



**State of Oklahoma**  
**Department of Agriculture, Food, and Forestry**

J Kevin Stitt  
Governor

Blayne Arthur  
Secretary of Agriculture

March 23, 2020

Livestock market operators and producers,

As the worry and fear has spread across our state and nation and has caused a cancelation of almost every event, I, along with our Governor, understand that agriculture doesn't stop and we are working to keep agriculture commerce moving. I encourage markets to continue operating and producers to continue to fuel these sales, while adhering to slight modifications and suggestions by the CDC to keep everyone safe and healthy.

This is a primary time for income for the livestock business and livestock auction markets are an integral part of Oklahoma agriculture — you all are key for true price discovery. We ask that while these times are unprecedented and the word 'challenging' is an understatement, you continue to operate while taking precautions to mitigate the risk of COVID-19.

Attached to this letter, you will find a one-page guideline sheet on recommended practices for your sales. Please print these flyers and post them throughout your facility for your guests to read.

We suggest implementing the following practices at your production sale:

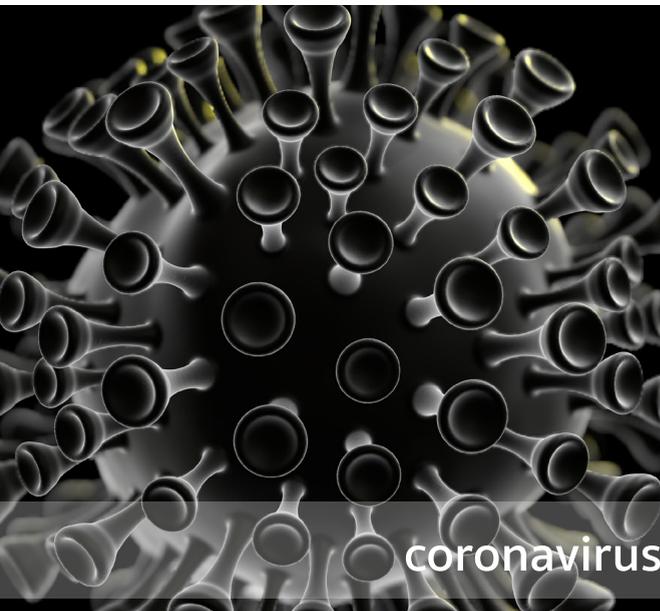
- Hand washing stations and hand sanitizers
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth
- Stay home when you are sick
- Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects – special attention to frequently utilized areas
- Keeping human numbers in the auction barn to a minimum
- Advise customers to view the auctions online
- Customers can make arrangements to pick up checks in the parking lot if they can't wait for the mail
- For food services, consider boxed-type meals and individually packaged items

Tough times don't last, but tough people do. Farmers, ranchers and agriculturists of all kinds are tough people. We will get through the weather, a pandemic and difficult market conditions, but it will be much easier with your help by continuing your essential role in our industry.

As always, if you have questions or concerns, reach out to me at [blayne.arthur@ag.ok.gov](mailto:blayne.arthur@ag.ok.gov).

Respectfully,

Blayne Arthur  
Oklahoma Secretary of Agriculture



# IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR LIVESTOCK MARKETS AND CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

[coronavirus.health.ok.gov](https://coronavirus.health.ok.gov) | Call Center: 877.215.8336

## WASH YOUR HANDS WITH SOAP AND WARM WATER FOR AT LEAST 20 SECONDS.

### Overview

A production sale is often times the primary income of the livestock business for the year.

A production sale offers customers an opportunity to come to your facility to interact with you, your families and staff, your livestock and each other. In light of the current health situation regarding COVID-19, we suggest implementing the following practices at your production sale:

### Reccomended Practices

- Have hand washing stations and plenty of hand sanitizer available.
- Wash hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not readily available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

### Meals

- Consider not having an open type (buffet style) meal. If you want to serve a meal, consider individual boxed type service.
- Have individually packaged items available rather than open choice settings. Bottled water and can soda are good options and for snacks, individually packaged muffins rather than boxed dozen donuts

### Protect Employees and Volunteers

There is no evidence that companion animals can spread COVID-19 or that infection would be serious for them. The virus spreads primarily from person to person. The health and safety of employees/volunteers should be the focus of every animal shelter.

- Employees and volunteers who are sick or show signs of respiratory illness should not work until they are symptom free.
- Wash your hands frequently for at least 20 seconds with soap and warm water before eating, after using the bathroom, coughing or sneezing, and touching surfaces. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Frequently sanitize common areas with EPA registered products for use against COVID-19 that are safe to use in and around livestock.

### Preparing for Communication to Public

Have someone prepared and ready to deal with a member of the press

- Be polite! Yes, you may be on private property but a kind response will go much further than a harsh one!
- Be prepared to show them around the facility. Don't let them wander.
- Be prepared to tell them what you have done to help your customers protect themselves.
- Be prepared to tell them how important it is to have your sale even in light of the COVID-19 situation.
- Have a trusted, well-spoken customer ready to share a positive comment with them on why they are attending the sale.