

April 17, 2020

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

Dear Gov. Wolf,

Thankfully, during this public health crisis food has been able to get from farms, to the grocery stores, due to diligence by workers in every part of the supply chain. However, Pennsylvania Farm Bureau has concerns about the long-term stability of the supply chain, and what that will mean for Pennsylvania farmers and needy families, if we do not take steps to shore up worker safety protection at food production facilities.

Already, we have seen voluntary plant closures of four meat packing plants in Pennsylvania. Each of those temporary closures have resulted in a serious disruption in the supply chain and staggering economic losses for Pennsylvania farmers. Right now, animals are on farms that should have gone to market. Given the demands faced by our charitable food system, and the need to continually supply retail stores, we need to take every step possible to prevent significant supply disruptions.

In addition, Pennsylvania employs several thousand workers who are producing canned and frozen fruits and vegetables, and numerous dairy product. Thankfully, we have not heard of issues arising at those plants, but we need to guard against that at all cost.

We are requesting that every effort be made to protect workers who are employed at this essential food production facilities such as:

- Making rapid testing available.
- Helping these production facilities find adequate personal protective gear to protect workers.

Workers in these food manufacturing facilities are a vital link the food supply chain. Without these facilities being open, food backs up on farms—possibly going to waste—and not reaching the people who need it. Our farm families, and our consumers, cannot afford significant disruptions in our food system. We are asking for your help in expediting resources to our food processing plants to either prevent them from having to shut down, or getting them up and running in the quickest way possible. Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,



Rick Ebert
President, Pennsylvania Farm Bureau