

E-Newsletter

An update from Manitoba Beef Producers

MANITOBA ANNOUNCES MAJOR INVESTMENTS IN FLOOD PROTECTION WHILE MODERNIZING PROVINCIAL DISASTER FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Flood Protection Program Supports Municipalities In Building Future Flood Resiliency: Squires

The province will invest nearly \$8 million to support more than 80 Manitoba municipalities with enhancing spring flood preparations and protection, Municipal Relations Minister Rochelle Squires and Infrastructure Minister Ron Schuler announced March 26.

“Manitobans always rally together in challenging times and while we are facing unprecedented global circumstances, our government is helping municipalities take important steps to enhance flood protection,” Squires said. “Municipalities know best what will work for them, and this program is designed to help ensure protection put in place this year will benefit communities for many years to come.”

Under the 2020 Flood Protection Program, the province offered one-time funding support to municipalities in enhancing municipal capacity for flood preparedness, equipment costs and build resiliency for future floods. Initially, the one-time program was capped at \$3 million, but in light of the need for preparation this spring, the funding will more than double for projects in areas all across Manitoba, the minister said.

This funding will bring added resources for projects and equipment for the crews who will be working on flood protection in areas all across Manitoba, while boosting economic activity during extraordinary global challenges, the minister noted.

Proposals were reviewed by a panel made up of representatives from the Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM), Winnipeg Metropolitan Region and the Manitoba government. Evaluation of proposals considered factors including flood risk, ability of the proposal to enhance emergency preparedness or resiliency for future flood events, as well as potential regional benefits.

Based on applications, the breakdown for funding by district is:

- Central District – \$1,271,662.07 for 14 municipalities;
- Eastern District – \$776,451.01 for 10 municipalities;
- Interlake District – \$1,059,167.70 for 10 municipalities;
- Midwestern District – \$715,082.41 for nine municipalities;
- Northern District – \$76,899.00 for two municipalities;
- Parkland District – \$759,262.68 for 11 municipalities;
- Western District – \$1,139,583.73 for 15 municipalities; and
- Winnipeg Metropolitan Region – \$2,041,770.52 for 13 municipalities.

“The Association of Manitoba Municipalities commends the provincial government for more than doubling its initial commitment to support the Spring Flood Preparedness program,” said Ralph Groening, president of the AMM. “As municipalities cannot fight floods alone, these additional dollars further help underscore the importance of the provincial-municipal partnership.”

“The Winnipeg Metropolitan Region commends the Province of Manitoba for providing support through the 2020 Flood Protection Program in such a timely and direct way, as municipalities are on the front lines in flood fighting across this province. With an important focus on partnerships and projects that cross jurisdictions, this program will ensure resources are used for the maximum benefit of all Manitobans,” Colleen Sklar, executive director, Winnipeg Metropolitan Region.

The funding covers a range of items including generators, pumps, steaming equipment to unclog frozen culverts, utility trailers, equipment for emergency operations centres, sandbags and other small equipment that will assist municipalities in protecting vital infrastructure and reducing flood damage. These items reflect what municipalities have identified as their priority needs in order to prepare for future flood events.

Also announced was a new opportunity for municipalities to set aside funding for disaster mitigation programs in their communities while modernizing the Disaster Financial Assistance (DFA) cost-sharing formula.

“We have developed an optional program for municipalities to apply to set aside funds dedicated to disaster mitigation and increase the resilience of Manitobans against future disasters,” said Squires. “If approved, municipalities would be able to redirect funds destined for payments under the provincial/municipal DFA cost-sharing formula to disaster mitigation and preparedness measures.”

“The existing DFA system is a decade old and needs to be revised,” said Schuler. “As the scale and scope of disasters increases, governments need to shift their focus to mitigation in order to limit the impact of future disasters, rather than relying on response and recovery.”

If approved, municipalities would be able to redirect funds destined for payments under the provincial/municipal DFA cost-sharing formula to disaster mitigation and preparedness measures. This would apply when a DFA program qualifies for federal cost sharing under Canada’s Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangements (DFAA). In this case, the province would reimburse municipalities for 100 per cent of eligible DFA costs.

