



**NEVADA  
HEALTH  
RESPONSE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**COVID-19 Press Bulletin for 12-14-2020**

Carson City, NV — Today, Caleb Cage, Nevada COVID-19 Response Director and Julia Peek, Deputy Administrator of Community Health Services were joined by Jennifer Ott, Director of the Nevada Department of Agriculture (NDA) to provide updates on Nevada's ongoing COVID-19 response and discuss NDA's programs, during a call with members of the media.

This bulletin provides facts, figures, and informational items from the call. As a reminder, data is provided in a dashboard on the home page of the [Nevada Health Response](https://www.nvhealthresponse.nv.gov) website and can be accessed 24 hours a day.

**SUMMARY:**

- The County Criteria Tracker is released every Monday and can be found on the NV Health Response dashboard. All counties in Nevada, with the exception of Eureka and Storey, have been flagged for elevated disease transmission.
  - All flagged counties met the criteria of a high case rate per 100,000.
  - All counties had a high test positivity rate.
  - Lincoln was the only county flagged for a low average of tests per day.

- As of today, Nevada has logged 189,412 cases, an increase of 2,579 new cases since yesterday.
- The state has completed a total of 1,845,307 molecular tests since the beginning of COVID-19.
- For the most recent 7-day period, cases are growing at a rate of 1.5% or 2,689 new cases per day.
- The test positivity rate over the last 14 days is 21.3%
- According to the Nevada Hospital Association, there are currently 2,025 COVID-19 hospitalizations (1,804 confirmed; 221 suspected)
- More information on hospitalization trends can be found on the [Nevada Hospital Association](#) website.

Jennifer Ott, Director of the Nevada Department of Agriculture, discussed the State's efforts to ensure access to safe food assistance for all Nevadans who need it.

- The [Nevada Department of Agriculture](#) (NDA) is committed to its mission to preserve, protect and promote food and agriculture in Nevada, and that includes supporting a safe and abundant food supply for all Nevadans.
- NDA administers several school and community nutrition programs, and partners with organizations throughout the state to help provide nutritious foods to Nevadans who need it – from school-age children to seniors.
- Feeding America describes food insecurity as a household's inability to provide enough food for every person to live an active, healthy life.

Food insecurity is one of the ways the risk of hunger is measured and assessed.

- Feeding America estimates 1 in 5 Nevadans are food insecure.
  - Previously 1 in 8, but the pandemic has exacerbated food insecurity throughout the country, but especially in Nevada.
- In anticipation of impacts of COVID on Nevada, NDA began planning in early March for how they could continue to provide nutrition access for people who rely on our nutrition programs.
  - NDA elected to participate in all available USDA waivers to give necessary flexibility to continue food distribution and maintain CDC safety guidelines.
  - In addition, for tribal and senior distribution, drive-through distributions and waived signature requirement waivers were implemented to minimize risk.
  - 72 alternative meal distribution sites were established within 48 hours of closures leading to more than 150 sites distributing food by the end of week 1.
- NDA secured \$8 million in CARES Act funding to address food insecurity, improve access to local food, and relieve stress on Nevada's food supply.
  - **Nevada CARES Community Food Response Relief Funds** promotes innovative food distribution models that complement existing food assistance resources, promotes safe food assistance models during the pandemic and provides food to underserved Nevadans.
    - For example, the UNLV Food Pantry received some of this relief funding to provide software to allow for online food orders to maximize safety and maintain distribution.

- **Inventory and Distribution System for Nevada Agricultural Produce and Products**
  - Promotes innovative models to address food and agriculture distribution challenges arising due to the pandemic.
  - Supports the establishment or expansion of inventory and distribution systems across Nevada for regionally produced agricultural products to consumer market channels.
  - Several projects were funded, including one through UNR's Made In Nevada program, which set up an e-commerce site to connect food and agriculture businesses directly with consumers for ease of purchase.
  
- **Agriculture Adaptability and Recovery Program**
  - Aids food and agricultural producers to relieve financial stress they are incurring in response to COVID-19 by having to adapt and diversify their operations to ensure a safe and adequate food supply.
  - This includes funding for PPE at farmer's markets and for farm workers and addressing storage of products stuck in a logistics pipeline to prevent food waste.
  - For example, Lattin Farms in Fallon, received funding to ensure they could continue to safely operate their on-farm produce stand and bring their product to farmers markets, ensuring Nevadans could maintain safe access to fresh and healthy food. This included signage to reduce congregation, sanitation supplies and barriers for traffic flow.

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