

We would like to share with you a few updates related to COVID-19 that you may find of interest. Please do not hesitate to share this information with your networks.

Please continue to consult the [AAFC website](#) regularly for updates. This week, we added information on the Agri-Stability Estimator and the Mandatory Isolation Support for Temporary Foreign Workers Program.

1) Mandatory Isolation Support for Temporary Foreign Workers Program (MISTFWP)

Earlier this week, we sent you an email to inform you that AAFC is now accepting applications under the under the MISTWFP. Eligible employers can receive a maximum contribution of \$1,500 per temporary foreign worker for incremental costs incurred during the mandatory 14-day quarantine period.

On May 8, 2020, Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) also sent an email directly to employers in the agriculture, fish, seafood, and food processing sectors, providing them with information on the Program.

Find out more information about the program, including how to apply [here](#). For ease of reference, please find attached the application form. Please contact Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada with any questions at 1-877-246-4682 or by email: aafc.MISP-PAIO.aac@canada.ca.

2) Agri-Stability Estimator

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada has developed an [Agri-Stability Estimator](#) to provide an online aid to help producers understand how the AgriStability program works, how program benefits are calculated and how different scenarios can impact their operations.

The Estimator is a single web page, similar to a mortgage calculator. It allows producers to adjust their program year income and expenses to instantly see how benefits are impacted as a result of the changes to income and expenses. Similar to a mortgage calculator, the AgriStability Estimator is designed to give a rough idea of how the program will respond to circumstances impacting producers' operations. It is not designed to calculate an exact payment.

To use the Estimator, producers can enter high level estimates, they can draw from their Statement of Farming Activities that they file each year to the Canada Revenue Agency or they can use information from their AgriStability Calculation of Program Benefits statement from previous years.

3) Additional flexibility to the TFW program

On May 12, 2020, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) [announced](#), effective immediately, a new, temporary policy that will drastically reduce the time it takes for a temporary foreign worker to start a new job.

This temporary policy will allow temporary workers who are in Canada with an employer-specific work permit to quickly change employers when they find a new job as long as their status has not expired. Previously, a worker couldn't begin working in a new position until a new work permit was issued, which often meant weeks without being able to work. The change brings what was weeks down to days.

4) Agri-Food Immigration Pilot now open

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, IRCC had delayed the opening of the application process for the Agri-Food Immigration Pilot. As of May 15, 2020, you can now [apply](#).

The Agri-Food Immigration Pilot helps address the labour needs of the Canadian agri-food sector by testing a new industry-specific approach. The pilot is designed to help address the labour needs of the Canadian agri-food sector, particularly in year-round mushroom and greenhouse crop production, meat processing and livestock raising industries, and attract experienced, non-seasonal workers who can settle in Canada.

This pilot will be accepting applications until May 14, 2023 (up to 2,750 principal applicants per year over three years).

Eligible industries for the Agri-Food Immigration Pilot are:

- meat product manufacturing (NAICS 3116)
- greenhouse, nursery and floriculture production, including mushroom production (NAICS 1114)
- animal production, excluding aquaculture (NAICS 1121, 1122, 1123, 1124 or 1129)

5) Additional support for businesses

On May 11, 2020, the Prime Minister Justin Trudeau [announced](#) new measures to support businesses, including:

- Establishing a Large Employer Emergency Financing Facility (LEEFF) to provide bridge financing to Canada's largest employers.
- Expanding the Business Credit Availability Program (BCAP) to mid-sized companies with larger financing needs. Support for mid-market businesses will include loans of up to \$60 million per company, and guarantees of up to \$80 million.

6) Wave 2 of the Employee Absenteeism Survey is now open

In April, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada launched an online survey to better understand employee absenteeism in the food processing sector during the COVID-19 pandemic. This survey continues to be a critical tool to help decision-makers

understand the scope of employee absenteeism issues that are affecting food companies across Canada.

Results from Wave 1 confirmed that about half of the companies that responded were struggling with absenteeism during the period of March 29th – April 4th.

The survey tool for Wave 2 is now [open](#) for the period of May 3-9. The questions have remained the same in order to help understand how the situation is evolving in the food industry. The survey is open until May 21, 2020, for all to complete, regardless of whether your company participated in Wave 1. Confidentiality will be fully protected.

If you would like more information about the survey or should you encounter a technical difficulty, please contact: aafc.por-rop.aac@canada.ca.