

## Coaching Guide 4

# Keeping people safe – COVID-19, PPE and Emergency Procedures on-farm

**Aim: To ensure that your employee understands the safety procedures in place on the farm, related specifically to COVID-19 and zoonoses, and emergency procedures**

Farms are complex places with a lot going on – large animals, vehicles moving, chemicals in use, wet areas, hoses etc to avoid, and now there are also COVID-19 considerations. At the end of this session, the employee will be able to describe how the farm identifies hazards, reports hazards and incidents, and minimises risks on farm to keep people safe – particularly for COVID-19 and zoonoses. Emergency procedures will also be discussed.

### Before coaching starts

**Prepare to discuss management of near-misses.** Sometimes having a new employee shows where controls are not adequate or intuitive.

#### Are your COVIDSafe plan and farm protocols up-to-date?

- Employers are required to keep up-to-date on the latest Department of Health guidelines ([DHHS for Victoria](#))
- Check the [Dairy Australia website](#) section on COVID-19 for many excellent tips including:
  - A template for preparing a COVIDSafe plan for your farm
  - Posters and guidelines on ways to adapt milking routines, calf rearing routines etc

#### Are your Emergency Plans up-to-date and known by all?

**Make sure the PPE that you will supply for them is suitable and available.**

**Have record sheets available to show that all of these things are being done.**

**Involve other team members in the discussion where you can.** This is a chance to emphasise the 'whole of team' responsibilities to safety and emergency responses –.

This coaching guide is longer than the others as safety is so important on-farm. Time invested goes towards keeping your team safe and healthy. The activities could be split over a couple of sessions or during any Farm Tours you do with the employee.

### COVID-19:

- Use the key messages about COVID-19 (coaching below) to set the scene for the routines now in place on the farm.
- Ensure that you 'walk the talk' – social distancing, being outside as much as possible, washing hands and wearing face masks during coaching.

## Identifying hazards and reporting

- ❑ Discuss how important it is to report hazards, near-misses and incidents. Near-misses give you the chance to correct something before an injury or fatality occurs.
- ❑ Don't be shy – "Always report everything ASAP" is important for keeping people safe.
- ❑ Point out that they have responsibilities too – safety is a shared gig – they mustn't ever put themselves or anyone else on the farm at risk.
- ❑ Any changes that effect you, we will make sure that you know.
- ❑ Explain how on-job safety training occurs – and must be completed.
- ❑ Take a walk around the dairy, pointing out some hazards (things/situations that hurt you). These could include:
  - in the dairy (e.g. hot water, chemicals, hoses, low bars).
  - traffic hazards around the dairy (e.g. vehicles and pedestrians)
  - contact with cows (understanding cow behaviour and gentle handling are key to safety around cows and are covered further in other coaching topics).
- ❑ Explain how risks are minimised.
- ❑ After pointing out a couple of hazards, ask the employee to point out some more to check understanding and awareness of hazards
- ❑ If you use posters for instructions, find a poster on the walk and read it through together. (Check they can read them while doing this activity – get them to tell you what the poster says to check comprehension).
- ❑ During the walk, find a person who role-models safe behaviour on-farm. Ask them to briefly talk about their approaches to staying safe.
- ❑ Go through your safety reporting procedure using an actual example.

Talking about safety and asking questions	<b>What are the highest risks in dairy farming?</b>
	<b>Who do you talk to about safety on this farm? (Everyone!)</b>
Potential hazards in the dairy	<b>Can you point out anything else around the dairy that could possibly be a hazard (could hurt someone)?</b>
	<b>Let's read an instruction poster together – is it clear?</b>
Traffic hazards around the dairy	<b>Is it clear where parking is permitted near the dairy?</b>
	<b>What is the speed limit? When should we travel more slowly?</b>
	<b>What vehicles might be travelling in the vicinity of the dairy?</b>
Reporting hazards or near-misses	<b>What would you do if you saw something you thought could be a hazard to your safety?</b>
	<b>What would happen if someone was injured on the farm?</b>
Everyone's involved	<b>What responsibilities do you have to make the farm safe for everyone?</b>
Further training	<b>What would you like to know more about next?</b>

