

## Agri-Food Workplace Protection Program – Producers

- Today OMAFRA announced a new funding program under the Canadian Agriculture Partnership to support growers address new and immediate health and safety issues directly related to COVID-19 impacts.
- The funding will cover 70% of eligible expenses up to \$7,500/farm. Eligible expenses can be incurred starting May 14, 2020 and applications will be received on an ongoing basis as funding remains. Each farm business can only apply once.
- Funding will fit within one of two categories:
  1. Occupational Health and Safety Measures: For projects to implement occupational health and safety measures related to COVID-19 on farms with intensive use of labour
  2. Enhancing Healthy Workforce Access and Accommodation: For projects to address workforce access and accommodations as a result of an on-farm outbreak of COVID-19
- Full details and the application process can be accessed at: <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/cap/capproducers.htm>

## Mandatory Isolation Support for Temporary Foreign Workers Program (MISTFWP)

- Most growers will be aware now that the details of the funding announced in April to support employers of TFW and SAWP workers are now available.
- Funding details and forms can be accessed at: <http://www.agr.gc.ca/eng/agricultural-programs-and-services/mandatory-isolation-support-for-temporary-foreign-workers-program/?id=1588186409721>
- From the original materials, eligible costs have been expanded, and include:
  - wages and benefits of the temporary foreign workers;
  - offsite accommodations;
  - transportation to and from offsite accommodations;
  - food or food allowances;
  - health and safety supplies; and/or
  - other incremental costs directly associated to the mandatory 14-day quarantine period of temporary foreign workers.
- Eligible expenses can be incurred between March 26, 2020 and June 30, 2020.
- Growers have until June 30 to submit applications for funding, with claims due by August 14, 2020.

**NOTE TO GROWERS: the above noted programs (Agri-Food Workplace Protection Program and MISTFWP) will not allow growers to receive more than 100% of reimbursement of a specific expense. Growers are encouraged to review programs carefully, including timing of eligible expenses, to determine how to allocate their eligible expenses incurred this spring across the two programs.**

## Production Insurance Enrolment EXTENSION

- Today, Agricorp posted on their website that they have extended the enrollment deadline to June 1, 2020 for farmers to apply for coverage under Production Insurance or make changes to existing coverage. This applies to Production Insurance plans that normally have enrolment deadlines of April 1, May 1 and May 10.
- Growers are encouraged to review the status of business risk management tools, including production insurance (where applicable), to ensure their farm is adequately covered. This extension allows growers another opportunity to participate in production insurance where the deadline had otherwise recently passed.
- Full details of the extension can be found here: <https://www.agricorp.com/en-ca/News/2020/Pages/ProductionInsurance-FarmersHaveUntilJune1ToEnrol.aspx>
- Last week Federal Minister of Agriculture announced that the federal government would be investigating with their provincial counterparts the possibility of including labour as a peril under production insurance plans. The OFVGA is encouraging OMAFRA to investigate options for this type of coverage given the tenuous nature of growers' workforces given the risk of COVID-19 this season.

## AgriStability Updates

- Today, Agricorp posted on their website that Ontario farmers who apply for a 2020 AgriStability interim payment will now receive 75% of their estimated final payment, up from 50%.
- Details on this change, along with how to apply for an interim payment can be found here: <https://www.agricorp.com/en-ca/News/2020/Pages/AgriStability-HowToApplyForAnInterimPayment.aspx>
- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada have created [AgriStability Benefit Calculator](#) that will help you determine the benefit you could receive. Growers can use the online tool, and, if applicable, discuss with your accountant or financial advisor to determine if registering for AgriStability will provide support for your operation.
- Growers are reminded that the deadline to apply for AgriStability has been extended to July 3, 2020.
- OFVGA and other industry stakeholders continue to advocate for supports for the horticulture sector, particularly through improvements to the AgriStability program that would hopefully see the trigger increased to 90% and for coverage to increase to 85%, as well as the removal of the reference margin limit.

## LMIA Updates

- On May 12, 2020 the [federal government announced](#) a new, temporary policy that intended to drastically reduce the time it takes for a temporary foreign worker to start a new job.
- While this policy is in place, a worker who is already in Canada and has secured a new job offer, typically backed by a labour market test, can get approval to start working in

their new job, even while their work permit application is being fully processed. This will cut what can often take 10 weeks or more, down to 10 days or less.

### **Government Resources**

- The provincial government has created a PPE Supplier Directory for businesses to reference: <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/how-your-organization-can-help-fight-coronavirus/#find-ppe> (and click on “terms of use”)
- The federal government has created [Workplace guidance for sector employers and employees](#) (not agriculture specific)
- Ontario Government Guidance for [Agriculture health and safety during COVID-19](#)