



COVID-19: Tuesday 24 March: Update on Agricultural Industry Essential Services

Joint update from Beef + Lamb New Zealand and the Meat Industry Association

We want to update you on the scope of agricultural business activities and services that have so far been deemed “essential” and can continue to operate after midnight on Wednesday 25 March, when the country moves to Alert level 4.

We also outline information on who needs to register and how, and some of the implications of the new processes for the supply chain. **You need to register by 5pm Friday 27 March if you meet the criteria below.**

This is an incredibly fluid situation. There are still likely to be more questions, but this information will provide some certainty and clarity to farmers and the processor and exporter sector.

What we know about essential services

- MPI has just released a tranche of information that provides further clarity about the scope of essential services for agriculture, who needs to register, which can be found on the following site: <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/covid-19-essential-primary-sector-service-registration/>

The following is a summary of the key information:

- Further clarification about what are “essential support services:
MPI has provided a more detailed list of the types of agricultural support services deemed to be essential. You can find the new list here: <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/40034-2020-covid-19-key-services-pdf>
- These agricultural support services are in addition to the essential businesses that the government released last night: <https://covid19.govt.nz/government-actions/covid-19-alert-level/#essential-businesses>
- Who needs to register?
Businesses with more than 5 people (including the owner) **working** at each business site, or who cannot achieve social distancing between staff, need to register. Check the criteria and find the registration form here: <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/covid-19-essential-primary-sector-service-registration/>
- The business will need to answer 11 questions to provide assurances they have a plan and process to manage infection risks.
- MPI is asking all businesses that need to register to do so by **Friday 5:00pm on Friday 27 March 2020**. Businesses that believe they qualify as an “essential service” are able to continue operating while they are going through the registration process.
- Frequently asked questions:
MPI has also pulled together an FAQ with further useful information: <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/40031-2020-covid-19-register-for-safe-practice-faq-pdf>
- If you are unsure if you need to register, or if your business is covered by the updated essential services information, you can call MPI on 0800 00 83 33 or email info@mpi.govt.nz

Processing and exporting companies

- The companies are committed to doing what they can to keep plants operating.
- The processing companies are collaborating on an industry standard that will enable them to operate and help expedite the registration process.
- The companies are aware of the pressures on farmers in parts of the country with drought conditions and need to get stock off farms. This is also the peak time of the year for processing.

We would like to acknowledge the hard work from MPI today to provide further clarity and information.

It is vitally important we play our part in stamping out the spread of this virus.

As a sector we are privileged to have the support and trust of the government to get on and do our jobs. This is because of the critical role we play in meeting the nutritional needs of New Zealanders and importance to New Zealand's economic viability from our exports.

This is a challenging period for farmers, processors and exporters, but we are a world leading industry and our leadership in New Zealand is required right now, let's pull together to help the country's response to the COVID-19 situation.



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