## Farm safety for COVID-19

- ❑ Discuss the reasons for the COVID-19 safety routines on-farm and the importance of seeing this as a collective responsibility – it's a team effort.
- ❑ Details in the box below can assist you with talking to your staff member on COVID-19 Plans on-farm.
- ❑ Watch this short video together. It shows some ways that everyone on farm, including visitors and service providers, can help to prevent the spread of COVID-19: <https://youtu.be/NFeFk-bltnw>
- ❑ If you are using posters to inform and remind staff, have a copy available to show or give to your new employee.
- ❑ Reinforce that personal hygiene (wearing gloves, hand washing, disinfection and wearing face masks) are all part of general safety requirements on the farm

Keeping distances	<b>Is the dairy set up to have people working as far apart as possible, at least 1.5 meters apart?</b>
Staying outside where possible	<b>How is the dairy set up to have people working as far apart as possible, at least 1.5 meters apart?</b>
Team meetings and communication	<b>Where are the places that people take their breaks?</b>
Washing hands	<b>Where/how do we have our farm team meetings?</b>
	<b>Where are the wash stations?</b>
	<b>Show me how you wash your hands now in COVID- time? (20 seconds = 2 x 'happy birthdays')</b>
If you have any symptoms of COVID-19	<b>If you had a temperature, cough or runny nose, who would you contact to say you couldn't come to work?</b>

### COVID-19 spread:

- Most spread occurs from infected people who are yet to show the first symptoms, breathing it into the nearby environment
- The virus can live outside our bodies – in the air for several hours or on surfaces for several days
- We must assume that anyone can be unknowingly spreading the virus and therefore plan systems accordingly

### Breaking the COVID-19 transfer chain requires:

- Ensuring that all workers with any symptom of COVID-19 stay away from work and get tested
- Keeping maximum distance, and avoiding shared inside spaces, so that airborne droplets cannot be breathed in
- Preventing the touch of common surfaces – hands, clothes, stationery, deliveries, shared tools, machinery, vehicles etc.
- If items are shared, disinfecting all touched surfaces after each use.
- Disinfection can be with time (one week), alcohol, bleach, or washing with a generous amount of detergent.

## Zoonoses

- ❑ Explain that a zoonosis is a disease that can be caught from animals (egs Lepto, QFever, Salmonella). They are hazards on dairy farms. The zoonoses are located in animal bodily fluids, and as such, exposure to these needs to be minimised.
- ❑ Describe and demonstrate how to minimise exposure to urine splashes, manure, animal body fluids (and where quiet animal handling and PPE helps).
- ❑ Discuss immunisation for QFever – encourage your new employee to discuss this with their GP.

Lepto	<b>How do we minimise exposure to urine splashes?</b>
QFever	<b>Who is immunised to protect people from Lepto? (the cows)</b>
	<b>Are you immunised for QFever?</b>

## General Farm Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- ❑ Advise on appropriate clothing (type and cleanliness), footwear, sunscreen/hat, etc.
- ❑ Discuss PPE that also is required on the farm – milking apron, gloves, safety glasses, etc – give examples of when worn
- ❑ Give your new employee the PPE that the farm supplies to them and get them to put it on. Observe them and provide guidance and feedback if correct or not.

Wearing PPE	<b>Where is the PPE kept?</b>
	<b>Show me how you correctly fit PPE.</b>
	<b>Do you suffer from any mobility constraints that restrict you wearing PPE?</b>
Sun protection	<b>It's an outdoor job. What will you wear to protect yourself from the sun?</b>

## Emergency Procedures

- ❑ What types of emergencies might occur on the farm (e.g. injury, fire, chemical spills) and what plans are prepared?
- ❑ Discuss what to do in an emergency:
  - Who to contact and how (e.g. emergency numbers)
  - Where to go (e.g. assembly points)
  - What to do (using an actual example if you have one).
- ❑ Show location of fire equipment, first aid kits and showers/eye washes (you can do this on the farm map / farm tour).

Emergency contacts	<b>Do you have the emergency contact numbers in your phone (if appropriate)?</b>
Emergency equipment	<b>Where are the fire extinguishers located? Where on the farm map? How do we use them?</b>
Emergency planning	<b>What happens in preparation for fire season on this farm?</b>