



Emerging Issues Digest

2020/04/03 - 2020/04/09

COVID-19

RESPONSES, GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FOOD INDUSTRY FROM GLOBAL OFFICIAL AND UNOFFICIAL SOURCES

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1.1 ARGENTINA

1.1.1 2020-04-08: COVID 19 - Monitoring: Supply chain Prices - Unofficial ([link](#))

Press/News: Press Release

[The price differential between the field and the table is maintained but the prices dependent on the horeca channel are sinking](#)

In the case of mandarin, prices at origin rose 13.7% and prices at destination 45%. This situation is due to the reduction of margins in most agricultural products, while livestock products have repeated value compared to February 2020. In both cases, the gap between what the farmer perceives and the final seller grew strongly, multiplying by six and seven times respectively. However, in March we spoke of an enormously atypical month because the prices at origin have been affected by the health crisis of COVID-19 and the monthly averages are not very significant for the evolution of the price in the month. Under the title "Produce food in times of pandemic", the analysis shows that the IPOD for the month of March 2020 shows an average differential between the prices between the field and the table of 333%, which supposes a contention in the margins with respect to previous month (341%) and also a drop compared to the prices of March of the previous year (355%).

1.2 BAHAMAS

1.2.1 2020-04-06: COVID 19 - Monitoring: Import/Export Restrictions; Supply chain; Supply chain Prices - Official ([link](#))

Ministry of Agriculture and Marine Resources: Notice

[Emergency Food Production Plan](#)

The Emergency Food Production Plan is based on the 'Food Drum' produced by the Ministry of Health which indicates the dietary intake of the major food groups: vegetables, fruit, grains/starchy vegetables, meat/dairy, fats, sugars and sweeteners and legumes/ (peas and beans). The Ministry of Agriculture and Marine Resources (MAMR) has produced an Emergency Food Production Plan to strengthen food and nutrition security during this time of crisis. These products were subject to import restrictions based on domestic production and due to their importance to the incomes of farmers, there are efforts to increase the production of these products. The Ministry of Agriculture is now engaging both importers and domestic producers to monitor closely the pressures that the international supply chain is under.

1.3 BRAZIL

1.3.1 2020-04-03: Transmission - Official ([link](#))

Ministry of Agriculture: Regulation

Concepts: [contamination](#)

[BEST PRACTICES TO PREVENT TRANSMISSION IN FRUIT AND VEGETABLE MARKETS](#)

1.4 CANADA

1.4.1 2020-04-06: COVID 19 - Monitoring: Food Controls; Food Packaging - Official ([link](#))

Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA): Notice

[Temporary suspension of certain labelling requirements for foodservice products due to COVID-19](#)

Effective immediately, the CFIA is temporarily suspending certain labelling requirements that have no impact on food safety. Low-risk activities are those that do not immediately impact the production of safe food for Canadians. It also applies to foodservice food that is packaged and labelled within 90 days of the publication of this notice. The information must be available to the consumer or final purchaser. [Language requirements for labelling] It is strongly recommended that labelling information be provided in both English and French. Resellers are asked to use their judgement and take into account the language of the population to which the products are destined.

1.4.2 2020-04-03: COVID 19 - Monitoring: Restrictions; Transmission - Official ([link](#))

Official Gazette: Notice

[Minimizing the Risk of Exposure to COVID-19 in Canada Order \(Mandatory Isolation\) - Quarantine Act](#)

This Order in Council, entitled Minimizing the Risk of Exposure to COVID-19 in Canada Order (Mandatory Isolation), is made pursuant to section 58 of the Quarantine Act. This Order works in conjunction with an Interim Order to Prevent Certain Persons from Boarding Flights to Canada due to COVID-19 made pursuant to subsection 6.1(1) of the Aeronautics Act, which came into force on March 18, 2020, and prohibits air carriers from permitting foreign nationals from boarding flights to Canada. This Order complements the Order in Council entitled Minimizing the Risk of Exposure to COVID-19 Coronavirus Disease in Canada Order (Prohibition of Entry into Canada from the United States) made on March 20, 2020, and the Order in Council entitled, Minimizing the Risk of Exposure to COVID-19 Coronavirus Disease in Canada Order (Prohibition of Entry into Canada from any country other than the United States), made on March 22, 2020.

