

COVID-19 Weekly Information Update - August 7 / Mise à jour de la semaine - le 7 août

Hello,

We would like to send you a few updates regarding COVID-19 and ask you to share this information in your networks. Please continue to consult the [AAFC website](#) regularly for updates.

1. **Important news regarding AAFC research in laboratories, barns and greenhouses**

As part of AAFC's plan to increase access to AAFC worksites, a limited number of projects and activities in labs, greenhouses and barns will restart in a staggered fashion while respecting local public health guidance.

The Department is restarting a limited number of these activities at its research centres in St. John's (Newfoundland), St-Hyacinthe (Quebec), Morden (Manitoba) and the Canadian Pari-Mutuel Agency's Reference and Research Laboratory in Ottawa, ON.

Our goal is to re-start lab, greenhouse and barn work in the remaining research centres by the early fall if local health orders remain favourable.

All research activities in labs, greenhouses and barns have been evaluated based on our business priorities to determine a prioritized sequence for gradual re-entry. As such, high priority activities include those related to research projects that: support value-addition for the sector; address climate/environmental challenges; or involve Indigenous and northern agriculture.

Various criteria are being taken into consideration when making these decisions, including:

- The physical set-up of the buildings;
- Our business priorities; and
- The personal circumstances of employees.

In addition, we have ensured that there are contingency plans in place to adjust to the possibility of stricter national or local restrictions.

As always our employees' health and safety remain the utmost importance. We appreciate your patience and understanding during this time as we work through these logistics.

2. **Government of Canada Essential Services Contingency Reserve (ESCR) NOW OPEN**

The [Essential Services Contingency Reserve \(ESCR\)](#) opened on August 3rd for registration and applications to purchase personal protective equipment (PPE) on a cost recovery basis. The ESCR is for all critical infrastructure sectors and is to help address urgent PPE needs when all other sources of supply are unavailable and when a significant disruption in the delivery of essential services to Canadians is imminent. Industry associations are encouraged to apply on behalf of their respective sectors. To begin the registration process of your organization, please [register here](#).

3. **Canadian Emergency Business Account (CEBA) – New Eligible Non-Deferrable Expense category**

Originally launched on April 9, 2020, [CEBA](#) is intended to support businesses by providing financing for their expenses that cannot be avoided or deferred as they take steps to safely navigate a period of shutdown, thereby helping to position businesses for successful relaunch when the economy reopens.

A recent change and enhancement to the program was made with the addition of a [new Eligible Non-Deferrable Expense category](#) for “**payments incurred for materials consumed to produce a product ordinarily offered for sale by the borrower.**” These expenses reflect payments for input materials that are consumed or transformed in producing, or in becoming part of, the product that is ordinarily offered for sale, such as raw materials, ingredients, supplies, seed or livestock feed.

Thank you,

Industry Engagement Division
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
Government of Canada