

**Coronavirus (COVID-19) Secure Working Protocol for
AHDB staff and contractors visiting levy payers on a one-to-one basis on farm
Updated 15 October 2020**

Note 1: For the purposes of this protocol, contractors acting on behalf of AHDB are considered to be an extension of the AHDB workforce and therefore the same guidance applies.

Note 2: Before each new visit, current local and Government guidelines must be checked and followed.

This document outlines AHDB's current approach to the provision of visits by AHDB staff and contractors to a levy payer on a one to one basis. [The government guidance on working safely during coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#) remains that everyone should work from home, unless they cannot work from home. For [outdoor working environments](#), including farming and agriculture, this includes minimising the number of unnecessary visits to the farm. Therefore, before visiting a levy payer, AHDB staff and contractors should:

1. Use remote working tools to avoid in-person meetings. Explore alternative options of levy payer engagement such as a virtual meeting or telephone call
2. Discuss whether the visit is necessary with their line manager (or main AHDB contact for contractors) – it must be essential for the business and not possible to carry out remotely
3. Consider their own risk profile regarding welfare/safeguarding requirements
4. For AHDB staff: Review and complete the risk assessment for "AHDB staff visiting a levy payer on a one-to-one basis". A generic risk assessment is available, but this must be reviewed and amended by the AHDB staff member to reflect the specific circumstances of the visit
For AHDB contractors: Complete their own risk assessment
5. Send the completed risk assessment and signed "Disclaimer for levy payers visited by AHDB staff and contractors" to their line manager (or main AHDB contact for contractors) for approval and relevant coordinator for filing on the central [SharePoint location](#)
6. Await email approval from Line Manager (or main AHDB contact for contractors) and file on [SharePoint](#) before commencing visit
7. AHDB staff to record the visit on CRM – this is essential for tracking where staff & contractors have been (see Appendix 2 for a simple step by step guide on how to do this and ask your team CRM champion or buddy if unsure)

Background

Severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) is the strain of coronavirus that causes coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), a respiratory illness. SARS-CoV-2 can be spread and infect a person through:

- Breathing in the exhaled droplets from an infected person; an asymptomatic person or person infected, but not yet showing symptoms (24 – 48 hours prior) who coughs or sneezes close to you, or even if very close face to face contact, breathes or talks to you (expelling fine droplets);
- Contacting contaminated surfaces (from someone who is infected) with your hands and subsequently touching your mouth, eyes, face, etc.; and
- Direct personal physical contact with an infected person e.g. shaking hands with someone who is infectious and who has contaminated their hands

The entry into the body is through the nose, mouth and eyes. Coronavirus does not 'float' around in the air. After being exhaled through sneezes or coughs in droplets the virus soon settles onto the persons own body, the ground, nearby surfaces or people.

Prevention or mitigation is therefore to:

1. Ensure (so far as is reasonably practicable) that staff and contractors do not come into contact with an infected person
2. Observe social distancing guidance
3. Prevent infection through contaminated surfaces, followed by touching of the mouth, nose, face or eyes
4. Ensure regular effective hand washing / sanitising
5. Promote normal good hygiene and biosecurity

AHDB staff and contractors that cannot conduct visits include:

- Those that have specifically agreed with their employer they should continue to work from home
- Those showing signs of the illness or sharing accommodation with people showing signs of the illness
- Those required to self-isolate by **NHS Test and Trace** or as a result of travel to a country outside the [common travel area](#)
- Anyone living in an area which is subject to lockdown (Government website should be checked for latest information)

AHDB staff and contractors will not go onto farms that:

- Have had a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 in the last 14 days
- Are voluntarily self-isolating (for whatever reason)
- Are in an area which is subject to lockdown (Government website should be checked for latest information)

Additional requirements

When visiting a farm, staff and contractors need to take:

- Refreshments and drinks, eating and drinking vessels and cutlery (because they can't use farm refreshments)
- Hand sanitiser
- Extra soap & anti-bacterial wipes
- Extra paper towels to dry hands
- Disposable gloves
- Antihistamine (where required) to reduce the symptoms of hay fever – and thus touching the nose and mouth
- Disposable bags

Standard Operating Procedures for AHDB staff and contractors visiting farms during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak

1. Before the visit

Contact the farmer that you are visiting to ensure the:

- Visit is necessary
- Conditions are suitable

- Time is suitable and minimised to reduce interaction and overlap between people
- Meeting can be held outdoors or in a well-ventilated room
- Protocol and risk assessment have been shared
- Required mitigations have taken place
- Disclaimer (see Appendix 1) has been completed and returned electronically to AHDB – note that any other form of communication is not acceptable

On the day of the visit, before leaving home, the AHDB member of staff or contractor will:

