

# New Mexico Agriculture Industry Information Related to COVID-19

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

<https://www.newmexico.gov>

*Coronavirus Health Hotline: 1-855-600-3453*

*New Mexico Department of Health COVID-19: <https://cv.nmhealth.org/>*

*Coronavirus Information (Non-Health) Hotline: 1-833-551-0518*

*New Mexico Crisis and Access Line (mental health): 1-855-NMCRISIS (662-7474)*

<https://www.nmcrisisline.com>

## PUBLIC HEALTH

*Center for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/>*

*New Mexico Department of Health COVID-19: <https://cv.nmhealth.org/>*

- Just like with many other illnesses, the best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19. This requires taking steps to protect yourself and to protect others.
  - Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
  - If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
  - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- To protect others, stay home if you are sick, cover coughs and sneezes, wash your hands regularly, wear a facemask if you are sick when you need to interact with other people, and clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily.

## FOOD SAFETY

*Fight BAC! Food Safety: <https://www.fightbac.org/food-safety-basics/the-core-four-practices/>*

*New Mexico State University College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences COVID-19: <https://aces.nmsu.edu/covid19/index.html>*

- Fresh produce can sometimes be dirty. It's important to wash it, no matter where you get it.
- Although raw chicken and turkey can carry bacteria on their surfaces, research has shown that washing raw poultry under running water in your kitchen sink is a bad idea.
- Basic Food Storage Rules:
  - The first rule in handling food is to keep it clean. Before preparing food for storage, wash your hands well and make sure utensils are absolutely clean.
  - When shopping, choose cans that are not dented on the seam or rim. In your home, quickly dispose of foods in leaking, bulging, or rusting cans.
  - Keep food either hot (above 140°F) or cold (below 40°F). The “danger zone” (45 to 135°F) provides ideal conditions for the growth of common bacteria that can cause spoilage or even food-related illnesses. Never leave food in this danger zone for more than two hours.
  - Most importantly, smell—but don't taste—any food you suspect is spoiled. If in doubt, throw it out

## PRODUCE SAFETY

*U.S. Food & Drug Administration: <https://www.fda.gov/food/food-safety-during-emergencies/food-safety-and-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19>*

*Center for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.fda.gov/food/food-safety-during-emergencies/food-safety-and-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19>*

- COVID-19 (novel coronavirus) is a virus that is transmitted two ways:
  - Respiratory droplets generated when an infected person exhales, coughs or sneezes.
  - Contact with any surface where droplets containing the virus could land.
- COVID-19 appears to persist on surfaces for a period of a few hours to a few days, but the virus' ability to survive may be influenced by temperature, humidity and the type of surface. Heat, high or low pH, sunlight and common disinfectants (such as chlorine) all facilitate die-off of coronaviruses.
- The FDA and the CDC have also provided Q&A sections on their websites regarding COVID-19. Unlike foodborne gastrointestinal (GI) viruses, like norovirus and hepatitis A that often make people ill through contaminated food, SARS-CoV-2, which causes COVID-19, is a virus that causes respiratory illness.
- Currently there is no indication that the virus can be transmitted through food such as raw produce or food packaging. Furthermore, there is no indication that our food supply is unsafe. It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.
- Remember, it is always critical to follow the 4 key steps of food safety—clean, separate, cook, and chill – to prevent foodborne illness!
- While food safety regulations and requirements do not change, producers can take extra precautions during a public health crisis. We encourage producers and handlers of food to take additional steps and considerations to minimize potential contamination of the virus. This applies to farms who are involved with harvesting, sorting, packing and holding activities as well as food processors:
  - If employees are not feeling well in any way, they should stay home.
  - Practice social distancing as best as possible during harvest and packing operations.
  - Take extra steps to provide adequate handwashing facilities, soap and hand sanitizing supplies to all workers.
  - Pay extra attention to cleaning and sanitizing of food contact surfaces, tools and/or equipment.
  - Keep high-touch surfaces cleaned and sanitized frequently throughout hours of operation.
  - Keep documentation of the additional cleaning and sanitizing schedules added to the operation.
  - Encourage continually washing hands!
    - \* After using the restroom
    - \* Before and after eating
    - \* After blowing their nose, coughing, or sneezing or touching their faces
    - \* After touching an animal, animal feed, or animal waste
    - \* Before putting on gloves

## NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

*Locate your county extension office: <https://aces.nmsu.edu/county/>*

*Visit the Extension website for more resources: <https://extension.nmsu.edu/>*

- Preparing for the unexpected. Have enough supplies on hand for 14-day quarantine. Among the items to stock up on are:
  - Dry goods such as rice, pasta, beans, oats and ready-to-eat cereals
  - Canned foods that contain liquid, such as tomatoes, beans and tuna. The excess liquid can be used to cook the dried goods, if necessary.
  - Canned fruits

- Canned meats
  - Comfort foods such as chocolate, coffee, ice cream and other foods that bring you pleasure. These foods can help with positive mental health and morale during a home quarantine.
  - Pet food
  - Household hygienic products such as hand soap, dishwashing liquid, laundry soap, hand sanitizer (made with at least 60 percent alcohol), toilet paper, paper towels, tissues, feminine care products and diapers
  - Prescription medications (if possible, get a 30-day supply)
  - Other medical supplies like contact lenses and solution, hearing aid batteries, and over-the-counter medications such as pain relievers and cough and cold medicines.
  - Entertainment items such as books, board games, card games, puzzles and movies.
- Please contact your county Extension office for any distance learning offered.

## BUSINESSES/EMPLOYERS

***New Mexico Economic Development Department: <https://gonm.biz/about-us/covid-19-response/>***  
***U. S. Small Business Administration: <https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/disaster-assistance>***

- NMEDD is adjusting its business-loan guarantee programs in order to make capital more available to business owners whose operations are severely impacted by the COVID-19 health emergency. Additionally, the department is working with partners across the state to identify special assistance programs and resources available to business owners. 505-827-0300
- Small Business Administration Disaster Loan Assistance contact info:
  - SBA New Mexico District Office: [www.sba.gov/offices/district/nm/albuquerque](http://www.sba.gov/offices/district/nm/albuquerque)
  - District Office Phone: 505-248-8225
  - Website: [www.sba.gov/funding-programs/disaster-assistance](http://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/disaster-assistance)
  - Phone: 1-800-659-2955 (TTY/TDD: 1-800-877-8339)
  - Email: [disastercustomerservice@sba.gov](mailto:disastercustomerservice@sba.gov)

## EMPLOYEES

***New Mexico Workforce Solutions: [www.jobs.state.nm.us](http://www.jobs.state.nm.us)***

***Apply for unemployment benefits anytime online or Monday–Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.***

***Toll Free: 1-877-664-6984***

- Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham has declared a state of public health emergency as a result of the novel coronavirus disease (also known as COVID-19). In light of the Governor’s declaration, certain workers may be eligible for Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits. Learn more at [www.dws.state.nm.us/COVID-19-Info](http://www.dws.state.nm.us/COVID-19-Info).
- You may be eligible if the situations described below apply to you:
  - Employers may lay off some or all of their workforce as a result of the impact of COVID-19; for example, a restaurant that sees a significant reduction in business due to lack of customers dining out during this time, or an event facility that cancels all events until a later date, or bus drivers who are out of work due to temporary school closures.
  - Workers who are self-quarantined or directed to be quarantined, or who have immediate family who is quarantined.
  - Workers who have their hours reduced as a result of COVID-19.

## STATE OF NEW MEXICO PUBLIC HEALTH ORDER EMERGENCY ORDER CLOSING ALL BUSINESSES AND NON-PROFIT ENTITIES EXCEPT FOR THOSE DEEMED ESSENTIAL (MARCH 24, 2020)

*Here is a list of the agriculture-related “essential business” that may remain open:*

- Emergency veterinary and livestock services, pharmacies, medical wholesale and distribution, research facilities, medical supplies and equipment manufacturers and providers;
- Food banks and other services providing care to indigent or needy populations;
- Childcare facilities necessary to provide services to those workers employed by essential businesses and essential non-profit entities;
- Grocery stores, all food and beverage stores, supermarkets, food banks, farmers’ markets and vendors who sell food, convenience stores, and other businesses that generate the majority of their revenue from the sale of canned food, dry goods, fresh fruits and vegetables, pet food, feed, and other animal supply stores, fresh meats, fish, and poultry, and any other household consumer products;
- Farms, ranches, and other food cultivation, processing, or packaging operations;
- Infrastructure operations including, but not limited to, public works construction, commercial and residential construction and maintenance, airport operations, public transportation, airlines, taxis, private transportation providers water, gas, electrical, oil drilling, oil refining, natural resources extraction or mining operations, nuclear material research and enrichment, those attendant to the repair and construction of roads and highways, solid waste collection and removal, trash and recycling collection, processing and disposal, sewer, data and internet providers, data centers, technology support operations, and telecommunications systems;
- Manufacturing operations involved in food processing, manufacturing agents, chemicals, fertilizer, pharmaceuticals, sanitary products, household paper products, microelectronics/semi-conductor, primary metals manufacturers, electrical equipment, appliance, and component manufacturers, and transportation equipment manufacturers;
- Services necessary to maintain the safety and sanitation of residences or essential businesses including security services, custodial services, plumbers, electricians, and other skilled trades;
- Gas stations, automobile repair facilities, and retailers who generate the majority of their revenue from the sale of automobile repair products;
- Hardware stores
- Laundromats and dry cleaner services
- Utilities, including their contractors and suppliers, engaged in power generation, fuel supply and transmission, water and wastewater supply;
- Banks, credit unions, insurance providers, payroll services, brokerage services, and investment management firms;
- Real estate services including brokers, title companies, and related services;
- Businesses providing mailing and shipping services, including post office boxes;
- Laboratories and defense and national security-related operations supporting the United States government or a contractor to the United States government;
- Restaurants, but only for delivery or carry out and local breweries or distillers but only for carry out;
- Professional services, such as legal or accounting services, but only where necessary to assist in compliance with legally mandated activities; and
- Logistics and businesses that store, ship or deliver groceries, food, goods or services directly to residences or retailers.

## CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

*Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA): <https://www.cisa.gov/>*

According to a memorandum from Christopher C. Krebs, the CISA Director, essential critical workers during the COVID-19 response include:

Food and Agriculture:

- Workers supporting groceries, pharmacies and other retail that sells food and beverage products
- Restaurant carry-out and quick serve food operations - Carry-out and delivery food employees
- Food manufacturer employees and their supplier employees—to include those employed in food processing (packers, meat processing, cheese plants, milk plants, produce, etc.) facilities; livestock, poultry, seafood slaughter facilities; pet and animal feed processing facilities; human food facilities producing by-products for animal food; beverage production facilities; and the production of food packaging
- Farm workers to include those employed in animal food, feed, and ingredient production, packaging, and distribution; manufacturing, packaging, and distribution of veterinary drugs; truck delivery and transport; farm and fishery labor needed to produce our food supply domestically
- Farm workers and support service workers to include those who field crops; commodity inspection; fuel ethanol facilities; storage facilities; and other agricultural inputs
- Employees and firms supporting food, feed, and beverage distribution, including warehouse workers, vendor-managed inventory controllers and blockchain managers
- Workers supporting the sanitation of all food manufacturing processes and operations from wholesale to retail
- Company cafeterias - in-plant cafeterias used to feed employees
- Workers in food testing labs in private industries and in institutions of higher education
- Workers essential for assistance programs and government payments
- Employees of companies engaged in the production of chemicals, medicines, vaccines, and other substances used by the food and agriculture industry, including pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers, minerals, enrichments, and other agricultural production aids
- Animal agriculture workers to include those employed in veterinary health; manufacturing and distribution of animal medical materials, animal vaccines, animal drugs, feed ingredients, feed, and bedding, etc.; transportation of live animals, animal medical materials; transportation of deceased animals for disposal; raising of animals for food; animal production operations; slaughter and packing plants and associated regulatory and government workforce
- Workers who support the manufacture and distribution of forest products, including, but not limited to timber, paper, and other wood products
- Employees engaged in the manufacture and maintenance of equipment and other infrastructure necessary to agricultural production and distribution

## NEW MEXICO DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

*[www.nmda.nmsu.edu](http://www.nmda.nmsu.edu), [nmagsec@nmda.nmsu.edu](mailto:nmagsec@nmda.nmsu.edu) or 575-646-3007*

- While the Las Cruces NMDA main building doors will be locked beginning March 19, per New Mexico State University policy, our staff will be available as needed for necessary business operations including, but not limited to, licensing, regulation, sampling on a complaint basis and functions related to our metrology lab, chemistry lab, petroleum lab and seed lab. If you have urgent business with NMDA, please contact us at the email or phone number listed above.
- NMDA's Albuquerque District Office and the Peanut Grading Station in Portales are closed to the public, however, necessary services at those facilities will continue. The public should call or email during this time:
  - Albuquerque District Office: 505-361-2840 or [jconlogue@nmda.nmsu.edu](mailto:jconlogue@nmda.nmsu.edu)
  - Peanut Grading Station: 575-356-8393 or [kberry@nmda.nmsu.edu](mailto:kberry@nmda.nmsu.edu)