MBP is open for business - virtually!

In light of the unprecedented challenges our province is facing with COVID-19, Manitoba Beef Producers' staff will be working remotely until Monday, April 13 at which time we will provide a further update. Our office hours remain 8:30am-4:30pm, Monday to Friday.

Please continue to contact us through all our regular channels including:

Telephone: 204-772-4542 or toll-free 1-800-772-0458

Fax: 204-774-3264

Email: info@mbbeef.ca

Social media:  [Manitoba Beef Producers](#)  [@ManitobaBeef](#)

We also encourage you to visit the [Government of Manitoba](#) or the [Public Health Agency of Canada](#) for reliable information about COVID-19.

For industry updates please visit <https://www.mbbeef.ca/news/covid-19-updates/>



A look at the news and articles of interest to the beef industry

[Editorial: coronavirus situation offers strange times](#)

[‘We’re in unknown territory’: Agriculture sector scrambling to offset consequences of COVID-19 pandemic](#)

[‘Old farmers’ share their wisdom](#)

[Young and farming in Austria](#)

[Cancellation of winter fair a multimillion-dollar blow to local economy: Brandon mayor](#)

Flood protection continued from page 1

Proposed changes to the Disaster Financial Assistance program will result in municipalities covering the first \$3.25 per capita, up from \$1 per capita, before the DFA formula applies.

Further details are available at www.manitobaemo.ca.

A full list of the 2020 Flood Protection Program projects is available at: www.gov.mb.ca/mr/mfas/flood_preparedness_funding_2020.html.

Highlights from 2020-21 Provincial Budget Speech

<https://www.gov.mb.ca/budget2020/>

The following are some key highlights from the 2020-21 provincial budget which was read in the Manitoba Legislature on March 19.

Green Levy and PST announcements – on, then off

On budget day, the province announced it would be introducing a made-in-Manitoba Green Levy effective July 1 at a flat \$25 per tonne that will not increase each year. At that time the government indicated it planned to offset the impact of the Green Levy by lowering the Provincial Sales Tax (PST) rate to six per cent as of July 1.

However, during a March 26 news conference Premier Brian Pallister indicated that due to the enormous financial implications of the COVID-19 situation the planned PST cut will not be taking place as announced in the budget, postponed to a future date. The implementation of the Green Levy is also being deferred at this time. He told the media that ““The gap between the revenues that were coming in and what's coming in now is enormous, and the need to borrow additional money is enormous.” (As cited in the March 26, 2020 online edition of the *Winnipeg Free Press*.)

Other finance-related budget announcements included a commitment to continuing to index the Basic Personal Amount, saving Manitobans \$16.2 million in taxes in the 2020 tax year. The personal income tax exemption will go up to \$9,809. The province is also eliminating all probate fees as of July 1. Vehicle registration fees are to be cut by 10 per cent July 1. Fees for preparing personal income tax returns are not to be subject to the provincial sales tax as of Oct. 1.

Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin Outlet Channels Project

- The government again stated its commitment to completing the Lake Manitoba and Lake St. Martin Outlet Channels Project “as soon as possible” with \$101 million allocated for this initiative.

- Additionally, there was also the following statement from the provincial Budget Papers: “While the Government of Canada’s commitment to this project was first made in Budget 2016, a federal funding agreement is still being negotiated, resulting in further delays. We are committed to getting this project built and we hope the federal government will work with us on the next phase.”

Emergency management and infrastructure

- To ensure the province is ready to handle the risk of flooding this spring, Budget 2020 increases the budget for emergency expenditures to \$100 million.

- There is also \$5.7 million in funding for the Department of Infrastructure to react quickly to smaller-scale floods or other emergency events.

- The budget allocates \$500,000 to support emergency preparedness and response related to animal health and welfare. No details were provided about this.

- Funding for Manitoba Infrastructure increases by 7.2 per cent, to \$494 million. Capital funding for highways rises slightly by \$12.5 million, to \$362.5 million.

- The budget includes a one-time capital investment of \$45 million for “climate resiliency projects”, but no details were provided.

