



Ministry of
Agriculture

COVID-19 INFORMATION FOR FARM STAND OPERATORS IN BC

The BC Restart Plan takes a phased approach to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19. Each phase provides guidance for individuals and businesses. The information in this document is written to provide business operators with suggested modifications that adhere to Phase 1 restrictions, which is the highest level of restriction. As phases progress, business owners may choose to relax certain practices as long as they continue to follow the guidance and orders of the Provincial Health Officer. Phases may change quickly if the number of COVID-19 cases increase in the community, so business owners will need to keep up to date with PHO guidance and be able to respond by adjusting business practices to adhere to requirements under the different phases of BC's Restart Plan.

For more information on BC's restart plan visit: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/bc-restart-plan>

Introduction

This document outlines information for farm stands to meet Provincial Health Officer (PHO) orders, notices and guidance. The information in this document is meant to complement PHO recommendations and PHO orders and guidance take precedent. Over the next several months, [PHO Orders, Notices and Guidance](#) will be updated and the level of restrictions may fluctuate which may impact an operator's ability to meet PHO recommendations. Stay informed and responsive by checking updates at the [BC Centre for Disease Control](#) and PHO websites.

Where permitted by provincial, local and First Nation government law, business owners may use farm stands to generate additional income and/or to market and retail their product(s). Farm stands range in size and formality and are generally located at the edge of the farmers' property. Infection control prevention measures will have to be scaled as appropriate to the size of the operation.



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General operations during the COVID-19 pandemic

If you choose to continue operating your business during the COVID-19 pandemic, you must follow PHO Orders and Guidance and develop a COVID-19 Safety Plan in accordance with the guidance from WorkSafeBC. Implementing PHO Orders and Guidance will decrease risk of virus transmission in your workplace and better ensure the health and safety of yourself, your employees and the community at large.

Steps 1 to 3 outline measures that will help your operation adhere to the PHO Orders and Guidance.

Step 1: Conduct workplace risk assessment

Workplaces that choose to continue to operate during COVID-19 should conduct a workplace risk assessment, which can be found at: [COVID-19 risk-informed decision-making guidelines for workplaces and businesses](#). This will assist business owners to determine what risks exist in their workplace and the level of risk involved in various activities or operations, as well as provide strategies to mitigate certain risks.

Step 2: Implement safety precautions in your business or workplace

All workplaces must implement the measures described in the PHO orders and employers must create a [COVID-19 safety plan](#) that include the basic precautions around: physical distancing, hand washing, covering nose and mouth when coughing and sneezing, and monitoring and reporting illness. All employees must participate in an education session provided by the employer. Employees must receive education and training on safety measures and protocols for employees during the COVID-19 pandemic. Training must include education on physical distancing, hygiene, monitoring and reporting illness, and staying home when ill.

PHO Orders and Guidance Documents

The office of the PHO has posted orders and guidance on their website. Guidance documents that are relevant to your worksite/operation should be reviewed: [PHO Orders, Notices and Guidance](#). Agriculture operations that provide accommodation will be required to implement the PHO Order for Industrial Camps. All agricultural operations with employees are required to implement the PHO Order for Workplace COVID-19 Safety Plans.



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Step 3: Review industry specific information and guidance

If implementing PHO orders or guidance appears logistically challenging due to the nature of your operation, industry specific information may be needed. The federal and provincial government and industry associations are in the process of creating industry specific guidance and information. Check relevant websites such as [AAFC](#), [WALI](#), and [AG Safe](#) for any information that might apply to your operation.

If you have completed all the previous steps and still have questions or need further guidance or information please contact the Ministry of Agriculture 1-888-221-7141 or AgriServiceBC@gov.bc.ca for support in determining additional measures that may be needed.

Information for Farm Stands during COVID-19

This section provides information specifically for businesses who operate farm stands. All farm stands should operate in accordance with provincial, local and First Nation government laws.

As a business owner it is your responsibility to ensure that PHO orders and guidance are being followed at your operation and to communicate to the public what is acceptable customer behaviour during COVID-19, noting it may be different then previous years.

Under the current PHO COVID-19 orders and guidance, farm stands are permitted. Different scales of farm stand operations will pose different levels of risk related to COVID-19 transmission, therefore different interventions may be required for different scales of farm stand operations (e.g. staff, type of structure, size of structure, number of customers).

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Communication with Customers

- Communicate with visitors that if they feel ill, they should not come to the farm.
- Post signage to communicate requirements for physical distancing, directional movement from parking to farm stand, hand washing, and payment options (see links below for printable signs).
- Communicate your enhanced practices to customers before the season by posting on social media, newsletters, or website.
- Ensure staff is easily recognizable (e.g. wearing a brightly coloured shirt or vest).
- Remind customers to keep a two-meter distance from staff at all times.

Customer Hand Washing

- Provide stations for handwashing and/or hand sanitizing with 60 percent alcohol or higher. Stations should be cleaned regularly.
- Post signs at all handwashing stations with [handwashing instructions](#)
- Require that all customers sanitize or wash hands before entering the field and before paying, before eating, after going to the washroom, and any time hands are visibly soiled.

Practice Physical Distancing

- Post signs to remind customers to maintain a physical distance of two meters between household units.
- Temporarily close gathering areas such as picnic tables, playgrounds, and petting zoos.
- Demark two-metre separation distances in the farm stand payment line up area.
- Limit the number of customers in the farm stand at any one time and request only one family member in the farm stand (See calculating number of customers below).
- If the operation is large, it may be necessary to dedicate staff to direct customers and ensure maximum limits of customer numbers is not exceeded.

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Farm Stand Practices

- Provide hand sanitizer at the front of the farm stand and near the cash box. Use signage to remind people to wash hands with soap and water or use sanitizer before shopping, before and after paying.
- If possible, pre-portion or pre-package items in bags or cartons before they are sold.
- Limit products on display for purchase and/or keep them in coolers or under a protective barrier behind the counter.
- Ask customers to only touch items that they intend to purchase.
- Provide bags for customers and ask customers not to bring their own bag(s) or post signs at each check-out indicating that the customer's own bags are not to be placed on checkout counters.
- Post additional signage reminding customers to wash all produce well before consuming.
- Disinfect surfaces (counters, credit card machines, reusable bins, buckets, railings, doorknobs etc.) on a regular basis, several time a day.
- Clean and disinfect public washrooms on a regular basis, several times a day.
- Use disinfectants on the list on [BC CDC's Poster: cleaning and disinfecting for public surfaces](#)

Payment Practices

- Install a plexiglass barrier between customers and employees at all transaction counters. If physical barriers cannot be erected, ask employees to wear a mask covering their nose and mouth.
- Require employees to wear gloves when handling money or use hand-sanitizer after every transaction
- Minimize the exchange of credit cards or cash by encouraging contactless payment (credit card tap, money transfers or online transfers).

For further questions or information contact:

Ministry of Agriculture 1-888-221-7141 or
AgriServiceBC@gov.bc.ca