1.5 EUROPEAN UNION

1.5.1 2020-04-03: COVID 19 - Monitoring: Restrictions: General - Official ([link](#))

EU (European Commission): Regulation

Concepts: [packaging](#)

[COVID-19 EU Response - Latest Updates](#)

The Commission issued guidance to ensure the free movement of workers, especially in the health care and food sectors. Guidelines on green lanes: the Commission issued guidelines on 'green lanes' to Member States to ensure speedy and continuous flow of goods across the EU and to avoid bottlenecks at key internal border crossing points.

1.6 INDIA

1.6.1 2020-04-04: Supply chain - Official ([link](#))

Government: Press Release

Concepts: [supply chain](#)

[MHA clarifies on ground level issues being faced by States in ensuring smooth flow of supply chain of Essential Items during National Lockdown to fight COVID-19](#)

At the ground level different interpretations are being made on the items given exceptions, which hinder smooth flow of supply chain of these essential items. Exceptions to sale (including through e-Commerce), production, warehousing and transport of essential goods such as food, groceries, fruits and vegetables, dairy and milk products, meat and fish, animal fodder, seeds, fertilizers and pesticides, agriculture produce, drugs, pharmaceuticals, medical devices, their raw material and intermediaries have been specifically mentioned in the aforesaid guidelines. Production, warehousing and transport of essential goods are included under exceptions in the guidelines and the district authorities are issuing individual passes to businesses covered in the exempted category. Taking the case of “laboratories”, the communication clarifies that they have been exempted from lockdown restrictions.

1.7 INTERNATIONAL

1.7.1 2020-04-05: COVID 19 - Monitoring: Supply chain - Official ([link](#))

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO): Report

[COVID-19 and the risk to food supply chains: How to respond?](#)

As the COVID-19 pandemic turns into a global crisis, countries are taking measures to contain the pandemic. Supermarket shelves remain stocked for now. But a protracted pandemic crisis could quickly put a strain on the food supply chains, which is a complex web of interactions involving farmers, agricultural inputs, processing plants, shipping, retailers and more. The shipping industry is already reporting slowdowns because of port closures, and logistics hurdles could disrupt the supply chains in the coming weeks. This policy brief provides recommendations on measures to consider in order to keep the supply chain alive in these times of crisis.

1.7.2 2020-04-07: COVID 19 - Monitoring: Supply chain - Official ([link](#))

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO): Report

[Responding to the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on food value chains through efficient logistics](#)

Measures implemented around the world to contain the COVID-19 pandemic have entailed a severe reduction not only in the transportation of goods and services that rely on transport, but also in the migration of labour domestically and internationally. Workers are less available reflecting both disruptions in transportation systems and restrictions to stop the transmission of the disease, within and across borders. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) urges countries to maintain functioning food value chains to avoid food shortages, following practices that are being proven to work. This note summarizes some practices that could be useful for governments and the private sector to maintain critical logistical elements in food value chain.

1.7.3 2020-04-07: COVID 19 - Monitoring: Supply chain; Supply Chain Prices - Official ([link](#))
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO): Report

[Migrant Workers and the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

Measures affecting the movement of people, not only across countries but also within countries, will have an impact on agricultural supply chains. Shortages of labour could disrupt production, as well as the processing and distribution of food. As the pandemic evolves, concerns emerge about shortages of migrant workers during planting and harvesting. In European countries, this possible shortage could affect a wide range of crops, especially the labour-intensive ones (e.g. tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, strawberries, cherries, potatoes, and asparagus). Overall, there may be an estimated shortfall of about 1 million seasonal agricultural workers in Europe, mainly coming from Eastern Europe and Northern Africa. Measures affecting the movement of people (internally and internationally) and resulting labour shortages will have an impact on agricultural value chains, affecting food availability and market prices globally.

