



## Questions about COVID-19 coronavirus?

Find more information about the current outbreak at:

- [Public Health Canada](#)
- [World Health Organization](#)
- [Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada](#)
- [Canadian Veterinary Medical Association](#) for mitigation tips or [here](#) for additional resources
- [Canadian Pork Council](#) has information and resources posted as well as links to additional sites
- [American Association of Swine Veterinarians](#) for general information and for a [Farm Crisis Operations Planning Tool](#)
- From OVMA, a [step-by-step guide](#) to help keep your practice afloat financially during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- [New Guidelines on COVID-19 and Animals](#) on Dr. Scott Weese's Worms & Germs Blog along with other information for veterinarians

## COVID-19 and Animals

Now that COVID-19 virus infection cases are widely distributed in the human population, there is a possibility for some animals to become infected through close contact with infected humans. However, to date, there are **only three** known animal cases.

Two dogs in Hong Kong from different households tested positive for COVID-19 virus following close contact with infected humans. Neither dog showed symptoms of the disease.

A cat in Belgium, owned by a person with COVID-19, also recently tested positive. The cat developed diarrhea, vomiting and respiratory difficulty about one week after the owner got sick and SARS-CoV-2 was found in the cat's feces.

The current spread of COVID-19 is a result of human to human transmission. To date, there is no evidence that companion animals spread the disease.

## COVID-19 – Social Distancing While Maintaining Animal Care

While it is important to practice social distancing, it is also critical that animal care not suffer. By implementing the basics of human distancing and reducing personal interaction on-farm, it should be quite safe for veterinarians to continue animal health visits.

### Staffing Practices

- If any office staff are able to work from home, that is the ideal situation.
- Provide information and education to employees regarding hand washing and good hygiene.
- There should be detailed cleaning and disinfection procedures for inside vehicles, equipment and clinic areas such as lunch rooms, offices, bathrooms, etc.
- Staff should be advised to stay home if ill, self-quarantine if they have travelled outside the country and to report this status to their employer.
- Clinics should develop human resources policies regarding requiring employees to stay at home if ill or how to handle a potential positive virus case (send person home, clean and disinfect area where employee worked, explain to other employees what has been done regarding cleaning and disinfection).
- Utilize electronic documents as much as possible rather than handling in hard copies, forego requiring signatures if possible.

### On-Farm

- Farm visits should be scheduled in advance.
- Ask farm staff to prepare any material to be provided to the clinic, e.g. carcasses to be autopsied.
- In all cases, proper social distancing protocols must be respected (by farm staff and visiting clinicians) by ensuring a distance of a minimum of two metres between themselves and other individuals unless close contact is required to perform animal care procedures.
- Ask producers to notify your clinic if they, an employee or a member of their family has travelled outside Canada within the previous 14 days, is ill with flu-like symptoms or has been in close contact with anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19.
- If any of these conditions are present, stress that producers and any other affected individual stay away from veterinarians and clinic staff. They must maintain self-isolation and not be present during a farm visit. If possible, an alternate should be present.

The Ontario Veterinary Medical Association has created a [COVID-19 checklist for practices](#) on how to safeguard employees and clients. Additional COVID-19 resources are listed in the text box to the left.

You should also check your provincial government website as movement controls and essential services are different between provinces. For up-to-date, local information, contact the public health unit in your community.

## Transition to Canadian Pork Excellence

The updated Canadian Quality Assurance (CQA) program is called PigSAFE and the new Animal Care Assessment (ACA) program is called PigCARE. Both are integrated under Canadian Pork Excellence. Canadian Pork Excellence is the national platform

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CASV-ACVP accepts classified advertising (e.g. job postings) in the e-newsletter. The cost is \$125 per week for classified advertising. For promotional and marketing type ads, we offer one banner ad each week at \$500 per week. The CASV-ACVP newsletter is sent to 180 members each week. If you are interested in advertising in the newsletter, please contact Krista Bates in the CASV-ACVP office at [krista.tfio@bell.net](mailto:krista.tfio@bell.net), 519-669-3350.

that covers the three on-farm programs: traceability, food safety and animal care.

PigSAFE | PigCARE Programs were launched in January 2019. Provinces implementing the two programs must work with their producers to ensure that;

- Farms that have completed a full validation under the CQA and ACA programs in 2019 must join the PigSAFE and PigCARE programs at their next full validation.
- Any farms due for a full validation in 2020 must do so under the PigSAFE and PigCARE programs.

CQA and ACA programs will no longer be available as of January 1, 2023.

**Note:** Due to COVID-19, CPC has given the option of extension on full CQA validations for up to three months past the expiry date.

**New Transportation Regulations – Health of Animals Act**

The new transportation regulations under the Health of Animals Act came into force as of February 19, 2020. However, for the new feed, water and rest times only, CFIA will be treating those as education and awareness rather than enforcement for the first two years for all species. Transporters must adhere to the current transport times and will be encouraged to try to comply with the new feed, water and rest times. If there are poor welfare outcomes with the load, CFIA will take action regardless.

The full text of the new regulations can be read [here](#). The updated Guidance Document can be found online [here](#). The Guidance Document is very important as it expands upon and explains the intent of the regulations. The updated list of definitions has not yet been posted.

Several factsheets have been prepared by Canadian Pork Council and by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency explaining the new regulations and definitions around compromised and unfit animals. The links to those websites are: <https://www.cpc-ccp.com/transportation> and [CFIA Humane Transport](#)

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*Susan Fitzgerald on behalf of CASV Board of Directors.*

**Mission:** *To be a responsive, proactive voice for veterinarians involved with the swine industry in Canada.*