

24 April 2020

Unite against COVID-19



## Queensland Agricultural Workforce Network is here to help

The Queensland Government's [Queensland Agriculture Workforce Network](#) officers are here to help agribusiness employers during COVID-19 and beyond.

They provide free advice on workforce attraction, retention and ongoing development of the workforce to all Queensland agribusinesses, regardless of commodity or organisation membership. They will work with you to understand your workforce needs and connect you with the most appropriate solution to help grow your business.



If you're an employer in agriculture in Queensland and need additional advice on these services, you can [contact your local agriculture workforce officer](#).

## Monitoring your business continuity response to COVID-19

On Thursday 30 April at 2 pm, BDO's Business Continuity Planning Partner, [Mark Cushing](#) and Food & Agribusiness Executive Director, [Margaux Beauchamp](#) will continue to assist you advance your continuity planning in the context of COVID-19.

The fourth webinar will:

- provide updated information on the COVID-19 response by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries
- outline real life examples of industry continuity responses

- provide practical tips to document your continuity activities.

[Please register here](#) and continue to share your valuable questions in advance of the webinar to help inform and shape the series to your needs.

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## **Drought planning and recovery webinars during COVID-19**

Free drought planning and recovery webinars have been developed to assist small landholders to provide best practice advice about feeding livestock in a drought and making decisions about their future.

Forums held earlier this year in Clifton, Kingaroy, Stanthorpe, Jimboomba and Karara were well attended, however the COVID-19 pandemic has meant these forums could no longer be held as public events.

As a result, the department has creatively repurposed the forums to make them available through three webinars:

- 1: Resilience strategies for small landholders: Managing climate variability, pastures and the feed requirements for horses and sheep
- 2: Drought plans and feed requirements for cattle
- 3: Duty of care to animals.

When registering, submit your questions for the question and answer session that will follow the webinar.

To access the animals in drought portal, or to register to attend a drought planning and recovery webinar on the 6, 8 or 11 May, visit [daf.qld.gov.au/animalsindrought](http://daf.qld.gov.au/animalsindrought).

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## **Freight and export market update bulletin—24 April**

Read our latest [COVID-19 freight and export market update](#) bulletin for the latest information about export markets, air and sea freight availability and opportunities, and government initiatives to support trade during COVID-19.

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## **ESL resources**

A variety of resources have been made available for employers who speak English as a second language to help everyone understand the risks of COVID-19 in the workplace. The [Australian Government](#), [SBS](#) and [Queensland Health](#) all provide a variety of information in more than 20 languages.

Those in agricultural, horticultural, and meat and livestock processing businesses can also seek translation assistance through the [National Translating and Interpreting Service](#).

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## Biosecurity Sciences Laboratory remains open for business

Diagnosing emergency and exotic diseases of livestock, wildlife and aquatic species remains a high priority for Queensland.

Measures are in place to protect the health and safety of our scientists so they can continue their vital work to support agriculture and the community.

Veterinarians can continue to [submit samples](#) for animal disease testing and diagnostics.

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## Help with WHS

Not sure where to start with implementing a workplace health and safety regime for your farm or agribusiness production facility during COVID-19?

Many of our industry partners, including [Growcom](#), have brought together a range of resources, including easy-to-follow guidelines and checklists that can be adapted for your situation.

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## Quick reference guide for support available for small to medium businesses

[Payroll tax relief package](#): If you're an employer (or part of a group of employers) who pays \$6.5 million or less in Australian [taxable wages](#), you may be eligible for a refund of your payroll tax for two months, payroll tax holiday (i.e. no payroll tax to be paid) for three months or a deferral of payroll tax for the 2020 calendar year.

[Temporary relief for financially distressed businesses](#): The Australian Government is temporarily increasing the threshold at which creditors can issue a statutory demand.

[SME power bill relief](#): Small and medium businesses may be eligible for a \$500 rebate off their energy bill.

[Commercial tenancies](#): Relief measures for commercial tenants and landlords. A mandatory [Code of Conduct](#) has been developed by National Cabinet.

[Commercial and residential tenancies](#): Evictions will be put on hold over the next six months for commercial and residential tenancies in financial distress, who are unable to meet their commitments due to the impact of the COVID-19.

Any small business impacted by COVID-19 can now contact the [Rural Financial Counselling Service](#) in the following areas:

- [Southern Queensland](#): phone (07) 4622 5500
- [North Queensland](#): phone (07) 4652 5669

[Boosting cash flow](#): Temporary cash flow support to small and medium businesses through two sets of cash flow boosts to support employers to retain employees. Support will be provided via tax-free cash flow boosts of between \$20,000 and \$100,000.

[Coronavirus SME Guarantee Scheme](#): The Australian Government will provide a guarantee of 50% to support short-term loans.

The Australian Government's [JobKeeper package](#) offers a subsidy of up to \$1500 per fortnight per employee to keep eligible businesses paying their staff. Employers and sole traders can register their interest in this program with the [Australian Tax Office](#).

The [JobKeeper Payment factsheet for employers](#) states the first payment will be received by employers from the ATO in the first week of May.

[Supporting apprentices and trainees](#): Eligible employers can apply for a wage subsidy of 50% of their apprentice's or trainee's wage paid during 1 January 2020 to 30 September 2020.

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## Latest health advice, current status and contact tracing alerts

Visit [Queensland Health](#) for the latest health information and instructions.

Join the [Australian Government WhatsApp group](#) for the latest news and advice.

If you develop a fever, a cough, sore throat or shortness of breath within 14 days of overseas travel, contact a doctor or call 13HEALTH (13 43 25 84).

Social distancing of 1.5 metres: [Social distancing](#) is a public health practice with the key aim to prevent sick people from coming into close contact with others to slow down the spread of a disease.

It also intends to reduce the chance of high-risk groups from becoming infected and to alleviate the burden on our health-care systems and workers.

When is self-isolation required? [What is involved?](#)

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## Mental wellbeing

[Queensland Health's website](#) has information on how to look after your mental wellbeing in a crisis.

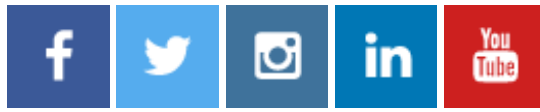
Other contacts:

[Lifeline](#) (Mental health and wellbeing):  
phone 13 11 14

[Beyond Blue](#) (Mental health and wellbeing):  
phone 1300 224 636

[Headspace](#) (Youth mental health and wellbeing): phone 1800 650 890





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