1.7.4 2020-04-07: COVID 19 - Monitoring: Controls; Supply chain - Official ([link](#))
World Customs Organization (WCO): Press Release
Concepts: [supply chain](#), [customs](#)

[WHAT CUSTOMS CAN DO TO MITIGATE THE EFFECTS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC](#)

The current version of the document analyses practices submitted by 26 WCO Members. The WCO will continue to update the document based on Member, stakeholder and official open source input.

1.7.5 2020-04-07: COVID 19 - Monitoring: Controls; Standards - Official ([link](#))
International Standards Organization (ISO): Press Release
Concepts: [standards](#)

[COVID-19 Response: ISO Standards Freely Available](#)

1.8 INTERNATIONAL - LATAM

1.8.1 2020-04-04: COVID 19 - Monitoring: Food; Transmission - Official ([link](#))
Institute of Nutrition of Central America and Panama: Report

[Recommendations for healthy alimentation during COVID-19](#)

The objective of this document is to provide general feeding recommendations varied and balanced in response to the pandemic of COVID-19 during the first months of 2020. The consumption of certain foods, micronutrients or diet type cannot prevent nor decrease the risk of contagion in healthy people. Calamity, emergency or crises are often characterized by limited access to certain foods, micronutrients and water safe. The protection, promotion and support to healthy eating in these situations is key to the well-being of the most vulnerable. Nutrition responses in case of isolation or suffering from COVID-19, they cover a series of actions to protect the varied and balanced diet.

1.8.2 2020-04-06: COVID 19 - Monitoring: Restrictions - Official ([link](#))
Central American Integration System (SICA): Report
Concepts: [supply chain](#)

MEASURES IMPLEMENTED BY PANDEMIC COVID-19 IN THE SICA REGION

Summary of measures implemented in Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, Dominican Republic.

1.8.3 2020-04-09: COVID 19 - Monitoring: Supply Chain - Unofficial ([link](#))

Association/Professional Organization: Notice

Concepts: [packaging](#)

[Report on COVID-19 Impact on Agro-Food in LATAM Region](#)

The report includes information for Mexico, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, Panama, Peru, Dominican Republic.

1.9 MALTA

1.9.1 2020-04-03: COVID 19 - Monitoring: Transmission - Official ([link](#))

Ministry of Health: Notice

[Guidance for Food Businesses](#)

This guidance document was developed to assist persons who own, manage or work within food businesses to minimise the risk of transmission of coronavirus to staff members and Coronavirus is spread via respiratory droplets. These can be spread during sneezing or coughing or when persons interact with each other within a small distance (usually less than one metre). Some persons have also reported a change or loss in their sense of smell or a change of their sense of taste. Supervisory and management staff are to ensure that the correct hand washing technique is adopted. The risk of transfer of coronavirus from food or food packaging is currently thought to be low and has not been reported as a confirmed source of contagion.

1.10 PANAMA

1.10.1 2020-04-03: COVID 19 - Monitoring: Restrictions - Official ([link](#))

Administration of Customs: Press Release

Concepts: [supply chain](#)

[MEASURES ADOPTED IN RESPONSE OF COVID – 19](#)

The Republic of Panama has declared a National Health Emergency status due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which is why the National Government has enacted temporary measures to guarantee the public health of Panamanians. Paperwork for the nationalization of goods, transshipment, transit, as well as any customs regime in ports, airports and land borders, will be carried out on the electronic platform of the Customs Management Integrated System (SIGA). The presence of the Customs broker will be mandatory at the time of physical examination (red light) and he must make available to the Customs authority all the physical documents. By means of an Administrative Resolution, the National Customs Authority of Panama regulated a temporary procedure for the import of merchandise established under the “Relief dispatch special modality” (Aid and humanitarian assistance). The authorized procedure applies to merchandise, including vehicles and other means of transportation,

food, medicines, clothing, blankets, tents, Prefab building structures, items to purify and store water. Implementation of WORK-AT-HOME initiative for public servants, which allows proper development and oversight of national and international supply chain operations.

