



Since 1894

March 30, 2020

RE: AGRICULTURE AS CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE, INCLUDING LIVESTOCK SALES.

The spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) and the world's response to it has created a great deal of uncertainty in the U.S., Kansas and around the world. In response, federal and state governments have recognized the need for critical infrastructure to continue to operate and provide essential services to impacted communities. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has issued guidance confirming food and agriculture are considered critical infrastructure in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Gov. Laura Kelly has issued a statewide stay-at-home order for Kansas that is set to begin March 30. The order directs all individuals to stay in their residence unless performing an essential activity and supersedes any local orders. Agricultural operations still are considered critical infrastructure. This designation ensures that agricultural operations and those that support them can continue operating as normal under orders that restrict movement of people.

After review of the relevant orders, communications with Gov. Kelly's staff and communications with the Kansas Department of Agriculture, KLA has confirmed that agricultural operations and livestock sales are exempt from Governor Kelly's stay-at-home order, as well as any local orders, which were suspended by the governor's order.

At this time, producers and livestock markets may continue to hold livestock sales as scheduled. However, KLA recommends organizers encourage customers to use online or phone bidding options when possible, especially for out-of-state buyers, those over 60 years of age or who have compromised immune systems and buyers who are feeling sick. Those attending livestock sales should be encouraged to follow CDC guidelines, which include avoiding person-to-person contact like handshakes, remaining at arm's length from other persons, avoiding touching your face, washing hands frequently and sneezing or coughing in a tissue or your elbow.

KLA staff will continue to monitor this constantly changing situation and provide updates and information as it becomes available.