

## Donna Boggs

**From:** Ag Association Management Services, Inc <chris@agamsi.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 30, 2020 12:16 PM  
**To:** Donna Boggs  
**Subject:** AAMSI Update on COVID-19 Situation

June 30, 2020

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SPECIAL **COVID-19 UPDATE**  
FROM YOUR TEAM AT AAMSI



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### New Report: Economic Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on California Agriculture

A new report funded in part by Ag Association Management Services, is getting broad media coverage. The report concludes that pandemic-related losses to California farms, ranches and agriculture businesses will reach between \$5.9 billion and \$8.6 billion this year. This includes year-to-date impacts of \$2 billion.

According to the report, impacts of the pandemic vary widely among different parts of the agricultural economy depending on how much a particular crop or commodity relies on sales to foodservice, how much it has been affected by shifts in retail demand and changes in costs of production and processing.

The report was produced by Davis-based ERA Economics and was commissioned by a coalition of ag groups including AAMSI, California Farm Bureau Federation, UnitedAg, California Fresh Fruit Association, California Strawberry Commission, California Tomato Growers Association and Western Plant Health Association.

AAMSI President Chris Zanobini was quoted in a press release issued last week. According to Zanobini, "Along with loss of key markets due to food service disappearing overnight or flower shops and garden centers not being allowed to operate in certain areas, we are now adapting to significant increased operational costs that many California farmers will never recoup."

It's hoped the report will be useful in communicating with California legislators and the Newsom Administration about the impact of coronavirus on California agriculture as the state continues to recover from the shutdown of businesses.

The full report can be found [here](#). The analysis uses a combination of production, expert and price data, extensive industry interviews and surveys sent to key businesses. It provides an overview of the pandemic's impact and details conditions for individual commodities including dairy, beef, poultry, rice, cotton, grapes, citrus, hay/feed crop, cherries/tree fruit, floriculture/nurseries, vegetables/dried beans and olive oil. In addition, the report covers impacts on agricultural businesses and support industries such as seeds, plant breeders, warehousing, pesticide and pesticide services and agricultural industry associations.

## Access to Important COVID-19 Testing

A critical component of policies in place at agricultural worksites is a plan to access testing for employees who may have symptoms related to COVID-19 as well as for workers exposed to anyone who has or may have contracted the virus. Access and cost of testing varies widely throughout the state and has been reported to be severely limited in some rural areas of the state where many of you operate.

In an attempt to assist the community in finding testing sites, an online portal has been created and is available [here](#). The site allows you to search for testing sites in your specific location.

We encourage you to take a look at this map and to contact these facilities in your area for more information so you are prepared to advise your workers on where they can get tested. Some employers have also been able to make arrangements to utilize mobile testing sites or to have tests done at their location.

When it comes to paying for tests, it is largely going to be the responsibility of the employer to cover costs of testing your workers. This will ensure the tests happen. As noted above, there is currently a wide range of pricing with some tests running in hundreds of dollars and some offered free of charge. Work is being done now to reduce costs and provide more free testing facilities. The length of time it's taking to receive test results is also a problem and is something that must be improved if we are to successfully protect workers.

We shared this information last week, but we once again encourage ag businesses to familiarize yourselves with this [checklist](#) offered by CDC as you are developing policies for dealing with workers who test positive for COVID-19.

## Update to County Ordinances

Ordinances in specific counties are once again fluctuating with additional directives from Governor Newsom. The link below provides the latest list of updated ordinances by county and includes changes to several counties.

Imperial County in particular has been severely impacted. The state is now advising the county to pull back from reopening and reinstitute their stay at home order. Over 500 individuals have been transferred out of the hospital system there in the last few weeks to decompress their local system.

The positivity rate in Imperial county over a 14-day period is about 23%, which is well over the 10% threshold needed to get onto the monitoring list.

We will continue to keep you updated as the county ordinances evolve.

[Download County Ordinances Here](#)

## New Online Portal Connects Businesses with PPE

Governor Newsom announced last week a formal partnership between the California Manufacturers & Technology Association (CMTA) and the State of California creating the "Safely Making California" Marketplace to help fill a critical gap during the COVID19 pandemic. The program went online this week to connect CMTA member manufacturers and other manufacturers to employers who have the need to purchase non-medical grade Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

As part of this effort, a new online portal has been created at <https://www.safelymakingca.org/>.

Many employment sectors have indicated over the past few weeks that protection equipment is their top priority for reopening and staying open. Hundreds of small to mid-size California manufacturers have indicated they would be ready to produce and supply gear for those sectors if they had a portal like this.

To help ensure manufacturers have what they need to stay operational to actually make the protective gear for other sectors, the site is also connecting the sector to the California Office of Emergency Services' program for allocated free PPE while their supplies last. There is a form for manufacturers to fill out to request face masks and sanitizer.

More information is available in a [press release](#) issued Friday.

## USDA Adds Digital Options for Farmers and Ranchers to Apply for Coronavirus Food Assistance Program

USDA's Farm Service Agency will now accept applications for the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) through an online portal, expanding the options available to producers to apply for this program, which helps offset price declines and additional marketing costs because of the coronavirus pandemic. FSA is also leveraging commercial document storage and e-signature solutions to enable producers to work with local service center staff to complete their applications from home.

"We are doing everything we can to serve our customers and make sure agricultural producers impacted by the pandemic can quickly and securely apply for this relief program," said FSA Administrator Richard Forgyce. "In addition to working with FSA staff through the phone, email and scheduled in-person appointments, we can now also take applications through the [farmers.gov](https://farmers.gov) portal, which saves producers and our staff time."

Through the portal, producers with secure USDA login credentials—known as eAuthentication—can certify eligible commodities online, digitally sign applications and submit directly to the local USDA Service Center. Producers who do not have an eAuthentication account can learn more and begin the enrollment process at [farmers.gov/sign-in](https://farmers.gov/sign-in). Currently, the digital application is only available to sole proprietors or single-member business entities.

USDA Service Centers can also work with producers to complete and securely transmit digitally signed applications through two commercially available tools: Box and OneSpan. Producers who are interested in digitally signing their applications should notify their local

service centers when calling to discuss the CFAP application process. You can learn more about these solutions at [farmers.gov/mydocs](https://farmers.gov/mydocs).

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