

## Guidance for Livestock Markets Regarding Coronavirus (COVID-19)

With COVID-19 spreading across the state and nation, all Kansas businesses are making significant efforts to prevent the spread of the virus. As counties across the state establish stay-at-home orders, and as the state complies with Governor Laura Kelly's Executive Order #20-14 prohibiting mass gatherings of 10 or more people, it has become necessary to clarify the status of livestock markets as essential functions included in the distribution of critical food and agricultural supplies and thus exempt from these orders.

Governor Kelly's Executive Order No. 20-15, which is a framework for identifying and continuing essential functions that must remain operational during a local "stay home" or similar order, states that:

"Local issuing authorities must grant – and do not have the discretion to deny — exemptions from the restrictions of any local "stay home" or similar order to requesting companies or other organizations for the performance of the following essential functions:"

- (KEFF 200)(2) "Maintain Essential Supply Chains for Essential Functions and Critical Infrastructure (as defined by DHS)"
- (KEFF 400)(5) "Produce and Provide Agricultural Products and Services."

Livestock markets are included in these definitions and are exempt from Executive Order #20-14 and any local stay-at-home orders. However, it is important that despite this exemption, livestock markets should act to institute changes to prevent the spread of COVID-19 among their staff, sellers and buyers. The Kansas Department of Agriculture strongly recommends that all livestock markets adhere to the following guidance:

Critically evaluate each auction to determine whether it needs to be held. If an auction can be postponed, please do so. If you decide to hold an auction, take the following protective measures:

- Use technology to host virtual sales. If you lack the ability to host virtual sales, limit the number of buyers present in the sales ring to ensure that buyers maintain at least a 6-foot separation between themselves at all times.
- Participants should be restricted to sellers and buyers only, keeping numbers to a minimum.
- Sellers and buyers should remain in their vehicle during the unloading/loading process
- Customers can make arrangements to pick up checks in the parking lot if they can't wait for the mail.

- Instruct any employee, seller or buyer exhibiting symptoms of illness to remain home and request that anyone who is a member of a population of heightened vulnerability to avoid areas where people are gathering.
- Provide ample opportunities for visitors and employees to wash hands following CDC best practices.
- Clean and disinfect all commonly used areas frequently including restrooms and restocking with soap, paper towels, and hand sanitizer.
- Close all parts of the auction market that are not directly associated with the sale to prevent people from co-mingling, including common seating areas.
- Cafes within livestock markets remain subject to Executive Order #20-14 which prohibits self-service food and requires that customers maintain separation of 6-feet. Cafes are also subject to any local orders. It is recommended that all livestock market cafes close to avoid unnecessary risk in conjunction with livestock sales.
- Clearly communicate and enforce your policies.