

# Special Report: COVID-19 Ag Impact News

## [Virus concerns change farmer habits](#)

*Survey: More than 69% of farmers don't have a prepared backup plan should they become sick with the virus themselves.*

Farmers are showing general concern about how the coronavirus pandemic will influence the coming crop year, their businesses in general and even their family's health, according to a current online poll conducted by DTN and data analytics company Farm Market iD. More than 69% of farmers polled don't have a prepared backup plan should they become sick with the virus themselves. (Progressive Farmer)

## [Massive stimulus deal authorizes billions in new farm aid](#)

A \$2 trillion economic rescue package that congressional leaders agreed to last week would replenish the Agriculture Department's Commodity Credit Corp. authority and earmark additional money for livestock and specialty crop producers as well as local agriculture. The additional spending authority would clear the way for USDA to make additional Market Facilitation Program payments this year. The package also includes aid for rural hospitals, direct payments to Americans and assistance for small businesses. (AGWEEK)

## [State Department clears the way for agriculture workforce](#)

The U.S. State Department revised its restrictions on the processing of visa applications submitted by farm workers in Mexico after hearing concerns that the restrictions would lead to a farm worker shortage in the U.S. Consular officers can now waive the visa interview requirement for eligible first-time and returning H-2A and H-2B applicants, making more workers in the H-2 program available while prioritizing public health. (AFBF)

## [COVID-19 puts ag financial concerns under a microscope](#)

The gloom and doom of the COVID-19 coronavirus continues to keep uncertainty in the agricultural finance sector at a high level. Nick Paulson, University of Illinois farmdoc expert says that the COVID-19 coronavirus is compounding problems in the already tough ag economy. With the U.S. jobless claims jumping to 3.283 million, from last week's U.S. data, that kind of economic activity is not helping sentiment. (Successful Farming)

## [Are animals vulnerable to COVID-19?](#)

While there's no evidence so far that pets, livestock, or their owners can infect each other with COVID-19, there's also very little research about a potential crossover. The novel coronavirus started with an animal, then mutated to transfer to people, but research hasn't yet shown if the virus has jumped back to animals, said Scott Kenney, a researcher at The Ohio State University College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences (OSU-CFAES).

"Viruses are constantly sampling and evolving, trying to find other hosts," said Kenney, who studies coronaviruses, including those that cross over from one species to another.