Justice

- The budget provides an additional \$6 million for provincial police service agreements including funding for 27 additional police officers.

- There is a commitment of \$5 million to fight crime and gang activity.

Education

- The government restated its commitment to eliminating the education portion of property taxes. It said that “the phase-out will begin the first year after the budget is balanced, and will be completed over a maximum of 10 years. Once fully implemented, the average homeowner will save more than \$2,000 annually.”

- The budget contained a \$4.8-million increase to the Manitoba Scholarship and Bursary Program including \$1.8 million for the Manitoba Bursary Program and \$3 million for the Manitoba Scholarship and Bursary Initiative.

- More than \$41 million in interest-free loans will be made available for post-secondary students

COVID-19 BULLETIN #33

Public health officials advise three additional probable cases of COVID-19 have been identified as of 9:30 a.m., bringing the total number of lab-confirmed positive and probable positive cases in Manitoba to 39 at this time. Manitoba has also recorded its first patient death. Patient specific details are not being released at this time.

Public health investigations are underway to determine additional details and to confirm the possible exposure of this/these case/cases.

As authorized under The Public Health Act, the following measures will be in place, effective 12:01 a.m. on Monday, March 30. Public gatherings will be limited to no more than 10 people at any indoor or outdoor place or premises. This includes places of worship, gatherings and family events such as weddings and funerals. This does not apply to a facility where health care or social services are provided including child-care centres and homeless shelters. Retail businesses including grocery or food stores, shopping centres, pharmacies or gas stations must ensure separation of one to two metres between patrons assembling in the business. Public transportation facilities must also ensure that people assembling at the facility are reasonably able to maintain a separation of one to two metres.

Other restrictions first introduced in a public health order issued on March 20 remain in effect.

Cadham Provincial Laboratory performed 606 tests on Thursday. As of March 26, a total of 6,203 tests have been performed.

Public health officials are strongly advising all Manitobans, including health-care providers, to cancel or postpone any non-essential travel. This includes international travel and travel within Canada. There should be no recreational, tourist or non-essential personal travel. In addition, public health officials recommended that effective March 23, anyone who returns from international or domestic travel should self-isolate and self-monitor for symptoms for 14 days following their return.

This recommendation does not include:

- the commercial transportation of goods and services;
- workers who live in a neighbouring jurisdiction and travel to Manitoba for work;
- health care workers who travel to work from outside the province;
- normal personal travel in border communities, including visits to a cottage.

Any person concerned about their exposure to or risk of having COVID-19 should call Health Links–Info Santé at 204-788-8200 or (toll-free) at 1-888-315-9257 to be screened to see if a test is required.

Additional drive-thru community testing sites opened today in Eriksdale at the Eriksdale Wellness Centre, 35 Railway Ave., 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday to Friday and in Portage la Prairie at the Stride Centre, 245 Royal Rd., from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. daily. A community testing site will open Monday, March 30 in Pine Falls at École Powerview School, 33 Vincent St., from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday to Friday.

The community testing site in The Pas has relocated to the Royal Canadian Legion at 4 Veterans Way and will continue to be open Monday to Friday, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. This will bring the total to 15 community testing sites including six drive-thru locations. The public is reminded that a referral to these sites is needed and they are not walk-in clinics. Information on locations and hours of operation are available at www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/locations.html.

Moving forward, the province will continue to share updates on the total number of cases but additional patient information such as gender, age, and the regional health authority where they reside will be provided online once it is confirmed through public health investigation. The province is also working to provide an additional breakdown of information online including the number of hospitalizations, home recovery and cases that are resolved. This reporting is in line with reporting in other jurisdictions and ensures consistent, accurate data is available to the public.

Information about flights where a person with a lab-confirmed case of COVID-19 had symptoms at the time of travel is updated at www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/flights.html as information becomes available.

For more information and to access the online screening tool for COVID-19, visit: www.manitoba.ca/covid19.

Government of Manitoba Media Release - March 27, 2020

Prime Minister announces support for farmers and agri-food businesses under Canada's response to COVID-19

(Office of the Prime Minister News Release) Canadian farmers and food businesses work hard so Canadians have quality food on their grocery store shelves and kitchen tables. In these times of uncertainty, it is more important than ever to make sure that they are supported so they can continue providing the good, healthy food that nourishes our families.

The Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, announced on March 23 important new measures to support farmers and agri-food businesses in Canada facing financial hardship due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Farm Credit Canada will receive support from the Government of Canada that will allow for an additional \$5 billion in lending capacity to producers, agribusinesses, and food processors. This will offer increased flexibility to farmers who face cash flow issues and to processors who are impacted by lost sales, helping them remain financially strong during this difficult time.

In addition, all eligible farmers who have an outstanding Advance Payments Program (APP) loan due on or before April 30 will receive a Stay of Default, allowing them an additional six months to repay the loan. This important measure, which represents \$173 million in deferred loans, will help keep more money in farmers' pockets during these critical months.

The Stay of Default will also provide farmers the flexibility they need to manage their cash flow when facing lower prices or reduced marketing opportunities. Applicable farmers who still have interest-free loans outstanding will have the opportunity to apply for an additional \$100,000 interest-free portion for 2020-2021, as long as their total APP advances remain under the \$1 million cap.

The Government of Canada remains committed to supporting Canada's agricultural sector to ensure that farmers and businesses have the support they need to provide for their families and all Canadians during this critical time.

Quotes

"Farmers and food producers work hard to put food on tables across our country, and they should not have to worry about being able to afford their loan payments or having enough money to support their own families. We are taking action now to give them more flexibility to meet the challenges ahead in these times of uncertainty."

The Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada

"Like many Canadians, I am truly grateful for our farmers and food business owners and employees, who continue working hard so we all have quality food on our grocery store shelves and kitchen tables. Their continued work is essential to our plan to manage COVID-19. The measures announced today will provide farmers and food producers across the country with important financial flexibility they will need during these challenging times."

The Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food

Quick Facts

- Grains, oilseeds, and pulse producers who participated in the 2018 Stay of Default [announced this summer](#), are encouraged to contact their administrator for more details. Cattle, bison, flower, and potted plant producers should also contact their APP administrator to enquire about their eligibility for the Stay of Default.

- [The Advance Payments Program](#) is a financial loan guarantee program that provides producers easy access to credit through cash advances. For the 2019 program year, there are over 21,000 producers participating and over \$3 billion in advances.

- Administrators participating in the Stay of Default are the Alberta Sugar Beet Growers, Alberta Wheat Commission, BC Breeder and Feeder Association, Canadian Canola Growers Association, Manitoba Corn Growers Association Inc., **Manitoba Livestock Cash Advance Inc.**, Western Cash Advance Program Inc., PEI Federation of Agriculture, and the Agricultural Credit Corporation.

- Farm Credit Canada is our country's leading agriculture and food lender, with a healthy loan portfolio of more than \$38 billion. The Crown corporation provides flexible, competitively priced financing, management software, information, and knowledge specifically designed for the agriculture and food industries. · Farmers will continue to have support under the [Canadian Agricultural Partnership](#). The comprehensive suite of business risk management programs are designed to help manage significant financial impacts and risks beyond farmers' control.

- The new deadlines for outstanding Advance Payments Program loans are as follows:

- o September 30, 2020: 2018 cash advances for grains, oilseeds, and pulses.

- o September 30, 2020: 2018 cash advances for cattle and bison.

- o October 31, 2020: 2019 cash advances on flowers and potted plants



CANADIAN
CATTLEMEN'S
ASSOCIATION

National Voice Of Cattle Producers

Recommendations

Recommendations to Government of Canada Financial Support for Beef Producers

March 24, 2020

To assist the Government of Canada in their approach to help producers in light of impacts from COVID-19, CCA put together recommendations to provide immediate stop-gap support for producers to keep their operations financially sustainable and ensure the health and welfare of producers, their cattle, and the Canadian Cattle Industry as we navigate through this global crisis.

