

September 24, 2020

The Honorable Mike Pence, Vice President
White House Coronavirus Task Force
Office of the Vice President
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Task Force members,

First and foremost, thank you for your continued work to combat the coronavirus pandemic and promote the wellbeing of our nation. Farmers are proud to serve on the frontlines with our employees protecting our nation's food and fiber supply, but we have not been immune to the crippling effects of the pandemic. Loss of markets, supply chain logistics, price volatility, and workplace safety are just some of the challenges our industry has faced this year.

Throughout these difficulties, farmers continue to do our best to provide a safe workspace for all employees, promoting safety on and off the farm. Across the agriculture sector, employers have instituted best practices including social distancing, enhanced hygiene and sanitation procedures, employee training, and the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). We now have six months of COVID-specific insight and experience working to protect the farm workforce and are committed to applying lessons learned as we move forward.

With the broad strain on PPE availability, testing, and other resources, however, we ask for your help as we continue to promote the health and safety of our farm employees and rural communities. Some of our recommendations that follow suggest direct farm assistance. Others may be best delivered at the community level, recognizing that the risks of virus exposure and spread are not limited to employment, but to all aspects of life in the community. In that regard, we ask the White House Coronavirus Task Force to implement the following measures:

- Allow the use of alternate housing structures, such as FEMA trailers or RV's to facilitate greater social distancing. While we appreciate the flexibility to use hotels/motels to facilitate social distancing and quarantine, these lodging options are not always available in rural areas. In many cases, quarantine and isolation options might best be approached with federal assistance at the community level, rather than the farm level.
- Ensure COVID-19 testing resources are accessible to agricultural employers and employees and that test results are available promptly. In some regions, it has taken almost two weeks for COVID-19 test results, which creates an increased risk of disease spread and potentially delays agricultural productivity. Additionally, access to federally-supported, farm worker community-based testing may be a good option in many production areas.
- Help farmers offset the costs of COVID-19 mitigation expenses, while maintaining existing farm programs, by increasing Commodity Credit Corporation funds. These

expenses include housing, transportation, retrofitting workplaces, testing, and training and compliance activities, among others.

- Prioritize PPE and future vaccine distribution for the food and fiber supply chain. Industries, such as agriculture, that are critical to the safety and wellbeing of our nation should be prioritized for vaccine allocation.
- Leverage networks, in cooperation with states, counties, associations and community-based non-profits, to address the areas of community exposure risks to our workforce that are outside the occupational setting and ensure care is available and accessible to those who become ill, even in rural communities. We recognize the critical role each of us play in looking out for the health and safety of our families and communities, so efforts must extend to our broader communities.

Our national food security depends on a safe working environment for frontline agricultural employees. The work of planting, cultivating, harvesting, packaging, and processing crops, dairy and meat cannot be conducted from the comfort of a home office, as with many jobs. Despite the implementation of best practices in fields and processing facilities, the agricultural workforce remains at heightened risk of infection. We ask for your attention to this matter to help us continue to mitigate risk whenever and however possible for those dedicated to stocking America's pantry.

Sincerely,

A. Duda & Sons, Inc.
Adams County Nursery
Agricultural Retailers Association
Agriculture Teachers Association of Texas
Agri-Mark
Agri-Placement Services
Agri-Services Agency LLC
Alabama Nursery and Landscape Association
Alameda County farm bureau
American Beekeeping Federation
American Farm Bureau Federation
American Mushroom Institute
American Seed Trade Association
American Sugar Alliance
American Sugar Cane League
AmericanHort
Arizona Farm Bureau
Arizona Nursery Association
Butte County Farm Bureau
California Apple Commission
California Blueberry Association
California Blueberry Commission