- Check the latest Government guidance to confirm that neither party are affected by a local lockdown
- Call the levy payer to confirm that the visit is still going ahead and that the conditions are suitable
- Confirm that neither party are exhibiting any of the main symptoms of coronavirus (high temperature, new continuous cough, or loss or change to your sense of smell or taste).
- Confirm that no one in their business, household or support bubble are exhibiting the main coronavirus symptoms

2. Hygiene

Prior to travel:

- Staff and contractors will wash hands with soap and hand sanitiser

On arrival and during visit:

- Apply gloves prior to opening gates
- Etiquette should be maintained to allow other users to approach their vehicle whilst maintaining social distance
- No shaking of hands between AHDB staff or contractor and levy payer
- Maintain 2 metre separation throughout the visit
- Avoid transmission during the meeting, for example avoid sharing pens and other objects. Where possible, use technology to send and receive paperwork
- Do not share a vehicle with the levy payer. If it is necessary to access another location on the holding, use your own vehicle or walk where safe to do so
- Avoid taking any unnecessary equipment such as laptops into the meeting
- End the visit and leave the farm immediately if you do not feel COVID-secure or have any concerns for your own health and safety on arrival or at any time during the visit. AHDB staff should raise the issue of concern with their line manager (or main AHDB contact for contractors)

On leaving the farm:

- AHDB staff and contractors to wipe down any equipment and dispose of wipes appropriately
- Staff and contractors will wash hands with soap and hand sanitiser
- Ask levy payer to open gates for departure
- AHDB already use clean clothes for every visit, with all equipment and boots disinfected between farms. Contractors are required to do the same.

At the end of the day:

- Use household disinfectant, wear disposable or washing up gloves, and use a disposable cloth to clean hard surfaces with warm soapy water, paying particular attention to frequently touched areas and surfaces, e.g. car handles, steering wheel, equipment

- Then disinfect these surfaces with the cleaning products you would normally use
- Staff and contractors will change and wash their clothing, and wash their hands again, immediately upon re-entering their home. Wash items in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Use the warmest water settings and dry items completely. Do not shake dirty laundry, this minimises the possibility of dispersing virus through the air. Clean and disinfect anything used for transporting laundry with your usual products, in line with the cleaning guidance above
- AHDB staff to record the visit on CRM – this is essential for tracking where staff & contractors have been (see Appendix 2 for a simple step by step guide on how to do this and ask your team CRM champion or buddy if unsure)

3. Prevention – follow the NHS advice on prevention (below):

- Wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds
- Use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available
- Wash your hands as soon as you get home
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- Put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards
- Avoid touching your ears, nose or mouth

There is no requirement to wear facemasks when visiting a levy payer on farm, because the social distancing and hygiene measures are suitable and sufficient. AHDB is supportive of those wishing to wear their own face coverings. If staff choose to wear facemasks or coverings, when removed these should be placed in a plastic bag rather than put onto surfaces where they may be a potential source of contamination. You should wash a face covering regularly. It can go in with other laundry, using your normal detergent. If you are using a single-use face covering, dispose of it safely in your general non-recyclable rubbish bin at home.

4. Social distancing

AHDB staff and contractors must exercise social distancing and maintain more than 2 metres between themselves and other people. Under this protocol, AHDB staff and contractors should only arrange to visit levy payers on a one to one basis and should have a clear format for the meeting to use the activity time involved as efficiently as possible.

5. Overnight stays, traveling and traveling distances

As of the week commencing 13th July 2020, there is now an AHDB Protocol for staying in hotels while on essential business. It is published on the Covid-19 section of the intranet. Therefore, visits are no longer limited to those within 125 miles of an AHDB staff member's or contractor's home because they could stay overnight. However, AHDB staff and contractors can only do this if they comply with the AHDB Protocol for staying in hotels. Prior to approving the visit, Line Managers (or the main AHDB contact for contractors) must also consider the necessity of an overnight stay and ensure the AHDB Protocol for staying in hotels is followed at all times. This change does not affect the standard AHDB driving policy on the number of hours driven in a day being limited to six hours.

AHDB staff and contractors will not travel together unless from the same household. If more than one staff member or contractor needs to visit a levy payer, they will either make separate appointments, or follow the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Secure Working Protocols for AHDB Events and Meetings for up to six people.

AHDB staff and contractors should avoid travelling with unnecessary equipment in their vehicle.

As of the week commencing 17th August 2020, AHDB staff and contractors are permitted to make more than one visit in a day in the same geographical area where it is essential to do so (previously the only exception was for registered vets). However, this is still subject to a maximum of five visits per week and can only take place if sufficient mitigation measures (as detailed in the updated generic risk assessment for one to one farm visits) can be met between visits. AHDB staff and contractors wishing to visit more than one farm in a day should also follow RCVS / BVA recommendations on incorporating appropriate biosecurity measures between farm visits. Prior to approving more than one visit in a day, Line Managers (or the main AHDB contact for contractors) must consider the necessity for multiple visits and ensure the risk assessment reflects the extra measures required. This amendment does not change the need to comply with all other parts of this protocol and local lockdowns.

