

# NFF COVID-19 UPDATE

**6 April 2020**

Welcome to the NFF COVID-19 update, collating recent updates and information relevant to the agrifood supply chain.

**We strongly encourage you to forward this brief through your network.**

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](#)

[NFF Workplace Guide](#)

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## NEW DETAILS ON AG VISA EXTENSIONS

Working Holiday Makers whose visas expire in the next 6 months will be allowed an additional (presumably 1 year) visa to work in food production, provide they self-isolate for 14 days before work commences and have accommodation which observes social isolation requirements. The Federal Government is working through some of the finer details with state and territory governments and we will update in due course.

Workers under the Seasonal Work Program and Pacific Labour Scheme can extend their visas for up to 12 months. There's little detail at this point, although the Department has confirmed that, with departmental approval, workers will be able to move between approved employers to follow the work. Details such as who will pay for travel and accommodation during isolation are still being worked through.

Learn more here:

- [Coronavirus and temporary visa holders](#)

- [Supporting the agriculture workforce during COVID-19](#)

## FARM INPUT SUPPLY – RESELLER VIEW

GrainGrowers has collated responses from major resellers to queries and concerns raised by growers around chemical, fertiliser and farm input availability and contingency plans. The collated responses are available [here](#), and point to strong demand and some tightness in supply due to the timing and size of the winter crop planting.

## CAUTION URGED AFTER REPORTS THAT IVERMECTIN EFFECTIVE AGAINST COVID-19

A study that found anti-parasitic drug ivermectin stopped COVID-19 growing in cell culture was widely [reported](#) over the weekend. This has led to concerns that members of the public may purchase ivermectin products intended for animals and attempt to self-administer, which could have serious health implications. Nutrien has put an alert out to all merchandise stores on how to respond to out of the ordinary enquiries about ivermectin products.

## NSW FREE TAFE COURSES

In her daily address, NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian, today announced 21 free short TAFE courses, most with a small business focus. Get further details [here](#).

## WA BORDER CLOSURE NOW IN FORCE

- [Hard border closure](#) in effect as of Sunday 5 April 2020 — persons will be unable to enter WA unless an exemption is granted.
- Under [the Quarantine \(Closing the Border\) Directions](#), exemptions include:
- Transport, freight and logistics
- Specialist skills not available in Western Australia. This includes a person who is employed or engaged in agriculture, food production or primary industry.
- FIFO workers are also exempt but must self-isolate for 14 days. The full list of exemptions is available [here](#).
- Hard border closure would likely last at least a month.
- Anyone seeking an exemption must complete the following [Exemption Application form](#) prior to travel and submit it by emailing the form to [WAEntryRequest@police.wa.gov.au](mailto:WAEntryRequest@police.wa.gov.au)
- Exemptions must be granted by WA Police prior to travel.
- Persons must carry an exemption form and proof of its submission when travelling.

Further information on border closures, including links to relevant paperwork can be found at [FarmHub](#).

## 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.

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

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

Forum	Convener	Time/day
NFF/DAWE Coronavirus Teleconference	NFF	Wednesdays, 3.30 - 4.00 pm
NFF Partner Briefing	NFF	Wednesdays, 4.30 – 5.00 pm
Member Communications Group	NFF	Thursdays, 4 - 5pm

NFF Member CEOs Meeting	NFF	Tuesday 9.30am
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