Our recommendations are:

- CCA and industry stakeholders to work with the federal government to ensure Canada's entire food supply chain is designated 'Critical Infrastructure' as part of the National Strategy for Critical Infrastructure under the Emergency Management Framework and the Emergency Management Act – thereby ensuring our plants and borders remain open, operating at full capacity, and cattle and beef products are permitted to flow uninterrupted through the beef value chain domestically and internationally.
- Have COVID-19 pandemic deemed a 'Natural Disaster' under the AgriRecovery Program.
 - a) Agri-Recovery should be triggered immediately and be used as the vehicle to compensate producers in a timely matter. The Canadian beef industry stands ready to collaborate with government to estimate these real-time losses.
 - b) High producer participation in AgriInvest may be prove a useful mechanism to disseminate immediate relief to producers directly affected by the market down-turn, however the current allowable net sales (ANS) calculation does not work as a support mechanism for the cattle industry when compared to other agricultural sectors. We also emphasize that producers not enrolled in AgriInvest or other Business Risk Management programming be treated equitably in an AgriRecovery response.
- Eliminate immediately the \$3 million payment cap on AgriStability and invoke the Late Participation clause to help producers access needed support to deal with income losses. And further, enhance AgriStability to provide meaningful, long-term support to the beef industry by:
 - a) Removing Reference Margin Limiting;
 - b) Processing claims more quickly, including requests for interim payments; and
 - c) Increasing the AgriStability trigger to 85 per cent for 2019-20 program year and for remainder of Canadian Agricultural Partnership.
- Provide extension to producers to repay cash advances under the Advance Payments Program.
 - a) The Stay of Default will provide additional flexibility to repay advances for farmers that may be facing lower prices, reduced marketing opportunities, or a decrease in farm cash income.

*The CCA is the national voice for Canada's beef cattle industry representing 60,000 beef farms and feedlots.
Visit www.cattle.ca*

Continued on next page

- Modify cattle price insurance programs to include a cost-shared premium structure similar to crop insurance programs across Canada, as well as expedite the development and deployment of an Eastern Settlement Index.
- To provide financial institutions with the necessary backstop to expand Overdraft Operating Credit provisions for producers.
 - a) Federal Government to provide financial guarantees to the financial institutions to allow for “Temporary Overdraft Operating Credit Bulge” (Bulge) for a period of 200 days during this crisis, that would relieve a significant impediment to normal operations. The Bulge facilities would need to be supported by customers, through financial statements and projections, their plan and needs for the temporary measure. After the time period, the Bulge is removed, and the credit facility reverts to pre-existing terms and conditions.
- In preparation for a potential major beef supply chain disruption across Canada, establish the infrastructure and governance for a federal Fed-Cattle Set-Aside Program.
 - a) Feedlot producers would bid to extend the feeding period of cattle up to a maximum of \$2/head per day for up to 90 days. Bids could operate on a weekly or bi-weekly basis, as determined by an established governing committee. Program design would be similar to the model used in 2004 during BSE, which included a governing committee, calls for bids from cattle feeders, hold back of enrolled animals, etc. Governing committee appointments would include independent business and financial experts. The fundamental difference between this new iteration of a set-aside program from 2004 would be its permanence. The program would remain in place as a possible mechanism to address seasonal surpluses in Ontario, and in the event of any major disruption to the beef supply chain across Canada.

For further information, please contact: feedback@cattle.ca

COVID-19 Resources

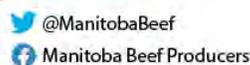
The Canadian Cattlemen’s Association (CCA) is collaborating with industry stakeholders and the Government of Canada (GoC) to ensure both stable beef production and trade during and following the COVID-19 pandemic. Ensuring Canadians have continued access to nutritious beef products is a top priority in these discussions. For updates, information and practical resources to help navigate the challenging landscape of COVID-19, please [click here](#).



Forage Insurance Review

The Minister of Agriculture and Resource Development wants to better understand the decisions of Manitoba producers when it comes to forage insurance products available through MASC.

To allow more producers to provide their input for the review, the online survey has been extended to March 31 and a paper version is available for those that may not have ability or comfort with completing it online.



The review will ask producers about insurance products, how they currently manage risks and how the program can evolve to support growth in the livestock sector.

