

## Vice Chancellor's Secretariat

Outfall Road, Lahore, Pakistan  
Tel: +92-42-99211476  
Fax: +92-42-99211461  
Email: pavc@uvas.edu.pk  
Web: www.uvas.edu.pk

**The Honorable Prime Minister**  
Islamic Republic of Pakistan  
Prime Minister Secretariat  
Islamabad

No.SVCI/ 3386

Dated: 01.04.2020

Subject: **Recommendations: Livestock and Poultry Sectors Amidst COVID-19 Threat**

Honorable Sir,

السلام عليكم!

Pakistan is an agricultural country where this sector contributes about one fifth in country's GDP and is the backbone of the rural economy as it provides employment to 42% workforce of the country. Livestock is the largest shareholder in the agriculture with enormous contribution of 58% in the agricultural GDP. It can be appraised from the fact that a rural population of nearly 40-45 million is directly dependent on livestock farming for their livelihoods. Likewise, Poultry is the second largest industry of Pakistan having investment of more than Rs.700 billion and providing cheapest protein to masses.

The University of Veterinary & Animal Sciences (UVAS) Lahore, has been playing its pivotal role in indicating the required strategies to the policy parlors of the Government. During COVID 19 pandemic, UVAS has convened an online meeting with all stakeholders of Livestock and Poultry sector today, which included representatives of academia, Livestock Department Govt. of Punjab, farmers, farmer's associations, processing companies, exporters and FAO expert. The required measures to ensure sustainability of food supply chain were discussed in detail.

The current threat of COVID-19 has devastating effects on the whole food supply chain due to recent containment measures. This situation has rendered Livestock and Poultry industries to non-sustainable and nonprofitable situations. These include lowering of demand in the market at lowest ebb, non-availability of transportation services and workforce in processing plants, manipulation of farmers to lift their produce at cheaper rates and inability of exporters to meet the supply orders in international markets. This has resulted into an emergency situation of food supply chain.

The house in today's consultative session came up with following recommendations which are split into general and industry specific recommendations.

### A. General recommendations:

1. A **comprehensive media campaign** should be launched at national level to create awareness and educate general public that the consumption of milk, meat (chickens, beef and mutton) and eggs is not only safe but also significantly helps in boosting immune system for combating the imminent corona virus infections.



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2. To declare livestock and poultry farming as **"priority sector"** and to offer immediate financing for working capital either as soft loans or on special discounted rates.
3. To **defer electricity bills** of small and large farmers at least for one month. The payments should be taken in three months installments once the emergency is over.
4. Govt. should **abolish the custom duties, sales tax and income tax** on the import of raw materials and machineries/equipment required for livestock and poultry industries for at least three years.
5. Necessary directions should be passed on to law enforcement agencies to facilitate personnel involved in **logistics of food materials** of all kinds on national and local routes.
6. To **ensure un-interrupted** milk, meat and egg supply chain in the country from villages to urban households. However, the required SOPs can be devised to avoid spread of disease.
7. **Equal incentives** should be given to all stakeholders i.e. poultry, meat and dairy industries in order to maintain the equilibrium.

### B. Recommendations Dairy & Meat Industries:

1. **Zero-rating regime** for the dairy sector should be resumed immediately.
2. **Tax exemptions /special tax packages** should be given to revive the livestock farming production systems.
3. To safeguard rights of local farmers and boost local production in this emergency, an immediate **ban on import of skimmed powder** be implemented.
4. The animal **"mandies"** must be open and fully functional to ensure fully efficient livestock supply chain.
5. Government should take necessary measures to ensure **farm gate prices of milk and meat** as these were before lock down.
6. Urgent measures should be taken to provide **subsidy on wanda** upto 25% for next three years.
7. The policy related to **opening animal feed selling outlets** must be implemented properly which will ensure supply of healthy feed and reduce chances of aflatoxin in animals.
8. The Govt. should engage the processing companies especially **"Milk powder plants"** to buy and process the excessive or unsold milk from farmers to convert it to powder which can be used in future.
9. The required measures, related to **bio security**, should be extended to ensure safety of farm workers.
10. To continue **all veterinary services** to livestock farms including vaccination, disease prevention, diagnostic, treatment etc. even with more rigor which are presently halted.

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### C. Recommendations for Poultry Industry:

1. To revive **exports of eggs and chicken meat**, some immediate measures be taken to start and regularize cargo flights/freighters services on subsidized rates.
2. Banks to be asked to help sector to arrange **working capital and short loans** on minimum interest rates.
3. Government shall support sector by **sharing the salaries and wages**, through grants to employees of this poultry sector.
4. Government should include provision of processed chickens and eggs in intended **food program of Prime Minister**.
5. Government should use **coupon system** in providing food from retail shops in place of giving cash to the needy families.
6. To ensure that imposed **lockdown exempts** the farmers, feedlots, poultry farms, farming inputs supply companies, processing plants, feed mills, feed raw materials, dealers, shops etc.
7. The **conventional chicken meat sale points** (phatta sale) shall be allowed to continue even in this emergency lock down.

It is expected that the above recommendations, if implemented in true letter and spirit can significantly reduce the negative repercussion of COVID 19 Pandemic of livestock sector of Pakistan. Thus, it is suggested that these recommendations should be immediately included in all recent measures of government to combat COVID 19 to ensure sustainable food supply chain.



**Prof. Dr. Nasim Ahmad, S.I.**  
Vice Chancellor

### CC:

1. The Incharge, COVID 2019, Prime Minister Secretariat, Islamabad
2. PS to Prime Minister, Pakistan
3. The Governor of the Punjab
4. The Chief Minister of Punjab
5. The Minister for Livestock and Dairy Development Department, Punjab
6. The Secretary, Livestock and Dairy Development Department, Punjab
7. All Concerned