1.11 TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

1.11.1 2020-04-07: COVID 19 - Monitoring: Transmission; Food Packaging - Official ([link](#))

Ministry of Agriculture: Notice

[Food Safety and Coronavirus - Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries](#)

To date, there is no evidence of human or animal food or food packaging being associated with transmission of the coronavirus that causes Covid-19. Little is known or understood about the effect of COVID-19 and food and food safety and the following Questions and Answers serve as a guide to consumers. Unlike foodborne gastrointestinal (GI) viruses like Norovirus and Hepatitis A that often make people ill through contaminated food, SARS-CoV-2, which causes COVID-19, is a virus that causes respiratory illness. As per general good food safety practices, raw meat, milk or animal organs should be handled with care, to avoid potential cross-contamination with uncooked foods. The most recently discovered coronavirus causes coronavirus disease COVID-19.

1.11.2 2020-04-07: COVID 19 - Monitoring: Restrictions - Official ([link](#))

Ministry of Agriculture: Regulation

[The Public Health \[2019 Novel Coronavirus \(2019-nCoV\)\] \(No. 7\) Regulations, 2020](#)

Lockdown measures and exceptions for essential activities.

1.12 SPAIN

1.12.1 2020-04-08: COVID 19 - Monitoring: Supply Chain, Prices - Unofficial ([link](#))

Association/Professional Organization: Regulation

Concepts: [packaging](#)

[COVID-19 - Report on Impact on Agri-Food Sector in SPAIN and PORTUGAL](#)

Despite its relatively good resistance compared to other animal productions, the production and sale of beef is not spared from the crisis. No cyclical respite either for red fruits, whose sales fell by half. Fepex requests the resumption of the marketing of flowers and plants, as in the Netherlands or in Germany. The Canary Banana is not spared from the crisis, and suffers from its mode of marketing in small local shops. Shops which are today mostly closed for lack of customers, although no provision of the state of alert obliges them to do so.

1.13 THAILAND

1.13.1 2020-04-06: COVID 19 - Monitoring: Supply Chain, Prices - Unofficial ([link](#))

Press/News: Notice

Concepts: [food fraud](#)

Thailand's COVID-19 'war': Local food production centre of focus as government guarantees supplies

Despite these measures, panic-buying still took place in Thailand when consumers were initially made aware of a possible lockdown, particularly impacting rice and egg purchasing. The other four are livestock, medical supplies, logistics & delivery, and animal feed. Three of these are food-related: Rice, fruits and vegetables, and processed foods. Most factories producing F&B products have also been allowed to continue operations. Thailand's Ministry of Commerce has also set up seven 'war rooms' earlier this month, which are joint working groups between the relevant industries and government departments to ensure sufficient, uninterrupted supply of necessities.

1.14 UNITED STATES

1.14.1 2020-04-03: COVID 19 - Monitoring: Transmission; Controls - Official ([link](#))

USDA FSIS: Notice

[USDA Updates Website with Latest Information on COVID-19](#)

Currently there is no evidence to support transmission of COVID-19 by food or food packaging and there have not been any cases of COVID-19 in the United States associated with imported goods. All components of the food industry are considered critical infrastructure and it is vital that they continue to operate. FSIS is continuing to inspect meat, poultry, and egg products to ensure safety and wholesomeness for consumers. The agency is closely monitoring COVID-19 and actively following CDC guidance and best practices.

