

20.3.2020

Questions and answers on the coronavirus epidemic in English:

Question: I run a livestock farm. What should I do if I contract the coronavirus and need to be quarantined? Can I use a relief worker on my farm?

Even if people are quarantined, animals are not. Therefore the milk is collected as usual, and a relief worker can enter the farm as usual. Livestock for slaughter or a stock agency will also be collected.

Question: What if there is no relief service available and I am quarantined – how can I ensure that my livestock is properly cared for?

Even if you are quarantined, you can tend the animals (they are not quarantined) if there are no other employees, apart from your own family, working in the same livestock housing unit. If you are sick you should not enter the livestock unit.

If you are infected

- You can obtain relief assistance for 7 days without a doctor's certificate, for 20 days with a doctor's certificate. After this, the holiday relief scheme requires an approved decision for daily sickness allowance (may be granted by provisional decision when the daily allowance issue is addressed at Kela) in order to grant assistance for a relief worker.
- The charge for relief assistance and the daily sickness allowance are based on the MYEL earnings. You need to apply to Kela for the daily sickness allowance.

If you are quarantined but you are not sick yourself

- Under the Communicable Diseases Act, you can apply for a daily allowance if a quarantine order / certificate A has been issued by a doctor specialised in communicable diseases.
- The communicable diseases daily allowance is granted by Kela and based on the MYEL earnings.
- You may be granted holiday relief cover (subsidised paid holiday cover 120 h).

Can the relief worker refuse to enter a farm because of a case of coronavirus on the farm?

- The relief scheme is not legally obliged to organise cover if the conditions on the farm do not comply with the standards set for health and safety at work, and a risk of infection may be classed as such a situation on a livestock farm. If there is a risk to the relief worker's health, a situation may arise where the scheme is unable to provide cover.

Question: What is the availability of veterinary services to livestock farms?

The availability of veterinary services depends on the spread of the infection affecting the veterinarians practising in the area. The emergency cover system for cases of sudden animal sickness is a normal municipal veterinary service covering the whole country. Under the Finnish Food Authority guidelines, urgent cases of sickness affecting production animals are now prioritised with non-urgent cases delayed to a later time. An exception is now made regarding the provision of vaccines for production animals in that no visit to the farm is necessary.

Question: Can the coronavirus spread via produce or foodstuffs?

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) does not consider foodstuffs to be a likely vector of the coronavirus. Good hand hygiene normally associated with production processes is a sufficient safety precaution.

Question: How do I prevent the spread of the coronavirus through my own actions?

Up-to-date information on the coronavirus – e.g. how to guard against it and what to do if you suspect an infection – on the [Finnish Institute of Health and Welfare \(THL\)](#) website. THL monitors the national and international situations and issues directions on preventing infection.