California Canning Peach Association
California Citrus Mutual
California Farm Bureau Federation
California Fresh Fruit Association
California Strawberry Commission
CoBank
Colorado Nursery & Greenhouse Association
Dairy Producers of New Mexico
DBA Book-Ends Associates
Farm Credit Council
Farm Credit East
Florida Citrus Mutual
Florida Farm Bureau Federation
Florida Fruit and Vegetable Association
Florida Nursery, Growers and Landscape Association
Florida Tomato Exchange
Fresno County Farm Bureau
Georgia Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association
Georgia Green Industry Association
Grower-Shipper Association of Central California
Grower-Shipper Association of Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Counties
H-2 Tax Associates
Idaho Dairymen's Association
Idaho Farm Bureau Federation
Idaho Nursery & Landscape Association
Illinois Green Industry Association
Indiana Nursery & Landscape Association
Iowa Nursery & Landscape Association
Kansas Cooperative Council
Kentucky Farm Bureau
Landus
Leitz Farms
Louisiana Farm Bureau Federation
Louisiana Nursery and Landscape Association
Low Country Labor Company
Madera county farm bureau
Maryland Farm Bureau
Maryland Nursery, Landscape, and Greenhouse Association, Inc.
Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation Inc
Massachusetts Nursery and Landscape Association, Inc.
MBG Marketing
MFA Oil Company
Michigan Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Association
Michigan Apple Committee
Michigan Farm Bureau
Michigan Milk Producers Association

Michigan Nursery & Landscape Association
Michigan State Horticultural Society
Michigan Vegetable Council
Minnesota Farm Bureau
Minnesota Nursery & Landscape Association
MKC
Monterey County Farm Bureau
Napa County Farm Bureau
National All-Jersey
National Association of Landscape Professionals
National Association of State Departments of Agriculture
National Christmas Tree Association
National Cotton Council
National Council of Agricultural Employers
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives
National Farmers Union
National Grange
National Milk Producers Federation
National Onion Association
National Peach Council
National Potato Council
National Watermelon Association
Nebraska Cooperative Council
New England Apple Council
New Jersey Farm Bureau
New Mexico Farm and Livestock Bureau
New York Apple Association
New York Farm Bureau
New York State Flower Industries
New York State Vegetable Growers Association
North American Blueberry Council
North Carolina Farm Bureau
Northeast Dairy Farmers Cooperatives
Northeast Dairy Producers Association
Northwest Horticultural Council
NW Agricultural Cooperative Council
NYS Vegetable Growers Association
Ohio Farm Bureau
Ohio Nursery & Landscape Association
Oklahoma Agricultural Cooperative Council
Olive Growers Council of California
Orange County Farm Bureau
Oregon Association of Nurseries
Oregon Dairy Farmers Association
Oregon Farm Bureau
Pacific Coast Producers

PennAg Industries Association
Pennsylvania Farm Bureau
Pennsylvania Landscape & Nursery Association
Plant California Alliance
Professional Dairy Managers of Pennsylvania
Reliable Labor Services, LLC
San Bernardino County Farm Bureau
San Diego County Farm Bureau
San Joaquin County Farm Bureau
Santa Barbara County Farm Bureau
Sonoma County Farm Bureau
South Carolina Farm Bureau
South Carolina Peach Council
South Dakota Association of Cooperatives
South East Dairy Farmers Association
Specialty Crop Farm Labor Contractors
Sun-Maid
Sunsweet Growers
Sutter County Farm Bureau
Tehama County Farm Bureau
Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation
Tennessee Nursery & Landscape Association, Inc.
Texas Ag Land Trust
Texas Agricultural Cooperative Council
Texas Citrus Mutual
Texas Cotton Ginners' Association
Texas Farm Bureau
Texas Food Processors Association
Texas Forestry Association
Texas Grain Sorghum Association
Texas International Produce Association
Texas Nursery & Landscape Association
Texas Poultry Federation
Texas Vegetable Association
The Saqui Law Group, a Division of Dowling Aaron Incorporated
Timm Adams Farms Inc.
U.S. Apple Association
U.S. Sweet Potato Council
United Ag
United Fresh Produce Association
USA Farmers
USA Rice
Ventura County Agricultural Association
Virginia Farm Bureau Federation
Virginia Nursery & Landscape Association
Washington State Dairy Federation

Washington State Nursery & Landscape Association
Washington State Tree Fruit Association
West Virginia Nursery & Landscape Association
Western Growers Association
Wine Institute
Yuba County Farm Bureau
Yuma Fresh Vegetable Association