6. Refreshments and toilet breaks

AHDB staff and contractors should avoid entering farm premises or using farm facilities wherever possible. If it is necessary to enter a farm facility (e.g. toilet or wash areas), cover your hands using gloves or paper towels or use your hand or elbow covered with a sleeve to touch any surfaces, including taps.

AHDB staff and contractors are instructed to avoid sharing refreshments. AHDB staff and contractors will take their own refreshments and drinks, eating and drinking vessels and cutlery, and take these home for washing. Follow the usual personal hygiene before and after eating (e.g. washing hands).

7. Post visit follow-up

Due to the risk posed by people that are asymptomatic, we will ask all levy payers who have a visit from an AHDB staff member or contractor to let us know immediately if they show signs of the illness within 14 days of AHDB staff or contractor leaving the farm. If the AHDB member of staff or contractor shows signs of the illness within 14 days of leaving the farm, they will immediately contact the levy payer(s) they have visited. All staff, contractors and levy payers should also follow the latest government advice on self isolating, test and trace.

AHDB staff must record the visit on CRM – this is essential for tracking where staff & contractors have been (see Appendix 2 for a simple step by step guide on how to do this and ask your team CRM champion or buddy if unsure).

Appendix 1. Disclaimer for levy payers hosting a visit by AHDB staff or contractors

Before a member of AHDB staff or contractor can visit a levy payer, this disclaimer and the associated risk assessment must be completed, returned, and sent to their Line Manager (or main AHDB contact for contractors) for approval and the relevant team coordinator for filing.

In inviting a member of AHDB staff or contractor to come to my premises I have read the standard operating procedures that AHDB have developed to minimise the risk of COVID-19.

1. My household and business are currently abiding by government advice with regard to minimising the spread of COVID-19

No one in my household or business has knowingly been in contact with the virus in the last 14 days. I will inform AHDB staff or contractors of any contact my family or staff have had with the virus

2. I will work with AHDB to provide a safe working environment for AHDB staff or contractors including, the following:
 - Access to plentiful water and washing facilities
 - Contact with non-essential staff and occupants will be kept to a minimum, including children and vulnerable adults
 - AHDB staff, contractors and event attendees are to be kept 2 metres away from my staff at all times
3. I will let AHDB know if anyone in the household, business or contact group develops COVID-19 symptoms within 14 days of this visit. This will allow AHDB staff or contractors to self-isolate.

By signing and returning this disclaimer to AHDB, I acknowledge that I have read, understood and accept the:

- AHDB risk assessment for AHDB staff visiting a levy payer on a one-to-one basis, or the
- Risk assessment completed by an AHDB contractor
- Coronavirus (COVID-19) Secure Working Protocol and Disclaimer for AHDB staff and contractors visiting levy payers on a one-to-one basis

Signed: Date:

Print name:

Visit date:

Appendix 2. Step by step guide for AHDB staff to record Levy Payer visits on CRM

Before you get started

Ensure that the Levy Payer (and Contractor if relevant) who were present at the visit are setup in the CRM, so they can be linked to the Task. If you are unsure about how to add new Contacts into the CRM, please refer to the CRM How-To guide.

Adding the meeting

1. Navigate to the Contact with whom you had the meeting and access 'Activities' by selecting the dropdown in the black bar next to the Contact name.
2. Click 'New Activity' and create a Task (make the page full screen for ease of use). Please note this will open in a new window.
3. Use the subject line of '**Farm visit CV19 Sep 20***' – it is imperative that you follow this exact format, so that the meeting is accurately recorded and can be reported on.
**Please note that the month is interchangeable depending on the calendar month.*
4. Populate the description with a top-level overview of what happened during the meeting. Please ensure that you only include information that is relevant. All information can be seen across the organisation and in the event of a SAR (Subject Access Request), this will be provided to the contact.
5. Once the description has been populated click 'Save' at the top of the screen.
6. The Subject Line, '**Farm visit CV19 Sep 20**' will appear in the top black bar – click the dropdown next to it and select 'Connections'. This is where you can add each Contact who attended the meeting.
7. Once you have selected 'Connections', click 'Connect' (which will open up in a new window) and use the search functionality to search for your Contact in the 'name' box, by scrolling down the list and selecting, 'Look up more records'.
8. When the 'Lookup Record' appears, ensure that you change 'Account' to 'Contact' to access your Contacts in the CRM.
9. Once the correct Contact has been added click 'Save & Close'. At this point the window will close and take you back to the Task.
10. Repeat as necessary until all relevant Contacts and Accounts are added.
11. Navigate back to the Task, by selecting, '**Farm visit CV19 Sep 20**' along the top black bar and select 'Mark Complete' – this will ensure the meeting is saved to the record.

You will then be navigated back to the Contact record.