

NFF COVID-19 UPDATE

1 April 2020

Welcome to today's edition of the NFF COVID-19 update, collating recent updates and information relevant to the agrifood supply chain.

In addition to this regular brief, we are also maintaining pages on FarmHub with information relevant to farm businesses. Follow the links below to view those pages.

FarmHub COVID-19 Resources

[Key Information and FAQs](#)

[Border Control Information](#)

[Assistance and Support](#)

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\$110 MILLION RELEASED TO SUPPORT AGRICULTURAL AIR FREIGHT

The Federal Government is allocating \$110 million from the \$1 billion COVID-19 Relief and Recovery Fund to support air freight of high value agricultural products.

Under this initiative, the Government will coordinate flights from Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and Perth for deliveries to China, Japan, Hong Kong, Singapore and the UAE.

Austrade is coordinating the initiative with details still to be finalised. You can access a media release and fact sheet with available details [here](#).

The NFF will participate in a teleconference on Thursday (time TBC) and will provide a further update following that call.

NEW BORDER CONTROL MEASURES

Western Australia

Hard border closures flagged by the WA Premier to come into effect in the next few days (date yet to be confirmed, expected 1-4). Zonal closures in force as of 1 April. Hard border closures would likely last for a month and exemptions would be allowed for freight, essential work and compassionate grounds. NT has flagged issues entering the through the WA border which may be resolved but waiting for confirmation that the agreement is reflected in practice.

Queensland

Hard border closures to come into effect on 3 April 2020. Only permit holders will be allowed into the State and exemptions continue for freight, essential work and compassionate grounds. Border pass paperwork is available here: <https://www.qld.gov.au/border-pass>.

The above information has been updated on the [Border Control Information page on FarmHub](#).

PRIORITISING FOOD SUPPLY IN RURAL/REMOTE AREAS

NFF has raised concerns regarding product limits at rural supermarkets for farm businesses. We are working with the government on options for resolving the problem which include:

- Blanket exemptions for certain businesses or individuals (e.g. those greater than x distance from store, verified by ID with address or ABN)
- An application process for bulk purchases for certain businesses or individuals (e.g. those greater than x distance from store, verified by ID with address or ABN)
- Other mechanisms to redirect additional supplies to rural/remote areas or priorities rural/remote deliveries

The NFF is in regular communication with the major supermarkets on this issue and both Coles and Woolworths are actively exploring improvements while balancing overall supply chain issues.

MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS

Key Messages

The NFF encourages stakeholders to align where possible with the cross-industry messaging below.

- Australia is one of the most food secure countries in the world, exporting 75% of what we produce.
- The impact of COVID-19 on Australian agriculture is an evolving situation, but it's largely business as usual for farmers and the food supply chain.

- Panic buying by consumers is not necessary, and it's not helpful. There is plenty of food to go around. We just need to shop sensibly.
- The NFF is in ongoing contact with all levels of government, and helping to coordinate the flow of information to and from industry.
- It is critical that all levels of Government recognise agriculture as an essential service, and not restrict the flow of inputs or raw products through the supply chain.

COMMODITY BRIEFS

RDCs and industry associations are releasing tailored information on COVID19 developments relevant to specific commodities. Links to these are below. Please let us know of others that can be added.

- [Dairy Australia](#)
- [Red Meat Advisory Council](#)
- [Wool Industry – Shearing Operations: Protocols in response to COVID19 – Operations Document](#)

KEY CONTACTS AND CONSULTATION FORUMS

NFF is participating in the COVID19 forums listed below. Please forward any questions you would like us to raise in these forums to the following staff:

- Overall coordination: Tony Mahar – (tmahar@nff.org.au)
- Labour and workplace issues: Ben Rogers (brogers@nff.org.au)
- Border Controls: Warwick Ragg (wragg@nff.org.au)
- Stimulus packages and trade: Pru Gordon (pgordon@nff.org.au)
- Farm inputs: Adrienne Ryan (aryan@nff.org.au)
- FarmHub: Heidi Reid (hereid@nff.org.au)
- Communications and media: Laureta Wallace (lwallace@nff.org.au) or Charlie Thomas (cthomas@nff.org.au)

Forum	Convener	Time/day
NFF/DAWE Coronavirus Teleconference	NFF	Friday, 3.30 - 4.00 pm <i>Note change of day for this week.</i>
NFF Partner Briefing	NFF	Friday, 4.30 – 5.00 pm <i>Note change of day for this week.</i>
Business Liaison Group (other attendees are ACCI, BCA, AIG ABA, and COSBA)	The Prime Minister and Treasurer	Tuesday, 31 March 2020
Food and Grocery Sector Group	Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment	Mondays 10.30-11.30am

The Agriculture Ministers' Forum (AGMIN)	Council of Australian Governments	Friday, 3 April 2020
Labour Forum	Attorney General's Department	
Coronavirus – Industry Consultation	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade	Wednesdays, 2.00 - 3.00pm
Coronavirus – Industry Consultation	Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment	Next TBC
Industry communications and media teleconference	NFF	Thursdays, 4 - 5pm