

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS



Department of Agricultural Resources

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Commissioner

BULLETIN 2020-11

To: Honey Bee Suppliers and Beekeepers

From: John Lebeaux, Commissioner Department of Agricultural Resources

Date: April 17, 2020

Re: COVID-19, Live Honey Bees and Associated Hive Equipment Transport and Sales

On Monday March 23rd, 2020 Governor Charlie Baker issued an emergency order requiring all businesses and organizations that do not provide [COVID-19: Essential Services](#) to close their physical workplaces and facilities to workers, customers and the public as of Tuesday, March 24th 2020 at Noon until Monday, May 4, 2020.

Honey beekeepers and suppliers have communicated with the Department that there are concerns with the intrastate and interstate transport and sales of live honey bees and associated occupied hive equipment relative to their industry being considered essential. While the Department cannot direct beekeepers as to other states' orders, restrictions and recommendations, under the Massachusetts Governor's [COVID-19 Essential Services Emergency Order](#) honey beekeeping services are considered essential within the following:

- Farm workers and support service workers to include those who field crops; commodity inspection, fuel ethanol facilities; storage facilities; **and other agricultural inputs.**
- Employee of companies engaged in the production of chemicals, medicines, vaccines, and other substances used by the food and agriculture industry, including pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers, minerals, enrichments, **and other agricultural production aids.**
- Animal agriculture workers to include those employed in veterinary health; manufacturing and distribution of animal medical materials, animal vaccines, animal drugs, feed ingredients, feed, and bedding, etc.; **transportation of live animals**, animal medical materials; transportation of deceased animals for disposal; **raising of animals for food; animal production operations**; slaughter and packing plants and associated regulatory and government workforce
- Organizations and workers responsible for the care and custody of **animals, pets and livestock**

The Department recommends honey beekeepers to contact the states they are planning to travel to, through, or pick up shipments in order to ensure they are following any existing orders, restrictions or recommendations.

While this is a very challenging time, please know that the Department is committed to serving its constituents and stakeholders and will continue to work in the most helpful and supportive manner possible. We appreciate your patience and understanding, as together, we navigate this rapidly evolving situation.

If you have any questions about this Bulletin, please contact Kim Skyrn, Chief Apiary Inspector, Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources, at Kim.Skyrm@mass.gov. Apiary Program: www.mass.gov/apiary-program-honey-bees

[COVID-19 Resources for Agriculture](#)