

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

Date: April 22,2020

Report Number: EZ2020-0005

Report Name: COVID-19 - Czech Government Announced a Plan for Relaxing of Restrictive Measures

Country: Czech Republic

Post: Prague

Report Category: Agricultural Situation, Agriculture in the Economy, National Plan, Policy and Program Announcements, Agriculture in the News, Beverages, Avocado, Canned Deciduous Fruit, Dried Fruit, Fresh Deciduous Fruit, Fresh Fruit, Kiwifruit, Raisins, Stone Fruit, Strawberries, Vegetables, Wine

Prepared By: Jana Fischer

Approved By: Emily Scott

Report Highlights:

A newly released plan from the Czech government outlines a gradual reopening of shops and services under strict hygiene conditions, between April 20 and June 8. Farmers markets will be the first to reopen, as well as craftsmen and repairers; shops of up to 1,000 square meters will follow. Driving schools and gyms can reopen as of May 11. Restaurants, pubs, and cafes with outdoor gardens and hairdressers can reopen as of May 25. The shopping malls and indoor food businesses will be able to reopen as of June 8.

The Czech government approved a plan unfolding five phases during which businesses will reopen, unless the epidemiological situations worsens. After a month of severe restrictions, the government introduced a scenario ensuring a gradual return to normal. The COVID-19 restrictions, which mostly affected stores, restaurants, cultural venues and sport centers/fields, will be lifted in five stages, with strict hygiene requirements in place.

The schedule of the five relaxation phases is as follows:

1. April 20 – farmers’ markets, crafts and repair businesses, car repairers and car stores, outdoor training of professional sportsmen, wedding celebrations up to 10 persons
2. April 27 – small retail shops under 200 square meters (not those in the shopping malls that are above 5,000 square meters)
3. May 11 – shops under 1,000 sq. meters (not those in the shopping malls that are above 5,000 square meters), driving schools, gyms and fitness centers (excluding changing rooms and showers)
4. May 25 – restaurants, pubs, cafes, bars, wine bars, etc. (take away, outside premises); hair and beauty salons; massage and reconditioning services; museum and galleries (special regimes); zoos (outdoor)
5. June 8 – all shops, shopping centers/malls, restaurants, pubs, bars, etc. (including inside premises); taxi services; hotels and other accommodation services; theaters, castles, chateaus (limited regime); zoos (indoor); public events up to 50 persons; weddings, etc.

No large public cultural events and/or festivals during summer are foreseen. Borders will most probably not open before June, depending on the situation in other countries. It is being discussed, whether the Czechs will be permitted to travel to countries, in which the epidemiological situation is similar to the Czech Republic or better, or not.

The Czech tourism industry is losing tens of billions in Czech Koruna (1 CZK=0.04 USD) due to the COVID-19 crises. Hotels, restaurants, spas, sport and historical places have been closed for over a month. The government intends to encourage Czechs to spend their holiday in the Czech Republic this year.

The government’s plan, however, was criticized by the industry representatives (The Czech Confederation of Commerce and Tourism, The Association of Shopping Malls) for its lack of transparency and accountability. The industry representatives criticize the perceived lack of mutual communication between the government and the industry, and the absence of mutual discussions during the preparation of the plan. The industry also finds the schedule of the reopening too slow and opening the shops based on their size as disadvantaging for some.

The plan depends on the epidemic situation and may be frozen or reviewed depending on circumstances. The staged ease of restrictions will continue unless the number of newly infected COVID-19 patients reaches 400 per day.

Attachments:

No Attachments.