

29 April 2020 – Laramie, WY

Assistance for Producers Affected by Meat Processing Plant Closures

American livestock and poultry producers are facing an unprecedented emergency due to COVID-19, particularly with the closing of meat processing plants in several states. USDA is leading the federal response by working in coordination with the Vice President's Task Force, the CDC, OSHA, Department of Labor, industry, state and local governments, and others across the federal family to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 on producers.

The USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is establishing an National Incident Coordination Center to assist producers affected by meat processing plant closures and pledges to continue to seek solutions to ensure the continuity of operations and return to production as quickly, safely and as health considerations allow at these critical facilities.



The intent is to provide direct support to producers whose animals cannot move to market as a result of processing plant closures due to COVID-19. Going forward, APHIS' Coordination Center, State Veterinarians, and other state officials will be assisting to help identify potential alternative markets if a producer is unable to move animals, and if necessary, advise and assist on depopulation and disposal methods.

Additionally, APHIS will mobilize and deploy assets of the National Veterinary Stockpile as needed and secure the services of contractors that can supply additional equipment, personnel, and services, much as it did during the large-scale Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza emergency in 2015.

Further, the USDA's Natural Resources and Conservation Service (NRCS) will provide state-level technical assistance to producers and will provide cost share assistance under the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) in line with program guidelines for disposal.

For more information, see:

- *USDA APHIS Establishing Coordination Center to Assist Producers Affected by Meat Processing Plant Closures*
https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/newsroom/stakeholder-info/sa_by_date/sa-2020/sa-04/meat-processing-coordination-center
- *Animal Health Emergency Management | APHIS*
https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/emergency-management/ct_emergency_management_home
- *USDA Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) | Resources Page*
<https://www.usda.gov/coronavirus>
- *Coronavirus (COVID-19) Response | Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)*
<https://www.fema.gov/coronavirus#>