



## COVID-19 Resources for Virginia Farmers, Agribusinesses, and Cooperative Extension Agents and Specialists

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### Introduction

At present, the global pandemic is disrupting many aspects of our lives, and information about the virus and government support programs for individuals and businesses is changing rapidly. To assist farmers, agribusinesses, and cooperative extension agents and specialists find up-to-date information about changing regulations and options for financial relief, I have compiled the following list of online resources from federal and state government entities.

### Information from the federal government

The **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** provides information on symptoms, precautions, data on the outbreak, and what to do if you are sick. Please see <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>.

The **U.S. Department of Agriculture** provides information about the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program and operation of USDA agencies including the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, the Food and Nutrition Service, the Food Safety and Inspection Service, the Forest Service, the Agricultural Marketing Service, the Farm Service Agency, the National Resources Conservation Service, and the Risk Management Agency. It also provides instructions on how to contact local USDA Service Center staff. Please see <https://www.usda.gov/coronavirus>.

For more information about **USDA aid to farm producers**, please see <https://www.farmers.gov/coronavirus>.

For more information about **USDA Rural Development** resources related to COVID-19, including information about financial assistance, please see <https://www.rd.usda.gov/coronavirus> and [https://www.rd.usda.gov/sites/default/files/USDA\\_RD\\_SA\\_COVID19\\_ProgramImmediateActions.pdf](https://www.rd.usda.gov/sites/default/files/USDA_RD_SA_COVID19_ProgramImmediateActions.pdf).

**USDA Rural Development** also provides a **COVID-19 Federal Rural Resource Guide** at the following website: [https://www.rd.usda.gov/sites/default/files/USDA\\_COVID-19\\_Fed\\_Rural\\_Resource\\_Guide.pdf](https://www.rd.usda.gov/sites/default/files/USDA_COVID-19_Fed_Rural_Resource_Guide.pdf).

The **U.S. Small Business Administration's Coronavirus Relief Options** page provides guidance about funding options for qualifying small businesses. The CARES Act of March 27, 2020 established four new funding programs: the Paycheck Protection Program, Economic Injury Disaster Loan Advances, SBA Express Bridge Loans, and SBA Debt Relief. Although the PPP and EIDL programs quickly exhausted their original funding allocations, additional legislation has replenished the funding for these programs, and **explicitly authorized more agricultural enterprises to receive funds from the EIDL program**. SBA will begin processing applications again on April 27, 2020. Please see <https://www.sba.gov/page/coronavirus-covid-19-small-business-guidance-loan-resources>.

The **U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services** website has information on temporary amendments to H-2A requirements. Please see <https://www.uscis.gov/about-us/uscis-response-covid-19>.

The **U.S. Food and Drug Administration** has published some guidance documents for changes in practices under the pandemic, including guidance related to third-party certification programs, the Egg Safety Rule, packaging and labeling of shell eggs, nutrition labeling requirements at chain restaurants, and FSMA enforcement. Please see <https://www.fda.gov/emergency-preparedness-and-response/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/covid-19-related-guidance-documents-industry-fda-staff-and-other-stakeholders>.

The **Environmental Protection Agency** provides a list of disinfectants approved for use against COVID-19, and other resources. Please see <https://www.epa.gov/coronavirus>.

The **U.S. Department of Labor** has guidance and resources available to help employers and employees prepare for and respond to coronavirus in the workplace. Please see <https://www.dol.gov/coronavirus>.

The **Occupational Safety and Health Administration** also provides detailed information on the OSHA standards related to COVID-19. Please see <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/>.

## Information from the Virginia government

The website **Coronavirus (COVID-19) in Virginia** is a directory for all government agencies' information about COVID-19. Please see <https://www.virginia.gov/coronavirus/>.

**Executive Order 55** is a temporary stay at home order and may be read here: [https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/executive-actions/EO-55-Temporary-Stay-at-Home-Order-Due-to-Novel-Coronavirus-\(COVID-19\).pdf](https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/executive-actions/EO-55-Temporary-Stay-at-Home-Order-Due-to-Novel-Coronavirus-(COVID-19).pdf).

The **Virginia Department of Health** posts daily information about the number of cases, hospitalizations, and deaths for each county and independent city in Virginia. Remember that the total number of cases reported are only the number of confirmed and probable cases, but do not include the large number of cases where the virus was

contracted but symptoms are not apparent. Please see <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/>.

The **Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) COVID-19 Emergency Information Center** page has information on the state of emergency in the Commonwealth of Virginia and guidance about farmers' markets, pick-your-own operations, food establishments, grocery and retail food stores, gardeners, and equestrians. Please see <https://www.vdacs.virginia.gov/about-emergency-information.shtml>.

**VDACS** has also posted information about state and federal financial resources for ag and forestry businesses in Virginia, and a summary of the CARES Act. (Note that the information about EIDL is now outdated, as more agricultural businesses are now eligible to apply for EIDL funds.) Please see <https://www.vdacs.virginia.gov/pdf/covid-ag-financial-resources.pdf>.

**Virginia Cooperative Extension** provides guidance on preventative measures, animal science, and healthy living, and guidance for groceries, food banks, farmers' markets and farm stands, foodservice, agribusinesses, families, and community gardens. Please see <https://ext.vt.edu/covid-19updates/resources.html>.

Visit Virginia Cooperative Extension: [ext.vt.edu](http://ext.vt.edu)

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