Follow our social media channels for information on upcoming online surveys, in-person consultations, or how to submit your comments to MBP.

Canada provides update on exemptions to travel restrictions to protect Canadians and support the economy

The Government of Canada is providing an update on travel restrictions put in place to stem the spread of COVID-19.

Exemptions to the air travel restrictions will apply to foreign nationals who have already committed to working, studying or making Canada their home, and travel by these individuals will be considered essential travel for land border restrictions.

The exemptions include

- seasonal agricultural workers, fish/seafood workers, caregivers and all other temporary foreign workers
- international students who held a valid study permit, or had been approved for a study permit, when the travel restrictions took effect on March 18, 2020
- permanent resident applicants who had been approved for permanent residence before the travel restrictions were announced on March 16, 2020, but who had not yet travelled to Canada.

In addition, a temporary modification is being made to the Labour Market Impact Assessment process for agriculture and food processing employers, as the required 2-week recruitment period will be waived for the next 6 months.

We are also increasing the maximum allowable employment duration for workers in the low-wage stream of the Temporary Foreign Worker Program from 1 to 2 years. This will improve flexibility and reduce the administrative burden for employers, including those in food processing.

To safeguard the continuity of trade, commerce, health and food security for all Canadians, temporary foreign workers in agriculture, agri-food, seafood processing and other key industries will be allowed to travel to Canada under exemptions being put in place to the air travel restrictions that took effect on March 18.

In addition to health screening protocols before travel, all individuals entering from abroad must isolate for 14 days upon their arrival in Canada.

Allowing foreign workers to enter Canada recognizes their vital importance to the Canadian economy, including food security for Canadians and the success of Canadian food producers. The arrival of farm workers and fish/seafood workers is essential to ensure that planting and harvesting activities can take place. There will always be jobs available for Canadians who wish to work on farms and at food processing plants.

Those affected by these exemptions should not try to travel to Canada immediately. We will announce when the exemptions are in place, which we anticipate will be early next week.

These exemptions follow others announced earlier this week, for

- foreign nationals travelling at the invitation of the Canadian government for a purpose related to the containment of COVID-19
- close family members of Canadian citizens
- close family members of Canadian permanent residents
- a person who is authorized, in writing, by a consular officer of the Government of Canada to enter Canada for the purpose of reuniting immediate family members
- a person registered as an Indian under the Indian Act
- accredited diplomats and family members (including NATO, those under the United Nations Headquarters Agreement, other organizations)
- air crews
- any foreign national, or group of foreign nationals, whose entry would be in the national interest, as determined by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, the Minister of Public Safety
- members of the Canadian military, visiting forces and their family members
- transiting passengers

Quotes

“Our government will continue to take the measures necessary to protect the health and safety of Canadians, including putting in place social distancing, isolation and travel restrictions to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Today’s announcement will ensure both a robust response to addressing the spread of the virus, and that our farmers, fishers and other producers have the workers they need, when they need them, to strengthen Canada’s food security and provide other vital services.”

– **The Honourable Marco E. L. Mendicino, P.C., M.P., Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship**

“Temporary foreign workers are important for sectors with critical labour needs— notably agriculture. Our government is taking strong measures to protect the health and safety of Canadians during the COVID-19 pandemic. These exemptions will provide the short-term workforce support necessary to maintain our high-standard levels of trade, commerce, and food security.”

– **The Honourable Carla Qualtrough, P.C., M.P., Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion**

“The participation of temporary foreign workers on our farms and in our food businesses is absolutely necessary. It is nothing less than an issue of food security. We are making sure that our food supply chain is not compromised by the closure of our borders, as we now need thousands of workers on the farms for the planting season as well as the processing of foods from the land and sea.”

– **The Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau, P.C., M.P., Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada**

“We’ve heard the call from our fish and seafood sector and we’re responding. These exemptions mean local processors on both coasts will have access to the workers they need to keep feeding Canadians and global citizens with healthy, high-quality food sources. These are unprecedented times and we will continue to work across government and at all levels to ensure Canadians are safe and the economy is supported.”

