



State of Utah

GARY R. HERBERT
Governor

SPENCER J. COX
Lieutenant Governor

Department of Agriculture and Food

KELLY PEHRSON
Interim Commissioner

NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Jack Wilbur
(801) 538-7098
Mobile (801) 243-2801

UDAF is Open for Business:

Important Office and Field Functions will continue as usual

(Salt Lake City) The Utah Department of Agriculture and Food is open for business at our offices and in the field.

“We are a service organization with regulatory responsibilities,” said Interim Commissioner Kelly Pehrson. “Those words have never meant more than they do now. We are committed to helping ensure Utah’s farmers, ranchers and food producers continue to provide safe, healthy food.”

All vital services including food production, animal health and identification, and plant and insect inspections will continue.

When possible some employees will telecommute, but our main office and other established work locations will remain open as usual.

“We also encourage everyone to look for and purchase local Utah food when possible from restaurants, food trucks, grocery stores and farmers markets,” Pehrson said.

As with other industries, some of the smallest agriculture and food businesses are most at financial risk from a possible downturn in business. Many of these small farms and businesses receive most or all of their income from local, direct-to-consumer sales.

“I hope that this time of uncertainty will allow us to appreciate the tireless efforts of our farmers, ranchers and food producers more than ever,” Pehrson concluded.

For businesses and farms that package or process food, we recommend basic precautions be taken by following all of the recommendations provided thus far by the CDC.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html>

Additionally, we urge basic common sense food handling practices:

- Frequent hand washing and sanitizing
- Avoid touching your any part of your face with your hands
- Minimize or eliminate bare hand contact with ready to eat foods being harvested.
- Clean and disinfect door handles and other touch points commonly used by the public, etc.
- Require staff to report any exposure (family, friends, etc.)
- In some cases, consideration may need to be given to either restricting or excluding staff from working or handling food, depending on exposure.

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Note: Here is a link to a Utah's Own video from 2016 with profiles of a few local farms and food businesses.

<https://rb.gy/c5n4w6>

More information about local food is available at <https://utahsown.org>