



CANEGROWERS Sugarcane Farm COVID-19 Guide

The sugarcane industry is working hard to minimise the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on farm operations, including harvesting. This guide puts the management of COVID-19 risks in context for cane growers.

While the virus itself is a challenge that the world has never seen before, management of its risks still fit within the broad area of all workplace health and safety risks. In that sense, as with any other risk on a cane farm, the owner/manager has the responsibility in law to keep workers safe from the risk of coronavirus while at the workplace and also to know what to do if someone becomes ill. It is just as important for the grower to keep themselves and their family safe.

This guide has been put together using information and protocols outlined in:

- The National Farmers' Federation farm workplace guide: farmhub.org.au/covid-19-nff-workplace-guide/
- A Safe Work Australia document for minimising the risk of exposure to COVID-19 for the agricultural industry: www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-04/agriculture_minimising_the_risk_of_exposure_to_covid-19_0_0.pdf
- A Safe Food Checklist for Reducing Workforce Impact from COVID-19 and Guideline for Reducing Workforce Impact: www.safefood.qld.gov.au/newsroom/guideline-for-reducing-workforce-impacts-related-to-covid-19/

If you need more detail or information, these are the documents to consult. Please note that this guide is not exhaustive and while every effort has been made to ensure its accuracy, it is intended to provide general assistance. It will be updated as required.

In conjunction with this farm guide, please ensure you and your staff are familiar with any COVID-19 policies and procedures your local mill may have in relation to interactions with its staff such as at sidings or other delivery points.

UNDERSTAND COVID-19

COVID-19, also known as coronavirus, is spread through close contact with an infectious person, droplets from an infected person's cough or sneeze and touching objects or surfaces that have droplets from an infected person and transferring them to mouth, nose or eyes. The virus can survive for many hours on some surfaces.

Symptoms range from mild illness to fatal pneumonia and include fever, coughing, sore throat, fatigue, and shortness of breath. Queensland Health has more information available here: www.qld.gov.au/health/conditions/health-alerts/coronavirus-covid-19

HOW TO MINIMISE THE RISK OF ANYONE CONTRACTING COVID-19 WHILE ON YOUR FARM



Check that staff and contractors are healthy before they arrive and have not been in contact with a COVID-19 case. They should be advised to stop work and inform you if they feel unwell. Consider using a Personal Disclosure Statement for staff, visitors and contractors. A sample is in the NFF Guide.

If any staff or contractors are employed from interstate OR are Queensland residents not staying at their permanent place of residence while they work, the Queensland Government requires:

- A COVID Safe Checklist https://www.health.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0014/1103360/checklist-seasonal-worker-businesses.pdf
- A Workplace Health Management Plan www.health.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/word_doc/0039/959880/health-management-plan-template-workplace.docx

A record of employees on the farm needs to be kept and the Check In Qld App can be used <https://www.covid19.qld.gov.au/check-in-qld>.

It is not mandatory to have a Health Plan if you only employ staff and contractors who live locally and go home after work but it is recommended that you do so to satisfy WH&S obligations.



PHYSICAL DISTANCING

- Limit physical interactions between workers and ensure there is space (for example in meal break areas) for people to keep at least 1.5m apart.
- Limit the number of people on your farm at any one time (for example, only one contracting group at a time) by postponing non-essential work or rescheduling work if necessary.
- Avoid handshakes, or any other close personal contact.



PERSONAL HYGIENE

- Advise everyone to cover coughs and sneezes with an elbow or tissue which should be immediately disposed of.
- Provide facilities and supplies of soap and warm water for regular and thorough hand washing.
- Encourage the use of hand sanitisers.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces such as doorknobs, tables and bathrooms
- Ensure cigarette butts are binned and strongly discourage spitting.



WORKSPACE HYGIENE

- Ensure farm machinery and tools are cleaned after use with a product containing at least 60% alcohol. Provide cleaning agents and training to ensure surfaces are cleaned. To see what's required for machinery clean down, watch this Sugar Research Australia video: youtu.be/ef44SO5c0Ag
- In addition to the usual requirements associated with the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) during operations such as the use of farm chemicals, consider making additional PPE such as gloves and face masks available to be used if workers or family members exhibit symptoms or wish to further minimise their exposure. The Department of Health does not currently recommend masks for use by healthy members of the public.

WHAT TO DO IF SOMEONE BECOMES ILL OR HAS BEEN IN CONTACT WITH A COVID-19 CASE

This is a general process to follow if someone on your farm, or in your family, starts to display symptoms which could be COVID-19:

- Immediately isolate any suspected infectious person and direct or assist them to be tested for the virus. Seek advice if needed from Queensland Health **13 43 25 84** or the National Coronavirus Helpline **1800 020 080**.
- Thoroughly clean and disinfect any places, equipment or objects that have been touched.
- Identify anyone else that the infectious person may have been in close contact with and ensure they are immediately isolated and directed or assisted to be tested. This table is a guide of definitions of contact and is sourced from the Safe Food Queensland resource linked above.

CRITERIA	OUTCOME
<p>CONFIRMED CASE</p> <p>A person who tests positive to a validated test.</p>	<p>After seeking medical attention, the person must remain isolated until health authorities inform them it is safe for them to return to their usual activities.</p>
<p>CLOSE CONTACT</p> <p>A close contact is defined as someone who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has had more than 15 minutes of face-to-face contact (in any setting) with a person with confirmed COVID-19 (including in the 24 hours before their symptoms appeared), or • has shared an enclosed space (e.g. office or sealed room) with a person with confirmed COVID-19 for more than 2 hours (including in the 24 hours before their symptoms appeared). 	<p>Workers who may have been in close contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus, are required to self-quarantine for 14 days.</p> <p>Self-quarantine means staying at home, in a hotel room or provided accommodation, and not leaving for the period required to quarantine. Only people who usually live in the household should be in the home. Do not allow visitors into the home.</p>
<p>CASUAL CONTACT</p> <p>A casual contact is someone who has been in the same general area as a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 while infectious. You are a casual contact if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You have had less than 15 minutes face-to-face contact (in any setting) with a confirmed case (including in the 24 hours before their symptoms appeared), or • You have shared an enclosed space with a confirmed case for less than 2 hours (including in the 24 hours before their symptoms appeared). 	<p>Casual contacts do not need to be excluded from work while well.</p>

Last updated 06/05/2020

**For more information including business support information visit:
www.canegrowers.com.au**