## VETERINARY DIAGNOSTICS SERVICES (NMDA)

[www.nmda.nmsu.edu](http://www.nmda.nmsu.edu), [ddvds@nmda.nmsu.edu](mailto:ddvds@nmda.nmsu.edu) or 505-383-9299

- Veterinary Diagnostic Services in Albuquerque will continue to operate Monday to Friday 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- Our team assures you that the NMDA Veterinary Diagnostic Services Lab will maintain normal diagnostic operations for the foreseeable future.
- We limited visitor traffic in the building, however, this will not affect your ability to drop off diagnostic samples.
- Obviously, this is a dynamic situation and things could change, but for now we will continue to provide the best possible diagnostic services to our clients.

## NEW MEXICO LIVESTOCK BOARD

<https://www.nmlbonline.com/> or 505-841-6161

- Due to the Governor declaring a State of Public Health Emergency, the office of the New Mexico Livestock Board is following the directive from Governor Michelle Lujan-Grisham and taking proactive measures. All in-person services and transactions at the Albuquerque office are suspended indefinitely. Exceptions to this closure can be made with an appointment by calling the office Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. The following services can be performed on our website:
  - Review Updates on Animal Health
  - Entry Permit Information and Requirements
  - Brand Renewals
  - Brand Searches
  - Print Brand Applications and Submit by Mail
  - Print Brand Transfer Forms and Submit by Mail
  - Find Statutes and Rules Related to Livestock in NM
- Although taking precautions, NMLB inspectors continue business as usual working in the field and at sale barns.

## LIVESTOCK MARKETS

*Livestock Marketing Association: <http://lmaweb.com/covid-19/>*

*Kristen Parman (816-645-5916; [kparman@lmaweb.com](mailto:kparman@lmaweb.com)); Chelsea Good (816-305-9540; [cgood@lmaweb.com](mailto:cgood@lmaweb.com))*

Livestock sales continue in New Mexico, but attendees are asked to practice social distancing.

## FARMERS MARKETS

<https://farmersmarketsnm.org/>

Toll Free: 888-983-4400; Santa Fe: 505-983-4010

Per the State of New Mexico executive order, farmers' markets are essential businesses and may remain open. Per the New Mexico Farmers' Marketing Association March 20, 2020: Markets are asked to ONLY sell food—no crafts, flowers, or other items—and that personnel take extreme safety precautions. Markets already fall under limited hours of operation, but to abide by the Governor's order, please add the following operational changes to ensure public safety:

- Sell NOTHING but food! No flowers, crafts, jewelry, etc.
- No product sampling

- Require all vendors to have sanitation supplies at their booths—hand sanitizer, hand-washing stations, gloves (for vendors), etc.
- Ask vendors who are sick not to attend, and do not penalize them if they do not contact you ahead of time
- If possible, limit the number of people in enclosed places

If you have questions or potential solutions, please don't hesitate to reach out to Denise Miller at [dmiller@FarmersMarketsNM.org](mailto:dmiller@FarmersMarketsNM.org).

## **NEW MEXICO BEEF COUNCIL**

<https://www.nmbeef.com/>

*Dina Chacon-Reitzel: office 505-841-9407, cell 505-263-0909, [DinaReitzel@nmbeef.com](mailto:DinaReitzel@nmbeef.com)*

The New Mexico Beef Council office is open; however, the doors are locked. Please call one of the phone numbers listed above if you need to reach someone at the beef council.

## **OTHER HELPFUL LINKS**

- Environmental Protection Agency: <https://www.epa.gov/coronavirus>
- FEMA Coronavirus Rumor Control: <https://www.fema.gov/Coronavirus-Rumor-Control>
- New Mexico Environment Department: <https://www.env.nm.gov/>
- New Mexico Government: <https://www.newmexico.gov/>
- Southwest Border Food Protection and Emergency Preparedness Center: <https://aces.nmsu.edu/preparedness/>
- United States Department of Agriculture: <https://www.usda.gov/coronavirus>
- U.S. Food and Drug Administration: <https://www.fda.gov/emergency-preparedness-and-response/mcm-issues/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19>

For additional copies of this document,  
contact *Kristie Garcia* at the New Mexico Department of Agriculture  
at [krgarcia@nmda.nmsu.edu](mailto:krgarcia@nmda.nmsu.edu) or 575-339-5011.