– **The Honourable Bernadette Jordan, P.C., M.P., Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard**

March 20, 2020 Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada News Release

The COVID-19 Emergency Response Act Receives Royal Assent

March 25, 2020 News Release From: [Department of Finance Canada](#)

The Government of Canada is taking strong, immediate and effective action to protect Canadians and our economy from the impacts of the global COVID-19 pandemic.

Bill C-13, the COVID-19 Emergency Response Act, today received Royal Assent, guaranteeing the rapid implementation and administration of measures to protect Canadians' health and safety and stabilize the Canadian economy. The authorities in this legislation makes sure that the government can do what it takes to support Canadians and Canadian businesses, and the economy as whole, in a timely way, today and in the future, as the situation continues to evolve.

The Government's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan provides direct support to Canadian workers and businesses, plus \$55 billion through tax deferrals, to help meet the cash needs of Canadian businesses and households, and to help stabilize the economy. This comprehensive support helps ensure that Canadians can pay for essentials like housing and groceries, as well as helps businesses continue to pay their employees and their bills during this time of uncertainty.

This legislation:

- Supports the agriculture and agri-food sector by amending the Farm Credit Canada (FCC) Act to temporarily provide the Minister of Finance with the flexibility to set the limit on the amounts that may be paid by the Minister of Finance to FCC out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund to ensure continued availability of credit to businesses in the agriculture and agri-food sector.
- Provides additional assistance to families with children by temporarily boosting Canada Child Benefit payments, delivering almost \$2 billion in extra support.
- Provides additional assistance to individuals and families with low and modest incomes with a special top-up payment under the Goods and Services Tax (GST) credit, delivering \$5.5 billion in support.
- Introduces a Canada Emergency Response Benefit providing a taxable benefit of \$2,000 a month for up to 4 months to support workers who lose their income as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The benefit would cover Canadians who have lost their job, are sick, quarantined, or taking care of someone who is sick with COVID-19, as well as working parents who must stay home without pay to care for children who are sick or at home because of school and daycare closures. Additionally, workers who are still employed, but are not receiving income because of disruptions to their work situation related to COVID-19, would also qualify for the CERB. The CERB is available to Canadian workers affected by the current situation whether or not they are eligible for Employment Insurance (EI).

Introduces a pause on the repayments of Canada Student Loans in the Canada Student Financial Assistance Act, the Canada Student Loans Act, and the Apprenticeship Loans Act in order to introduce a 6-month moratorium on the repayment of Canada Student Loans for all borrowers currently in repayment.

Helps businesses keep their workers by providing eligible small employers a temporary wage subsidy for a period of three months. Eligible employers would include small businesses (including co-operative corporations) eligible for the small business deduction, unincorporated employers, certain partnerships, non-profit organizations and charities.

- Helps protect seniors' retirement savings from the impact of volatile market conditions by reducing required minimum withdrawals from Registered Retirement Income Funds by 25 per cent for 2020.
- Supports provinces and territories with a COVID-19 Response Fund that would provide one-time funding of \$500 million through the Canada Health Transfer for their critical health care system needs and to support mitigation efforts as needed.
- Ensures the availability of drugs and medical devices by providing the Government with the authority to make regulations to address any future shortages of therapeutic products, including drugs and medical devices. This would include allowing for drug patent overrides in health emergencies in the period up to September 30, 2020, and for the importation of drugs and medical devices not authorized for sale in Canada to address certain shortages, such as for personal protective equipment or drugs required to treat COVID-19.

Supports Canadian businesses through the Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC) by temporarily providing the Minister of Finance with more flexibility to determine BDC's capital limit, allowing it to provide further financial support to Canadian businesses when they need it.

