



## COVID-19 – Peer Support Group Meeting Notes

March 31 & April 2, 2020 – 3:30 PM

### Summary and Update From Last Call

Franco Naccarato, Executive Director, Meat & Poultry Ontario

**MASKS & PPE** – 3M putting in a process to help manufacturers get access. Work with existing rep and put in a PO, mention that you are in meat processing industry.

> Follow up with Franco and Derek on ordering process.

**INSPECTORS** – OMAFRA hearing our concerns but no action has been taken to date.

> Please let MPO know if you have any issues with inspectors refusing to be at plant.

**EMPLOYEES/COVID** – OMAFRA recommending to work with public health proactively (before having a positive test) and share what you're doing with business to prevent spread.

> Work proactively with your local health unit and develop documentation/protocols.

**PRICE INCREASES** – Government is aware and implementing system for price gouging. Things are still high but seem to be going back down.

> Website to report gouging: <https://www.ontario.ca/form/report-price-gouging-related-covid-19>

**EASTER STRATEGIES** – Converting to ready to eat products, and seems to be going quickly.

> MPO to work with commodity partners on ready to eat production.

**TECHNICAL BULLETINS & TIP SHEETS** – MPO working on templates and resource documents and technical bulletin. Please share best practices with Daphne to add to our resources.

> These will be shared on our website at <https://www.meatpoultryon.ca/covid-19-update/>

### New Concerns

- Has anyone had a positive employee – please share experience.
- Being shorted on products.
- Supply fluctuations – pork shortages.

### Guest Speakers

1. Cher Mereweather, President & CEO, Provision Coalition  
**7 Urgent Questions for Food & Beverage Manufacturers Dealing with COVID-19**  
[Watch Online](#)



2. Alex Barlow, Business Development Executive, Mentor Works Canada  
**Assistance Programs for Employees and Businesses**  
[Watch Online](#)
3. Justin Coffey & Clinton Buttar, Farm Credit Canada  
**Cash Flow Management for Businesses & Overview of Support Programs**  
[Watch Online](#)

## Q & A Roundtable

**Government programs** – lots of questions around what's available and how to apply.

- 10% program application is available
- 75% must have 30% reduction in revenue.
- > MPO to post links to most up to date programs on website.

**Business Interruption Insurance** – If insurance is not qualified, push back. This is very specific to your policy.

**Veal backups** – numbers being reduced and gaps filled. Farmers numbers are getting backed down and prices are dropping. MPO to host joint call with commodity groups.

**Easter lambs** – Lack of orders. Need strategy to move product.

**Concerns about training of new inspectors** - Social distancing spacing not being met and the government is not following their own direction.

- > Franco will bring up with OMAFRA.

**Carpooling fine rumour**–Proactively some processors are providing letters for carpoolers to carry saying they are essential service worker. Franco to follow up with Minister.

## Best Practices Shared

### **SOCIAL DISTANCING ON THE LINE AND IN PLANTS:**

- Separating shifts completely
- 15 minute buffer between shifts
- Changing entry points and tracking/documenting all traffic in and out.
- Renting trailers and tents for breaks and eating areas
- Sub groups of staff members who work together to keep spread isolated

### **PREVENTING SPREAD AND PREPARING FOR ILLNESS:**



- Increased cleaning and keeping schedule of cleaning practice
- HR documenting absences and following up with employees. (pre and post COVID testing).
- Staff members to keep contact logs daily to keep track of who they've been in close contact with during shift.
- Shields for employees to help with containment especially in areas where social distancing is not possible.
- Develop protocols for symptom awareness and if positive test (working with public health unit to determine practices)
- Documentation is important. Document cleaning practices, social distancing, schedule, who employees been in contact with.
- Taking temperature checks and documenting everyone in and out of facility.
- Shields for employees
- Placing plexi glass between working spaces on the line, hung from ceiling to help with containment especially in areas where social distancing is not possible.

#### **EMPLOYEE MORALE:**

- Temporary shift premiums and bonuses (Hero premium)
- Daily meeting with team to go over their concerns and mental health, how to prevent spread.

#### **RETAIL STORE PROCEDURES:**

- Spacing and changing flow
- Allowing small amount of customers in store at same time (no families)
- Signage and hand sanitizer on entry

#### **ECOMMERCE:**

- Many retailers have moved online ordering. Freezer packs are popular item.
  - Shopify and Woo Commerce
  - Instacart
  - Local line
- MPO to look further into solutions to speak about during future call.