

Chat from Commissioner Beal on May 29, 2020

From yvette.meunier : DACF COVID-19 resource page:

<https://www.maine.gov/dacf/covid19/index.shtml>

From Jenni Tilton-Flood : Thanks Yvette!!!!

From yvette.meunier : To stay connected on COVID-19 updates from DACF contact

[Jim.Britt@maine.gov](mailto:Jim.Britt@maine.gov)

From Emily.K.Horton : Commissioner Beal & Gov Mills Letters to USDA can be found here:

<https://www.maine.gov/dacf/about/news/index.shtml>

From Nancy McBrady Maine DACF : Maine Mobile Health Program: 1-888-351-9634

<http://www.mainemobile.org/>

From Gary.Fish : The Mobile Health Unit has been an excellent service for many years, especially in the blueberry growing areas!

From Lisa, Maine Mobile Health Program : Lisa Tapert [ltapert@mainemobile.org](mailto:ltapert@mainemobile.org)

From Lisa, Maine Mobile Health Program : thanks, Gary!

From yvette.meunier : If there are any resources or questions Ag Resource Development Division can help with please reach out and I will be sure to assist you.

[Yvette.Meunier@Maine.gov](mailto:Yvette.Meunier@Maine.gov)

From Jenni Tilton-Flood : Thanks for all the resources, everybody! And I enthusiastically second Gary's testimony with regards to MMH as a dairy farmer and Maine community member!

From maxwellrush to Donna Coffin (Privately) : Hi Donna! Just letting you know I am from Senate President Jackson's office at the State House. Dont need to speak just letting you know.  
- Max

From Renee Page, HCCA, she/her : Thank you Commissioner. I had submitted my questions when I registered for the call and appreciate that you had addressed this at the beginning of the call.

From Eric Venturini : What is the timeline for broader access to testing? Ideally, we will able to test incoming ag workers prior to their entry, or at the time of entry into aggregate worker housing. It sounds like so far, that is not possible. When might it be? Also, I heard that MMHP has a rapid response test. Is this available for use and will the rapid response capacity be expanded?

From Ken Morse : Valuable article on food system issues:

<https://www.nybooks.com/articles/2020/06/11/covid-19-sickness-food-supply/>

From Jenni Tilton-Flood : For the Commissioner and Director, as well as Congressional Staffers: through the course of these past few months emergency resources have very purposely excluded many of the folks who are integral and essential to our food system and economies...is there any effort to ensure going forward our ag workers and food workers are not excluded due to their birthplace and/or citizenship? We are talking about some of the most crucial people in our Maine communities who are carrying the water to support our food systems, economies, and communities and our resilience. Thank you!

From Gary.Fish : Drive up testing is becoming available at CVS, Urgent Care clinics, etc.

From Allison Lakin : I'd like to see a cooperative labor and equipment (beyond the MOFGA grower centric equipment) connection be made. With all the extra work people are doing, the time window for summer projects is dwindling and the extra work load is taking away from

other needs. Might there be a rhythm of work where people could share labor, like haying. or retired farms that have useful Farm machinery that might rent, or could work out a payment arrangement for unused equipment.

From Lisa, Maine Mobile Health Program : Please contact me directly if you are interested in testing on your farm.

From Julie Ann Smith : Given the income loss due to COVID-19, how will the state generate the necessary revenue to sustain tax exemption and abatement programs that are critical to farmers? Many farms have to purchase expensive equipment due to lack of labor, and the sales tax paid on a large tractor can be more than what is paid in annual income tax. Will any of these programs, such as BETE and BETR or farm and open space be taken away? Will any new taxes be implemented?

From Nancy McBrady Maine DACF : Here is the link to the guidance about Emergency MaineCare [https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/oms/pdfs\\_doc/COVID-19/Emergency-MaineCare-COVID19-Guidance.pdf?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=govdelivery](https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/oms/pdfs_doc/COVID-19/Emergency-MaineCare-COVID19-Guidance.pdf?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery)

From Julie-Marie Bickford : The Legislature's Appropriations Committee is getting a summary of the budget numbers right now (started at 10 am) and will be planning on meeting soon to address fiscal responses going forward.

From Eric Venturini : How is, or has, GetReal GetMaine pivoted in response to the new COVID-19 market realities and how can producers/suppliers get engaged?

From Renee Page, HCCA, she/her : Thank you DACF! Just got off another MANP webinar with Commissioner Johnson. Thank you to the administration for being so accessible.

From Nicolas Lindholm : Thanks Amanda, Nancy, et al!

From Eric Venturini : Thank You!

From June : Thanks to all!

From Julie-Marie Bickford : Thanks

From bgushee : Thank you