



March 18, 2020

Dear Commissioners, Directors and Secretaries of Agriculture and Staff,

The animal food industry, like many other industries, is concerned about and taking necessary steps to prevent the further spread of the new coronavirus disease (COVID-19). This is a difficult and unprecedented time for many of us. The American Feed Industry Association and undersigned state associations representing animal feed producers want to make sure that as you take the proper precautions to protect human health, including closing down some retail establishments or businesses, you keep in mind the manufacturers, retailers and distributors of livestock, poultry and pet food.

Founded in 1909, the American Feed Industry Association (AFIA) is the world's largest organization devoted exclusively to representing the business, legislative and regulatory interests of the U.S. animal food industry and its suppliers. With more than 680 domestic and international members, AFIA represents more than 75% of the feed and 70% of the non-grain ingredients manufactured in the United States. AFIA and the below state association members are responsible for providing safe, high quality and nutritious food to the livestock, poultry, aquaculture, equine, pets, specialty pets, laboratory and zoo animals in the U.S.

Some state governments are considering closing “non-essential” businesses as a way to prevent the further spread of coronavirus. While we understand and appreciate the efforts to slow this pandemic, we also must recognize that animals must continue to have access to food and therefore, our industry must be able to manufacture, transport and sell ingredients, feed and pet food. These products are also purchased from a variety of places, including pet stores, grocers, veterinary clinics and a variety of agricultural and non-agricultural retail establishments. Some states have taken the necessary steps to exclude essential businesses that qualify as “agricultural” under their respective state codes. As you look at your next containment steps, we want to ensure that livestock feed and pet food, and the establishments that transport, package, manufacture, process and sell those products, receive the same exemptions as they are vital to the health and wellbeing of animals.

Thank you for your attention to this matter as we work to ensure the health of both people and animals during this challenging time. For those states that have addressed this concern, we greatly appreciate your action. Please contact, John Stewart, AFIA's director of membership and stakeholder engagement, at jstewart@afia.org or (703) 558-3566, with any questions or comments.

Sincerely,

American Feed Industry Association
Agribusiness Association of Kentucky
Agribusiness Association of Iowa
Alabama Feed & Grain Association
California Grain & Feed Association
Florida Feed Association, Inc.



Grain & Feed Association of Illinois
Indiana Grain and Feed Association
Kansas Grain & Feed Association
Michigan Agri-Business Association
Minnesota Grain & Feed Association
Missouri Agribusiness Association
Montana Feed Association
Nebraska Grain & Feed Association
Ohio Agribusiness Association
Oklahoma Grain & Feed Association
Oregon Feed & Grain Association, Inc.
Pacific Northwest Grain & Feed Association
PennAg Industries Association
Rocky Mountain Agribusiness Association
South Dakota Grain & Feed Association
Tennessee Feed & Grain Association
Texas Grain & Feed Association
Wisconsin Agri-Business Association