

The past couple weeks have certainly been a whirlwind for all of us as we navigate life during the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. North Star Veterinary Services continues to be open and available for routine and emergency large animal veterinary care at this time. Veterinary services for livestock are considered an “essential” service, and it is our priority to continue to provide veterinary care and support the farms of Franklin and Clinton counties while helping to keep you all healthy and safe. In order to do this, we will be making the following changes to our routine.

- At this time our physical office at 245 Coal Hill Rd is closed. Our phone line is still on, and we are still on the road, but our practice manager (Alexa) will be working from home. As always, please call the main line 518-483-6223 for all your needs. Call ahead to arrange any drop-offs/medicine pick-ups that typically would occur at the office.
- We will continue with routine appointments/herd checks, but are post-poning the following types of appointments to decrease non-essential social contact:
  - In person management meetings and employee trainings
  - Equine castrations
  - Routine equine dental work (Exception: if your horse is experiencing pain, weight loss, or other negative signs we will still do their dental work)
- If you are feeling ill, PLEASE stay home and quarantine yourself based on the recommendations of your personal physician. In this case, please make arrangements to have another person at your appointment/herd check, or call to reschedule your appointment.
- Please limit the amount of people at appointments/herd checks to 1-2 people.
- We will be doing our best to keep appropriate “social distance” from clients at all appointments including herd checks. To do this we ask that you have all cows you need checked caught and properly restrained. We will check them with you all standing at their heads. Conveniently a cow is just about the recommended “6 feet” the New York Department of Health recommends to be apart from others



- In any situation where it is safe to do so such as well restrained sick animals or animals needing vaccinations, we may ask that you do not stand in the immediate area when we examine them to decrease contact. We will contact you before and after your appointment via telephone to discuss your animals. Obviously if we need assistance, we will let you know.
- In situations where it is not safe to maintain social distance, we may wear a mask

Quick reminder: Cows and other livestock cannot catch COVID-19. The coronaviruses we manage in livestock are different than COVID-19.

Thank you for your understanding during this difficult time. You all are actually experts in infectious disease, and know exactly what it takes to decrease the negative effects of a disease outbreak. We speak all the time about ways to decrease spread of disease in calves and cows; stopping nose-to-nose contact, stopping contact between old/young/immunocompromised animals, and practicing excellent hygiene. All of those management techniques are so important to think about today and we work together to decrease the rate of the virus' spread in our population. Please work with us to keep everyone safe.

## Tips for Dairy Farms and COVID-19

- **Have a plan, write it down:** Come up with a plan for how you will decrease your workforce's/family's risk of contracting/spreading this virus. Have a plan for what you will do if your workforce becomes ill or quarantined or if the farm owner becomes ill or quarantined. Make sure to address sick leave and unemployment policies
- **Communicate with your employees:** Once you have a written plan, communicate with your employees/family about the plan. If you need help with language translation with your employees in order to do this, reach out to us or your county's agriculture extension program.
- **Prevent the introduction of/spread of the virus**
  - Clean common areas
  - Promote handwashing
  - Encourage all who feel ill not to come in to work
  - Adjust work hours for more vulnerable employees
  - Limit outside consultants from coming on farm
  - Implement web meetings for non essential business
  - Connect with partner business (co-op, nutritionist, vendors, vet etc) to clarify procedures and expectations for working together through this
- **Check in:** This is rapidly changing situation. Keep your employees/families updated and communicate regularly with them. Everyone should understand that our plans will continue to evolve as the situation does.

## Tips for Equine Barns and COVID-19

- **Have a plan, write it down:** Come up with a plan for how you will decrease your workforce's/boarder's risk of contracting/spreading this virus. Have a plan for what you will do if a person involved with your barn becomes ill or is quarantined.
- **Communicate with your employees/boarders:** Once you have a written plan, communicate with your employees/boarders about the plan.
- **Prevent the introduction of/spread of the virus**
  - Limit the number of people in the barn so they can keep 6 feet of distance between them
  - Encourage boarders/horse owners to communicate with each other or to create a virtual schedule, to help limit the number of people present in the barn at the same time
  - Sick people/boarders or people who have been exposed to a confirmed positive case should stay home. Boarders/owners should have enough feed (concentrate, hay, and supplements) and bedding for two weeks at the barn. Emergency contacts and instructions for care (feed, supplements, medications, exercise, special concerns) should all be written down somewhere in the barn.
  - Perform routine environmental cleaning and disinfecting:
    - Change the barn hours to allow more time for cleaning and disinfecting.
    - Regularly disinfect frequently touched surfaces/ shared supplies
- **Check in:** This is rapidly changing situation. Keep your employees/boarders updated and communicate regularly with them. Everyone should understand that our plans will continue to evolve as the situation does.

Finally, this is stressful time for all of us. Remember to take of yourself- body and mind. Remember that there will be an end to this, and that we have a strong and resilient community that will work together through it all. Some well-being strategies to share with you are:

- Separate what is within your control from what is not
- Do what helps you feel safe
- Get outside but practice social distancing
- Challenge yourself to stay in the present
- Use virtual tools to help stay connected to friends, family, and loved ones

Below are some important contacts in our community to have on hand:

<u><b>Franklin County</b></u>
<b>Food &amp; Basic Needs:</b>
⇒ Community Connections of Franklin County-518-521-3507
⇒ Dept. of Social Services-518-481-1808
⇒ JCEO-518-483-7022
⇒ Office for the Aging-518-481-1526
⇒ Red Cross-518-561-7280
⇒ Salvation Army-315-877-6079
<b>Family Needs:</b>
⇒ Catholic Charities of Franklin County-518-483-1460
⇒ Child Care Coordinating Council-518-561-4999
<b>Public Health:</b>
⇒ Adirondack Health-518-891-4141
⇒ Alice Hyde Medical Center-518-483-3000
⇒ Dept. of Public Health-518-481-1709/1-877-410-5753
<b>Mental Health &amp; Counseling:</b>
⇒ Community Connections of Franklin County-518-521-3507
⇒ National Alliance on Mental Illness-CV-518-561-2685
⇒ North Star Mental Health-518-483-3261

<u><b>Clinton County</b></u>
<b>Food &amp; Basic Needs:</b>
⇒ Catholic Charities-518-300-0272
⇒ Dept. of Social Services-518-565-3300
⇒ Interfaith Food Shelf-518-562-3663
⇒ JCEO-518-561-6310
⇒ Office for the Aging-518-565-4620
⇒ Red Cross-518-561-7280
⇒ Salvation Army-518-561-2951
<b>Family Needs:</b>
⇒ Child Care Coordinating Council-518-561-4999
⇒ JCEO-518-561-6310
<b>Public Health:</b>
⇒ Dept. of Public Health-518-565-4840
⇒ CVPH-518-561-2000
<b>Mental Health &amp; Counseling:</b>
⇒ Behavioral Health Services North, Inc.-518-563-8000
⇒ Champlain Valley Family Center-518-561-8480
⇒ Dept. of Mental Health-518-565-4060
⇒ National Alliance on Mental Illness-CV-518-561-2685