health officials, the Ontario dairy industry's commitment to producing safe and wholesome dairy products remains steadfast. We, at the Kirkton Vet Clinic, stand with you through these difficult times and embrace the challenge of producing safe, nutritious food for a consumer that too often has found empty shelves at their local grocery store.

This newsletter will outline the clinic's current protocols to limit the spread of COVID-19 as well as what you can do as a producer to protect yourself and your employees.

Current COVID-19 Protocols at KVC

- Before a farm visit, we will be checking health and travel history of all farm staff
 - If a client has travelled, is experiencing symptoms, or is a high-risk individual we ask that they are not present at the farm visit
 - In these circumstances we ask that you have low risk help available to assist
- During the visit we will wear gloves and clean coveralls
- We will wash our hands routinely throughout the day and after each farm visit
- Social Distancing of >6 ft will be observed at all times
 - If social distancing is not possible for a procedure, then one person will assist and all options for reducing risk will be considered
- Vets are limiting access to the clinic, so it is critical you place drug orders early and through KVC staff so they can prepare them
- Clinic doors are locked at all times, if you wish to pick up medicines please call us in advance so we can prepare them and set them outside for you
- Clinic hours have also been adjusted so do not assume we are open, especially on Saturdays
 - Please call ahead so we can best serve you
- Safeguarding human health is a priority and we will work together to limit exposure of both producers and vets

On Farm COVID-19 Recommendations for Producers and Employees

- Ensure staff know they are not expected to report to work if they are exhibiting any symptoms or if they have travelled in the past 14 days
- Frequently wash hands for 20 seconds and consider wearing gloves
 - Remember gloves are only effective if they do not get contaminated, so refrain from touching face and change gloves regularly
- Routinely disinfect all surfaces that are frequently touched
 - Door handles, gates, bulk tank, lunch room tables, refrigerator handles, steering wheels, cupboards, computers, etc
- Stock up with products that are routinely used on your farm
 - Medicines, gloves, cleaning supplies, off-farm feed supplements, etc
 - It should not be assumed all products will be continuously available throughout the pandemic duration
- Consider splitting your farm's workforce into 2 teams with alternating schedules so if someone becomes COVID positive the opposite team is able to continue working
 - Teams must be kept entirely separate
 - Keep in mind, there is a 14-day waiting period (retroactively from the day of split) to where public health would consider the teams separate, so consider splitting as soon as possible
- Discuss farm protocols and expectations with staff; develop an open dialogue of ways to keep everyone safe

Disclaimer: This information was based on available advice as of April 3, 2020. Please continue to check official Government, Public Health and DFO Guidelines.

