



Q&As
BC Wine Industry & COVID-19
DRAFT 2

1. As a BC winery, how can I stay up-to-date on the most relevant industry information related to COVID-19?

Bookmark the BC Wine Institute's [COVID-19 UPDATE](#) web page. This page hosts and posts the most up-to-date information for BC wineries on what you need to know, what you can do, and critical key links with professional guidance and information from BC Centre of Disease Control and tourism partners.

2. Can the BC Wine Institute clarify what BC winery business operations are currently allowed and not allowed under the essential service designation?

BC wineries that are licensed to serve alcohol (including tastings) in their own lounges or tasting rooms are no longer permitted to do so.

BC wineries may continue to manufacture alcohol.

Retail liquor sales may continue as before at BC wineries from their on-site and on-line stores, subject to specific conditions, outlined [here](#).

3. How has the extension of store and delivery hours for liquor retail outlets including BC winery retail (or Manufacturer Onsite Store) changed?

Effective April 3, 2020, the Liquor & Cannabis Regulation Branch (LCRB) is [temporarily extending the hours of liquor service](#) for Licensee Retail Stores, Wine Stores and Special Wine Stores, and Manufacturer Onsite Store endorsements to no earlier than 7:00 AM and end no later than 11:00 PM.

These optional extended hours are intended to assist retailers in implementing the [Provincial Health Officer's recommendations](#), including social distancing and providing early shopping hours for seniors and the vulnerable population. The LCRB is also authorizing delivery services to purchase liquor on behalf of a customer from a liquor store or from any licensee authorized to sell in unopened containers, and deliver and sell that liquor to a customer, provided the delivery does not take place between 11:30 PM and 7:00 AM. This new policy is effective immediately and is in effect until July 15, 2020. Licensees do not need to apply to change their hours of sale.



4. What small business programs and supports are available for BC wineries?

Governments and the private sector are providing a wide-range of supports for businesses in BC affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

BCWI auditor Grant Thornton has a comprehensive online overview of federal and provincial government support. The website provides updates to guiding businesses through Coronavirus (COVID-19) including what government measures impact businesses, changes to employment and labour, and provides [links](#) to find more information.

Key support programs that the federal government has introduced include:

- [Canada Emergency Response Benefit: applications opened April 6](#)
- [Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy: applications opening soon](#)
- [Canada Emergency Benefit Account: applications available through your primary lending institution in mid-April \(three weeks after March 27\)](#)
- [Federal Support for Farmers and Agri-Food Businesses](#)

The Province of BC has produced a short 2-page document with links to the most up-to-date information and resources relating to: financing and credit, wage subsidy programs, federal tax information. Download the document [here](#).

For the latest information on BC small business supports, resources and advisory services during COVID-19, BC wineries can also visit [Small Business BC](#). Advisors are ready to help by phone at 1-800-667-2272, [email](#) and daily [digital meetups](#).

5. What programs and services are available for BC winery employees that have or could be laid off from regular or are seasonal positions?

Employment Insurance (EI) provides regular benefits to individuals who lose their jobs through no fault of their own (for example, due to shortage of work, seasonal or mass lay-offs) and are available for and able to work, but can't find a job. Visit [EI Regular Benefits Overview](#) for application information.

If you have stopped working because of COVID-19, the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) may provide you with temporary income support. The Canada Emergency Response Benefit will offer \$2,000 a month for up to four months for workers who lose their income as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Select “[Apply](#)” to continue to the application.



6. Is the BC Wine Institute talking to Governments about industry specific cash injections and tax breaks?

Beyond what has been announced to date, the BC Wine Institute continues to talk with both provincial and federal governments on policies and programs to assist BC wineries.

To assist with lobbying efforts and to inform government on the state of the BC Wine industry, we encourage all wineries to complete the BC Wine Institute Impact Survey *each week* where possible.

The most recent Impact Survey can be found on the BC Wine Institute's [COVID-19 UPDATE](#) web page. Please bookmark this page and visit it weekly, as it hosts and posts the most up-to-date information for BC wineries on the health and wellness, government programs, and general business operations during this difficult time.

7. If I am a BC winery and/or grapegrower, what do I need to know or prepare for to ensure temporary workers are available?

The situation in Mexico and Canada is constantly evolving and many factors are still unforeseeable. BC wineries can connect direct by [email](#) to the BC Grapegrowers' Association on any questions and for the latest information on the Western Agriculture Labour Initiative (WALI), BC wineries should [sign up](#) for regular updates [here](#).

8. How can BC wineries update their online business information and optimize their social media to help reach more consumers and increase wine sales?

BC wineries should create, update, and post regularly on their Google Business Profile to ensure the latest contact information, business hours and special offers are communicated. The BC Wine Institute offers a tutorial on how to harness the power of Google Business. Access the tutorial [here](#).

BC wineries can learn how to drive consumer traffic to their online website stores using Facebook and Instagram Advertising. The Facebook Ad Platform manages this for you. The BCWI is hosting a webinar on this topic on Wednesday, April 8 at 3:00 PM and encourages members register. Members can also visit the [BCWI webinar webpage](#) to learn about or replay any past webinars.

BC wineries can learn to grow their reach and engagement specific to the Instagram by learning how the Instagram Algorithm works. The BCWI provides a webinar on this topic along with a [hand-out](#). Visit this [link](#) to access the complete BCWI webinar.