

LATEST UPDATE FROM THE LAA REGARDING COVID-19

LATEST UPDATE: Tuesday 24th March 2020

We **MUST** understand that in this time of national crisis there are two main priorities:

1. First and foremost – Protecting Public Health - this means reducing the number of COVID-19 infections and managing NHS resources.
2. Supplying the Food Chain

Defra and Welsh Government have today both agreed:

Livestock Markets have an important role to play in minimising social contact and making sure robust hygiene precautions are in place, where people do have to come together, and facilitating efficient supply of livestock into the food chain through purchase systems and assembly points.

With immediate effect LAA members MUST apply the following additional standards – in addition to those circulated yesterday evening.

The Sale of Primestock, Cull animals and Stores Breeding Cattle, Sheep and Pigs.

The Sale of ALL breeding stock through the live ring MUST cease immediately – Breeding Cattle, Sheep and Pigs.

This category of sales include, but are not limited to, Dairy, Beef breeding cattle, Breeding sheep, Ewes with Lambs at foot, Etc.

- Members should give strong advice to purchasers to ‘double up’, asking one person to buy for multiple clients.
- All purchasers must register with the market and only ‘known’ purchasers be given access to the market.
- Markets must ensure that the highest hygiene prevention measures are in place.
- Members must enforce social distancing, 2m apart, not allowing more people at the ringside than the 2m gap allows
- All potential “gathering” points MUST be prevented - all refreshment cafes, mobile units Etc MUST close
- For store sales – We are asked to work with the big purchasers so that as few people as possible are buying the stock. This may include some buyers buying on behalf of others to reduce attendance numbers and therefore reduce the risk of virus spread.

Vendors MUST remain in their vehicles when they arrive at the market, the market staff should unload the vehicle and the vendor’s vehicle must then leave the mart site immediately.

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With immediate effect LAA members MUST implement a “drop and go” policy for vendors bringing stock to market for sale.

Vendors:

Members must implement a “drop and go” policy for vendors.

This action is to prevent any sellers from entering the market.

Vendors MUST be instructed to deliver their animals to the loading docks (remaining in their vehicles) whilst the market staff unload the vehicle and take the animals to their pens.

The sale documentation MUST be collected by the auctioneers staff from the vendor’s vehicle when they arrive at the unloading docks – Vendors MUST NOT take the paperwork to the market office themselves, or enter the market pennage area for any reason.

The LAA appreciates that this will create many challenges – no more so than developing a system by which the vendor can accept or reject the price offered at the time of sale.

Unfortunately, if we want to stay in business and protect everyone from the virus we need to find and implement solutions to these challenges.

Buyers:

The number of buyers MUST be restricted to allow Social Distancing (2 meters between each buyer).

The number of buyers able to attend may be different between markets, depending upon the size and layout of your sale pens and/or sale rings, and will result in some markets being able to manage slightly more buyers than others.

Markets MUST keep a register of those that attend their sales – contact name, address and telephone number.

At the conclusion of the sale buyers MUST be asked to enter the sales office in a way that does not result in too many entering at any one time.

Buyers should be asked to sanitise on entry to the market and again on exit.

NB. If concerns are raised and any market operator is found to be not complying with the rules above (these rules being the minimum) all of our markets will be closed by Government.