COVID-19 Guidance
For Livestock Auctions
Updated May 8, 2020

Guidance for Livestock Auctions During Re-Opening

The state’s framework to resume business operations — “Ad Astra: A Plan to Re-Open Kansas” — was established via Executive Order No. 20-29 issued by Governor Laura Kelly on April 30, 2020. Under Phase One of the framework, most businesses were allowed to resume operations beginning on Monday, May 4, under certain conditions.

It is important to note that local governments retain the authority to impose additional restrictions, and any specific guidelines not outlined by the Governor’s re-opening framework are the jurisdiction of each local government. However, the new Executive Order states that while local governments may implement more restrictive orders or provisions, they must continue to allow the performance of essential functions identified in the Kansas Essential Functions Framework (KEFF).

Licensed Livestock Auction Marketsi and Livestock Breeding Stock Auctionsii are considered activities performing essential functions; as an essential function, and part of the critical infrastructure of this state, your contribution to the state and local community is critical. We strongly encourage you to exercise ongoing safety measures to ensure that your employees remain healthy and you can continue to function, and also to assure your customers and community that you provide a safe, reliable environment.

How does the Re-Opening Plan apply to livestock auctions?

• Livestock auctions qualify as essential activities under the Keeping Essential Functions Framework and for the most part have continued to function throughout the statewide Stay Home order.

• Local orders or provisions regarding businesses, mass gatherings or stay-home requirements may affect or regulate essential functions only so long as they do not significantly disrupt performance of the essential function. The KEFF functions listed in Executive Order 20-16 are the essential functions local governments must continue to allow.

• Any auction or market which had limited its activities to only the essential functions as defined by KEFF can now resume its other functions which did not qualify for KEFF exemptions, unless prohibited by local orders.

What should livestock auctions be doing during the Re-Opening Plan?

• Managers of all livestock auctions should — to the extent possible without significant disruption to essential functions — continue to implement operational changes to protect their employees and customers.
The following best practices have been developed to ensure continuity of operations and protection of animal health and welfare while also safeguarding the health of the staff, vendors and buyers.

Central to the efforts to protect public health within your operation are these principles:

- Maintain at least 6 feet of distance between individuals, be they customers or employees, as much as possible.
- Follow fundamental cleaning and public health practices detailed on covid.ks.gov.
- Avoid instances in which large groups are in one location and unable to maintain a 6-foot distance with only infrequent or incidental moments of closer proximity. This includes limiting areas and instances in which physical distancing is not maintained, such as in entrances, lobbies, break rooms, cafeterias, etc. (Groups are limited to 10 in Phase One, 30 in Phase Two, and 90 in Phase Three; even essential businesses should aim for these maximum group sizes.)

Best Practices

Best Practices have been developed to ensure continuity of operations and protection of animal health and welfare while also safeguarding the health of the staff, vendors and buyers. These principles are centered on maintaining at least 6 feet of distance between individuals, both customers and employees, as much as possible. Individuals should follow fundamental cleaning and public health practices as detailed on covid.ks.gov. They should also avoid instances in which large groups are in one location and unable to maintain a 6-foot distance with only infrequent or incidental moments of closer proximity. Groups should be limited to 10 in Phase One, 30 in Phase Two, and 90 in Phase Three; even essential businesses should aim for these maximum group sizes.

Best Practices

Despite being essential functions, the Kansas Department of Agriculture strongly recommends that auctions make efforts to implement measures intended to limit the spread of COVID-19, including but not limited to: social distancing, remote or online bidding, and limiting the total number of persons in attendance to the extent that it will not disrupt the primary purpose of the auction. These best practices will protect your employees and customers and are recommended during the Re-Opening Plan. In communities with continued “stay-at-home” orders or other additional restrictions, operations should implement these practices to comply with local orders.

- Use technology to host virtual online sales if at all possible and encourage buyers to utilize this service.
- For Livestock Breeding Stock Auctions, encourage buyers to observe sale offerings in advance (if opportunity is provided) and submit bids online or to sale management and/or sale representatives.
- For Licensed Livestock Auction Markets, limit attendees to registered buyers only, keeping the number of people onsite to a minimum.
- In all situations, attendees should maintain at least a 6-foot separation between each other at all times.
- Sellers (consigners) at Licensed Livestock Auction Markets should remain in their vehicles during the unloading process, and not enter the livestock market indoor facility.
- Encourage customers to make arrangements to pick up checks in the parking lot if they can’t wait for the mail.
- Instruct any employee or buyer exhibiting symptoms of illness, or exposed to anyone who is ill, to remain home and request that anyone who is a member of a population of heightened vulnerability avoid areas where people are gathering.
- Provide ample opportunities for attendees and employees to wash hands following the Centers for Disease Control’s best practices.
- Clean and disinfect all commonly used areas frequently including restrooms, and restock regularly with soap, paper towels, and hand sanitizer.
• Close all areas of the auction facility that are not directly associated with the sale to prevent people from co-mingling, including common seating areas.
• Licensed cafes within a livestock auction market are to abide by guidance for food service establishments which require: 6 feet of distance between consumers (individuals or groups), fundamental cleaning and public health practices; and avoiding instances with group sizes that exceed the appropriate gathering number for the current phase of re-opening.
• Clearly communicate and enforce your policies.


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1 **Licensed Livestock Auction Markets**
Kansas has approximately 45 livestock auction markets (sometimes referred to as sale barns) that provide an essential critical infrastructure role in the food supply chain. Consigners to these markets are area livestock producers who are reliant on the markets’ services for the sale of their commodity and to sustain the food supply chain. In addition, these auctions are crucial for timely and transparent price discovery needs, which is relied upon by the supply chain within Kansas and throughout the multi-state region.

2 **Livestock Breeding Stock Auction**
Kansas has many livestock producers who breed and raise genetically superior animals as breeding stock for other producers. In some instances, these animals are sold in a breeding stock or production sale, often held at the farm or ranch of the breeder. These sales usually occur in the fall and spring so livestock producers may restock their breeding herd for the next breeding season. Breeding stock purchased in the spring are critical for the crop of newborn animals in 2021 and will help sustain the food supply chain. While online sales are becoming a popular avenue for Livestock Breeding Stock Auctions, it’s not feasible for all sales to occur without a live presence of buyers.