



CONTINGENCY PLANNING DURING A PANDEMIC

With FCN

Why is it important to have a contingency plan in place?

Planning ahead for possible events is essential for a farm business. Contingency planning ensures that farm businesses can return to normal after unforeseen circumstances with minimal damage and disruption. With COVID-19, farmers and their families face the very real possibility of falling ill with the virus or symptoms of the virus, forcing self-isolation for the sufferer and their families. Having a contingency plan in place for the farm business will ensure the farming family is prepared for the possible unexpected situations they may face.

We have listed a few ideas to consider around contingency planning for your farm business and family throughout the pandemic:

The Family & Home

Check with your local authority website or gov.uk for the measures in place in your area and for the latest information and guidance.

- How will you source essential shopping and medications if your household has to self-isolate?
- Do you have a local support group in your village/parish?
- Have you sufficient heating oil, gas etc?
- Have you agreed a plan with your family of how they will organise things if anyone has to self-isolate?
- Is your will up to date?

The Business Enterprise

PRIORITISE: Day to day farming activities fall broadly into three categories:

1. **“Must do”** ie. milking, feeding and bedding livestock
2. **“Nice to do”** ie. mucking out pens daily
3. **“Can probably wait”** – building maintenance etc.

We suggest to draw up a list of activities in priority order so that tasks can be re-allocated accordingly.

- Have you prepared a list of any payments that need to be made to sustain feed and other supplies?
- Have you considered topping up stocks of feed, fuel and other essential inputs to avoid possible supply problems if supply chains get disrupted?
- Are feed rations and any livestock medicine requirements accessible to others?
- Are forthcoming supply commitments (ie. grain movements, livestock) clear?

Staff/contractors

- If your staff/contractors are unable to work, who will assume decision making for their business?
 - Who will take responsibility for staff – duty of care and work planning?
 - How will staff get paid?
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➔ **IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:**
Run through some scenarios as to:

“What if?” & “So what?”

Doing this problem-solving exercise is an essential part of contingency planning for business continuity. Record your answers.

➔ **COMMUNICATE:**
It is important to stay in touch with family, friends, neighbouring farmers and neighbours around you, as well as those on a key contact list. Even if you become ill or have to isolate as a household, keeping others in the loop as to your status will ensure that help can be provided. By ensuring that others know your wishes, business continuity is made so much more possible. Let your neighbours know if you are prepared to help them in the event they have to isolate.

➔ **ASK FOR HELP:**
COVID-19 is unprecedented in its scale and seriousness. Even though people may not be able to congregate as normal, there is still much that people can do and there is a national upsurge in community spirit. Farmers need to make best use of reaching out and not be afraid to ask for assistance in their time of need.

➔ **KEY CONTACTS**
Have you prepared a contact list of important contacts? ie. vets, family doctor, farm contractors, feed suppliers, bank manager, farm business consultants, agronomists, insurance consultants and anyone else the farm relies on day to day.

The information on this document is for general information and guidance purposes only. If you need support in developing a contingency plan, call the FCN Helpline on 03000 111 999 and one of our volunteers can go through this guide with you.

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COMMUNITY
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