



COVID-19 – Peer Support Group Meeting

March 24 & 26, 2020

Opening Remarks & Summary of Last Call

- Peer groups concerns are being sent to Provincial and Federal Government.
- Meat & Poultry Ontario has all hands on deck finding answers to groups concerns.
- MPO working daily with OMAFRA office and addressing concerns.
- MPO Landing Page available to share best practices – will be updated daily with most recent resources and information.
- Team always available for questions.

Challenges

- Uncertainty with staff morale and labour shortages.
- Markets (supply, pricing, volume)
- Availability of inspection services (government has provided funding for inspector training)
- Access to PPE & sanitization supply.
- Farm groups are concerns with livestock flow.
- Safety, social distancing at work, what are the best practices to reduce sickness in workplace.
- Livestock supply and pricing becoming a concern.
- Easter supply – how to navigate and redirect supply.

Q & A

Q) What do I do if someone in my plant becomes sick?

A) In a conversation with the Associate Medical Officer, MPO was told that the **plant does not have to close**. Send employee home and sanitize their workstation well. Determine which other employees have been in close contact and assess risk. Employee will be interviewed by public health.

Q) What are the best practices to prevent staff from becoming sick?

- A) Additional masks and PPE.
- B) Encouraging social distancing, hand washing and not touching face.
- C) Change lunch and break schedules to reduce number of workers in break room at same time.
- D) Extra cleaning of common areas and between each shift change.
- E) Screen employees for illness prior to entering work. Encourage to stay home if feeling ill.



Q) What are others doing to keep staff morale up?

- A) Communicate, walk the floor to let team know the important role they play during the crisis.
- B) Bonus pay or wage increase during crisis.
- C) Provide lunches & coffee.
- D) Covering private transportation costs for those who normally use public transit.

Q) What support Programs Available for Employees and Business? (MentorWorks)

- A) **How to manage labour with reduced business requirement, what are our options?**
 - a. **Layoff and file for EI** (Has ROE codes to use).
 - b. **Workshare program** (working with federal on applications and to prioritize – 30 day wait will be eliminated). Apply now to receive funds before May.
 - c. **Temporary wage subsidy** – up to \$25k subsidy on payroll deductions. Immediate relief can be implemented with payroll.
- B) **Financial Planning - How to afford projects or equipment down the road when this crisis is over.**
 - a. Some work being done around cash flow contingency plans. BDC has great resources to manage finances over next quarters.