- Supports Canadian businesses through Export Development Canada (EDC) by temporarily providing the Minister of Finance with more flexibility in setting EDC's capital and liability limits – as well as the Canada Account limit – and expanding EDC's ability to engage in domestic financial transactions so that it can more effectively deliver financial and credit insurance support to affected Canadian businesses.
- Supports the mortgage financing market in Canada by enhancing the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's (CMHC) access to capital, and increasing its insurance-in-force and guarantees-in-force legislative limits, so that it can continue to provide stable funding to banks and mortgage lenders in support of continued lending to Canadian businesses and consumers.
- Protects Canadians from the Spread of COVID-19 by providing authority to a federal minister to requisition funds from the Consolidated Revenue Fund with the concurrence of the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Health to support federal efforts to prevent or control the spread of COVID-19.
- Provides the Minister of Finance with flexibility to respond expeditiously to COVID-19 developments, by amending the Financial Administration Act (FAA) to temporarily remove the requirement for the Minister of Finance to receive Governor in Council's authorization in order to use emergency powers.
- Supports the protection of Canadians' savings by providing the Minister of Finance with the flexibility to increase the Canada Deposit Insurance Corporation's deposit insurance limit beyond its current level of \$100,000.

Emergency Response Act continued from page 9

Quotes

“I would like to thank and commend my Parliamentary colleagues in the House of Commons and Senate for agreeing to the immediate adoption and Royal Assent of Bill C-13 so that the Government can deliver this extraordinary support for Canadians and the economy on an urgent basis. The measures being implemented through Bill C-13 show that we will do whatever it takes to ensure that the health of Canadians is protected, that families and businesses are supported, and that our economy remains strong in the face of uncertainty.”

Bill Morneau, Minister of Finance

Related products

- [Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan](#)
- [Prime Minister announces more support for workers and businesses through Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan](#)
- [Prime Minister outlines Canada's COVID-19 response](#)
- [Government of Canada takes action on COVID-19](#)
- [Canada outlines measures to support the economy and the financial sector](#)

Extensions on Tax Filing Deadlines Announced by the Federal Government

In a March 18 news release the federal government announced its COVID-19 Economic Response Plan which includes a series of measures to help Canadians facing hardship as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak. This includes some changes with respect to tax filing deadlines as follows:

Flexibility for Taxpayers

In order to provide greater flexibility to Canadians who may be experiencing hardships during the COVID-19 outbreak, the Canada Revenue Agency will defer the filing due date for the 2019 tax returns of individuals, including certain trusts.

- For individuals (other than trusts), the return filing due date will be deferred until June 1, 2020. However, the Agency encourages individuals who expect to receive benefits under the GSTC or the Canada Child Benefit not to delay the filing of their return to ensure their entitlements for the 2020-21 benefit year are properly determined.
- For trusts having a taxation year ending on December 31, 2019, the return filing due date will be deferred until May 1, 2020.

The Canada Revenue Agency will allow all taxpayers to defer, until after August 31, 2020, the payment of any income tax amounts that become owing on or after today and before September 2020. This relief would apply to tax balances due, as well as instalments, under Part I of the Income Tax Act. No interest or penalties will accumulate on these amounts during this period.

In order to reduce the necessity for taxpayers and tax preparers to meet in person during this difficult time, and to reduce administrative burden, effective immediately the Canada Revenue Agency will recognize electronic signatures as having met the signature requirements of the Income Tax Act, as a temporary administrative measure. This provision applies to authorization forms T183 or T183CORP, which are forms that are signed in person by millions of Canadians every year to authorize tax preparers to file taxes.

To see the complete details of the Economic Response Plan, go to:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/economic-response-plan.html>

Temporary foreign workers, some international students and approved permanent residents who haven't yet landed are now able to enter Canada

Update from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

March 26, 2020

The travel restriction exemptions that were announced are now in place. If you're exempt, you can now travel to Canada.

If you're travelling by air, you need to pass a health check before you're allowed to board your flight. Anyone who shows symptoms of COVID-19 will not be allowed to enter Canada by air.

When you arrive in Canada we'll assess your health before you leave the port of entry. You must isolate for 14 days even if you have no symptoms. This is mandatory.

Only people who provide essential services and truck drivers who regularly cross the border to maintain the flow of goods are exempt from the isolation requirements.

IRCC, along with other government departments and international allies, continues to closely monitor COVID 19 and any impacts on people and our operations.

For complete details of the implications of travel restrictions on IRCC clients, including a detailed question and answer section, go to:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/coronavirus-special-measures.html>

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