



May 12, 2020

The Honorable Michael Pence
Vice President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20050

The Honorable Sonny Perdue
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Vice President Pence and Secretary Perdue,

As the nation begins to plan for reopening, the Sustainable Food Policy Alliance (SFPA) writes to urge that food and agriculture workers, as part of an essential industry, be heightened in priority for access to expedited testing, personal protective equipment (PPE) and any other forthcoming treatments. We respectfully request that the federal government work with states and local officials to ensure increased testing capacity for COVID-19 for this critical sector of the economy.

At the outset, it is important to state that we, as four major food manufacturers, believe the primary focus should remain on ensuring that our nation's healthcare workers, first responders and public safety workers continue to be first in line for PPE and coronavirus testing within their communities. Once their needs are addressed, we urge you to ensure that food and agriculture workers across the supply chain are next in line.

Fully stocked shelves at grocery stores are an important part of our nation's food security and, by extension, our national security. Being able to safely go to the grocery store and easily find a diverse array of products also supports consumer confidence during a pandemic – an important step in returning to normalcy after the pandemic.

Maintaining a strong and stable food supply chain depends on keeping food and agriculture workers – from farmers and ranchers to truckers to grocery store employees to food company employees – safe and healthy. SFPA members Danone North America, Mars, Incorporated, Nestlé USA and Unilever United States have implemented health and safety measures that are in line with or above the recommendations from government and public health officials and have been able to meet our needs for PPE and for some testing in our U.S. operations. However, we believe more resources and prioritization are needed to ensure the needs of the full U.S. food and agriculture supply chain are met.

There are still many unknowns about this pandemic. Experts can't yet tell us how much longer the pandemic will continue, or, for example, how long PPE, social distancing and other practices to prevent the spread of the coronavirus will be necessary to keep employees safe while maintaining operations.

We do know that companies across the food and agriculture supply chain will continue to need priority access to testing kits and PPE for the foreseeable future, and they will continue to need to procure those in a timely way and on a significant scale. As an industry designated as essential by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) during the pandemic, we also believe food and agriculture should be given high priority for vaccines, once available. Ensuring adequate access to testing kits, PPE and, eventually, vaccines for food and agricultural workers across the supply chain will be critical for the continued



security of the food supply during the pandemic and in the post-pandemic world.

Working with federal, state and local officials, SFPA will continue to do everything we can to protect our employees and meet the needs of our customers while supporting strong, healthy families and communities. We stand ready to support and implement policies and practices that will aid the entire food and agriculture industry in meeting these goals, and we hope you will move expeditiously to help us and the entire food and agriculture supply chain during this crisis.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Adamo".

Chris Adamo
Vice President
Federal and Industry Affairs
Danone North America, PBC

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brad G. Figel".

Brad G. Figel
Vice President
Public Affairs North America
Mars, Incorporated

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Molly Fogarty".

Molly Fogarty
Senior Vice President
Corporate & Government Affairs, U.S.
Nestlé USA

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Langan".

Tom Langan
North America Director
Sustainable Business & External Affairs
Unilever

cc:

The Honorable Mitch McConnell, Senate Majority Leader
The Honorable Chuck Schumer, Senate Minority Leader
The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House of Representatives
The Honorable Kevin McCarthy, Minority Leader of the House of Representatives
The Honorable Pat Roberts, Chairman of the Senate Agriculture, Nutrition, & Forestry Committee
The Honorable Debbie Stabenow, Ranking Member of the Senate Agriculture, Nutrition, & Forestry Committee
The Honorable Collin Peterson, Chairman of the House Agriculture Committee
The Honorable Mike Conaway, Ranking Member of the House Agriculture Committee
The Honorable Chad F. Wolf, Acting Secretary, US Department of Homeland Security
The Honorable Alex Azar, Secretary, US Department of Health and Human Services
The Honorable Stephen Hahn, Commissioner, Food and Drug Administration
The Honorable Frank Yiannas, FDA Deputy Commissioner for Food Policy and Response
The Honorable Robert Redfield, MD, Director, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Dr. Deborah Birx, Response Coordinator, White House Coronavirus Task Force