1.14.2 2020-04-07: COVID 19 - Monitoring: Regulations - Official ([link](#))

FDA: Guidance

[Temporary Policy Regarding Enforcement of 21 CFR Part 118 \(the Egg Safety Rule\) During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#)

1.14.3 2020-04-08: COVID 19 - Monitoring: Regulations; Supply Chain Transmission - Unofficial ([link](#))

Press/News: Regulation

[FDA action aims to direct more supply to table egg market | 2020-04-08 | Food Business News](#)

Provisions of the guidance titled "Temporary policy regarding enforcement of 21 CFR Part 118 (the Egg Safety Rule) during the COVID-19 public health emergency" take effect immediately. "According to the egg industry, the COVID-19 pandemic has created a market imbalance," the FDA noted. "Although there is not currently an egg shortage, there is increased consumer demand for shell eggs in the table egg market. The agency said it believes these conditions will address food safety concerns that could arise when poultry houses shift from producing eggs for further processing to producing eggs for the table egg market. "FDA does not intend to object if shell eggs from a poultry house consisting solely of laying hens up to 45 weeks of age are sold to the table egg market provided the following conditions below are present.

1.14.4 2020-04-03: COVID 19 - Monitoring: Supply Chain; Fraud - Unofficial ([link](#))

Association/Professional Organization: Notice

Concepts: [food fraud](#)

[Can Blockchain Fortify the Organic Food Supply Chain?](#)

Many were sold to farmers of organic livestock—which must be fed organic feed—ultimately compromising the integrity of the organic food label. As blockchain technology adoption rises among farmers, suppliers, and food manufacturers, the organic food supply chain will only strengthen, and that means healthier food and beverages for consumers today, and a sustainable future for tomorrow. Using distributed ledger technology for the food and beverage supply chain is more than just a theoretical solution. That same supply chain data can also be used to build consumer confidence in the organic food market, where shoppers demand more information about the goods they buy. BaaS platforms only require a device with an internet browser and easily integrate with existing supply chain management systems.

1.14.5 2020-04-06: COVID 19 - Monitoring: Controls- Unofficial ([link](#))

Press/News: Regulation

[FDA to Temporarily Conduct Remote Importer Inspections under FSVP Due to COVID-19 - Food Safety Magazine](#)

Until now, FSVP inspections to review FSVP records typically have been conducted at an importer's place of business. The FDA will immediately begin conducting a limited number of remote inspections, prioritizing the inspections of FSVP importers of food from foreign suppliers whose onsite food facility or farm inspections have been postponed due to COVID-19. In rare situations, such as in response to an outbreak of foodborne illness, FDA may still choose to conduct an onsite FSVP inspection. Therefore, the agency will shift to temporarily conducting FSVP inspections remotely as practical until further notice. The FSVP rule requires importers to perform certain risk-based activities to verify that their foreign supplier is producing the food in accordance with U.S. food safety standards.

1.14.6 2020-04-06: COVID 19 - Monitoring: Regulations; Controls; Supply Chain - Unofficial ([link](#))

Association/Professional Organization: Press Release

[FDA, USDA Address Challenges Facing Fresh Produce Industry during COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

The agencies updated the industry on alterations to inspection and auditing regulations, transitioning from food service to retail, and the food supply chain.

1.14.7 2020-04-08: COVID 19 - Monitoring: Supply Chain - Unofficial ([link](#))

Association/Professional Organization: Notice

[AHPA Supply chain disruption - Response for USDA](#)

American Herbal Products Association to make sure USDA is aware of Food Supply Chain issues our organization may be experiencing related to business disruptions associated with COVID-19. The responses received reported shortages or delivery disruptions of a variety of ingredients, supplies, and services that largely fall into the categories identified below. Note that though several of the specifically identified ingredients may not be readily familiar, these are used in dietary supplement products regulated under the Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act as a category of food Identified examples include: agave, arnica, bilberry, boswellia, cilantro, echinacea, elderberry, gentian, hawthorn, linden, and lomatium, passionflower, pomegranate, reishi and turmeric. To contribute information to your inquiry we surveyed these member companies and requested responses within two business days. The

responses received reported shortages or delivery disruptions of a variety of ingredients, supplies, and services that largely fall into the categories identified below.

