



Control Order key messages during the COVID-19 pandemic

April 9, 2020

Human health is the highest priority for the Government of Yukon and all Yukoners during the COVID-19 pandemic. Although there are many uncertainties at this time, we want to ensure that current Control Order information is available for sheep and goat owners in Yukon, and that we are keeping you informed about the changes that we are making in response to COVID-19. We will continue to provide updates as the situations unfolds. Contact us at any time for more information.

Fencing

- If your containment is in-progress, continue to communicate with the Agriculture Branch to ensure you meet the 2020 deadlines as outlined in your funding agreement.
- Inspection to confirm compliance can be done through farm visits with physical distancing or with photographs/video.
- Signage for inspected and approved fencing is required and can be provided with “no-contact.”

Testing

- Only essential testing to meet the goals of the Control Order will be carried out this year.
- Taking nasal swabs from sheep or goats requires close contact between people. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic and the direction from the Chief Medical Officer of Health, farm visits for *M. ovi* sampling activities will not be scheduled at this time. We will evaluate as the situation evolves, but expect that this restriction will be in place for several months.



- When sample collection and testing can resume, our testing protocol for each farm will depend on the results from the previous year:
 - On farms with all negative *M. ovi* results last year: animals on farm will be tested once.
 - On farms that had any *M. ovi* positive animals last year: the testing protocol will be developed via phone call discussion between the owner and the Control Order veterinarian based on risk, with two or more tests per animal.
 - As in the past, additional testing will be done for herds if any animals test positive and compensation will be available for the animals ordered destroyed.

Import

- If you wish to bring sheep or goats into Yukon in 2020, please contact the Agriculture Branch or the Animal Health Unit as soon as possible to discuss your plans.
- Consider the COVID-19 health risks associated with travel and respect any travel restrictions and self-isolation guidelines after travel.
- Permits are required to import sheep and goats into Yukon and application forms are available from the Agriculture Branch.

Record keeping

- It is required that producers keep a record for each sheep or goat they own. Templates are available from the Animal Health Unit and the Agriculture Branch.

Communication

- We are working to maintain communication despite being less available for face-to-face conversations and farm visits. Currently a web page on Yukon.ca is being developed by the Agriculture Branch specifically for sheep and goat owners so that information and documents are available in one place.

As always, we are available to answer your questions and discuss concerns. Contact the Agriculture Branch or the Animal Health Unit if you have any questions or concerns regarding the Control Order.

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