

April 14, 2020

The Honorable Governor Tom Wolf
508 Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Governor Wolf,

I'm writing to you on behalf Pennsylvania's farm families to ask your consideration for the ability of garden centers to open on a limited basis—following similar guidelines that restaurants are using. Specifically, we are asking for garden centers to offer curbside or parking lot service. Many restaurants have successfully adopted this model of service. We believe this is a way for our garden centers to meet customer demand during the most critical part of their season.

Pennsylvania farmers have taken seriously their designation as life-sustaining and have risen to the challenge that COVID-19 presents. Even with market disruptions that seriously threaten the profitability of their products, farm families across the state are working hard to grow food for their local communities. In addition, farm businesses that rely heavily on retail sales are adjusting their practices to provide the proper amount of social distancing and sanitary standards, while still providing a “life sustaining” public service.

Gardens are equally life sustaining. During this time of uncertainty, many are turning to gardens to give some measure of control over their food supply. In addition, gardening is a safe outdoor activity that residents of this state can enjoy.

Spring is a critical time for our independent, family-owned, garden centers. The bulk of their business is accomplished in the lead up to Mother's Day and spring planting season. It is imperative that we provide a method for these businesses to offer some type of sales, while protecting customers. We believe curbside and parking lot services is a solution that garden centers are willing to adopt to conduct business while addressing public health and safety concerns.

We are asking for the Department of Community and Economic Development to give garden centers the ability to offer curbside and parking lot service. Given the time sensitive nature of this request, we are seeking an expedited review. Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,



Rick Ebert
President, Pennsylvania Farm Bureau