1.14.8 2020-04-08: COVID 19 - Monitoring: Transmission; Supply chain - Unofficial ([link](#))

Press/News: Notice

Concepts: [supply chain](#)

[Sen. Markey pushes for higher safety at grocery stores as employees begin to die from coronavirus](#)

Markey's letter comes one day after Trader Joe's, Giant and Walmart confirmed that at least four frontline employees have died of COVID-19. As such, he asked FEMA and the White House Task Force by April 10 to explain how they define frontline workers for purposes of estimating PPE needs. He also asked them what guidance they are providing to frontline workers to protect themselves and what types of PPE could be made available. Walmart and Kroger now check employees' temperatures at the start of each shift and provide workers with gloves and masks. The CDC and FDA must do all they can to help protect retail food industry workers and their consumers from coronavirus infection and its spread," Markey told the agencies in a sharply worded April 7 letter.

1.15 USA CALIFORNIA

1.15.1 2020-04-06: COVID 19 - Monitoring: Controls; Regulations - Official ([link](#))

Ministry of Public Health: Notice

[NOTICE OF TEMPORARY WIC AUTHORIZED FOOD LIST](#)

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) is adopting a Temporary WAFL pursuant to: Executive Order N-40-20, which allows temporary changes to CDPH's regulations governing authorized supplemental foods; 7 Code of Federal Regulations part 246.10(b)(1)(i) and (b)(2)(i), which permits State agencies to establish criteria for supplemental foods in addition to the minimum federal requirements in 7 Code of Federal Regulations part 246.10(e)(12), table 4, and requires State agencies to identify the brands of foods and package sizes that are acceptable for use in their States; and waivers approved by the United States Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service (USDA/FNS), which provide additional food package flexibilities in response to the significant impacts of COVID-19 on WIC Program services. The Temporary WIC Authorized Food List (WAFL) described below is effective immediately and will remain in effect until May 31, 2020. Crisp Rice or Crispy Rice: shall be in twelve (12) ounce to thirty-six (36) ounce containers A. Shall be in twelve (12) ounce to thirty-six (36) ounce containers; and i. Sardines: shall be in fifteen (15) ounce containers (D) Canned Mature Beans: shall be in fifteen (15) ounce to sixteen (16) ounce containers 1. Refrigerated Juice: shall be in forty-eight (48) ounce, sixty-four (64) ounce, ninety-six (96) ounce, or one hundred twenty-eight (128) ounce containers 1. Pink Salmon: shall be in five (5) ounce, six (6) ounce, or fourteen and three-quarters (14.75) ounce containers 4.

1.16 USA OREGON

1.16.1 2020-04-08: COVID 19 - Monitoring: Controls; Food Packaging - Official ([link](#))

Ministry of Agriculture: Notice

Concepts: [packaging](#)

Federal agencies announce temporary label regulation flexibility - Oregon Department of Agriculture News

The Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) is sharing this information with the intent of following the lead of the federal agencies. For more information please visit the USDA FSIS website (link below) or reach out to the ODA Food Safety Program. Link: [FDA – Safe Distribution of Human Food for Animals](#)
ODA has also created a COVID-19 webpage for agriculture-specific resources. Here you can find out how ODA is handling business such as field inspections and get the latest guidance regarding your food-related business. Additional shell eggs for consumers are available, but labeled retail packaging may not be available.

ABOUT HORIZON SCANNING

The Decernis Emerging Issues Digest was generated with Decernis Horizon Scanning, an intelligence gathering solution and early warning system.

This Digest includes global major responses, recommendations and guidance impacting the Food Industry during the COVID- 19 outbreak.

This comprehensive report was generated using Artificial Intelligence and reviewed for relevance by our Subject Matter Expert team. In the system, you will find links to the regulatory sources as well as automatic summaries translated into English.

For more information, please contact us under info@decernis.com or contact your local representative, or refer to our web page www.decernis.com/solutions/horizon-scanning.