

ACRD Covid-19 Mitigation and Action Plan for Agriculture (MAP-A)

Issue	Primary Concerns	External Resources	Potential Local Actions - Fast/Easy	Potential Local Actions - Longer term/ Complex	Potential Partners
Supply Chain	Retailers shutting down and/or supplier shortages and accessibility challenges (feed, bedding, garden supply, fertilizer, fuel, etc)	Port Alberni Farmers Helping Farmers Facebook page	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Send letters reminding local retailers that agriculture is an essential service and asking to contact ACRD with supply or closure concerns and/or requests for support - Encourage producers to purchase proactively and/or collectively - Encourage producers to expand and foster local networks - Suggest producers develop contingency plans with their suppliers proactively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop supplier lists for key agricultural inputs and build relationships with them directly, as a community - Source and store an emergency supply of feed, bedding, fertilizer and other identified supplies for community producers - Produce mealworms or other feed stock locally - Renovate fallow fields and increase production of forage grasses, grains, and straw - Create bedding from local wood waste 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AFI - Province - AFH - Chamber of Commerce - EOC - Local mills - Producers
	Reduced access to repair and specialized parts and services	Port Alberni Farmers Helping Farmers Facebook page	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage producers to expand and foster local networks - Share information about available service providers via established communication channels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research and collate supplier alternatives - Create stockpiles - Establish an Island or Province-wide support and resource network, including supplier lists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AFI - Province - Supplier businesses
	Food supply shortages (external)	Food insecurity organizations such as food banks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stimulate existing Grow Local programs to support small-scale production initiatives and increase support for local commercial producers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stockpile and warehouse food supplies - Increase community commercial production initiatives - Support commercial producers as possible, per individual request, particularly those at high risk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AFI - AFH - City of Port Alberni - SD70 - Province - Producers
	General Disruptions - transportation, distribution, supply	Other Vancouver Island Governments and non-profit organizations		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop inter-community distribution channels for food and agricultural supply - Support transportation channels between Alberni Valley and West Coast 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nanaimo Food Share - LUSH Valley - Cowichan Green Community - Eat West Coast - Tofino-Ucluelet Culinary Guild
Storage	May be a need for stockpiling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PA Food Processing Hub - Local producer barns 	Collate information about potential storage locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enter into an agreement with a facility to stockpile and warehouse agricultural supplies - Establish new storage infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - City of Port Alberni - PAPA - AFI - Individual farms

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Markets	Larger markets (restaurants, etc) closing down		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote online markets to public - Promote local buying to those developing new markets (Steampunk Cafe, Salvation Army, Circle Dairy, other) - Provide access to market information to public (Growers Guide and online producer highlights) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support development of new local market outlets - Support low-tech producers to access online or new markets - Support established retailers to develop a 'local only' section - Lobby for reduced regulatory burden on small producers selling to local retail outlets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AFI - AFH - TUCG - Shelter Farm - BCFMA - AVNews - Chamber of Commerce - EOC
	Farmers' Markets shutting down and/or scaling back		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support groups to develop online markets and to continue with safe in-person markets - Support Farmers' Markets to ensure strong safety measures in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expand/Adapt Farmers' Market Coupon program - Support development of new distribution and sales channels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shelter Farm - AFI - TUCG - BCFMA - Chamber of Commerce - Province - Island Health
	Safety concerns with Farm Gate sales		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop and share Covid-19 safety guidelines for farm gate sales, based on existing Provincial and Federal advice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop PR campaign for producers and consumers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Province - AFI - Chamber of Commerce
	Transportation costs and shutdowns		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to foster relationship-building and information sharing between stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop transportation pool/bulletin board - Provide transportation services for essential goods and services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nanaimo Food Share - LUSH Valley - Cowichan Green Community - TUCG - Province
Labour	Unable to secure labour from out of region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bowman Employment Agency - Govt of Canada 75% fund 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Share information about available employee funding and local training and employment opportunities - Develop and expand local networks - Promote job opportunities in agriculture throughout the pandemic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support development of new training and employment programs - Develop a local agricultural 'job/volunteer bank' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AFI - AFH - Shelter Farm - Leda Farm - Eat West Coast - Province - Young Agrarians

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	Sickness within family workers or existing employee group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AgSafe BC - Worksafe BC - PHO rules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage farms to develop contingency plan in case of worker illness (identify and communicate with potential replacement person, start some training if possible) - Ensure strong physical distancing is practiced with farm employees - Ensure workplace BC and AgSafe resources and regulations are followed for Covid-19 safety on-farm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support development of new training and employment programs - Develop a local agricultural 'job/volunteer bank' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AFI - Province
Communi-cations	Reaching producers, ensuring safe practices and a strong support network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Province - Food security organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ACRD email updates and notifications - Facebook updates - Notifications via EOC - Send letter mail to producers with farm status (include safety info, contact info for ACRD support, links to online platforms, link to survey, copy of MAP-A, links to employee funding programs, links to provincial/federal support) - Online producer survey - Request Province send mail out to all producers with information and resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Host an online producer forum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AFI - Province - EOC - Food security organizations
	Reaching consumers		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Share info via Grow Local email list and Facebook pages - Create newspaper articles and news releases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work with retailers to develop and share local signage program and local foods sections - Develop PR campaign for local food 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AFI - AFH - AVNews - EOC - Retailers - Chamber of Commerce - City of PA - Farmers' Markets - ADFF

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	Reaching the Province		<p>Send Letter to Province, with requests including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meat Regulations changes (Regional Designation, temporary exemptions for on-farm slaughter with direct sales during Covid-19, accelerating regulatory changes or initiatives such as the mobile facility) - Exempt maximum flock sizes during the pandemic - Clarification about essential service status of non-food agricultural products (seeds, flowers, seedlings, Christmas trees, ect) - Temporary exemption for raw milk sales during Covid-19 - Request to print and mail Covid-19 safety signage and guidelines to all farm properties (do mail outreach, not just online) - Description of contingency plans for rationing and agricultural supply shortages - Supports to help keep small agricultural supply stores operational in small communities - Funding programs to support labour needs on-farm - Zero interest loans for producers - Reinstallation of Grow Local program funding (victory garden initiative) - To consider the local needs we highlight, based on our surveys, local knowledge, and engagement 		

Collaboration, community engagement, collective efforts, building networks, and strengthening relationships are key!

NOTES: