



3 May 2020

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister,

We are writing to urge your government to take concrete action to address the spread of the new corona virus through many food production plants in Canada that is threatening the welfare of workers in those facilities and food security for Canadians.

You have spoken several times about the importance of protecting the health and well-being of workers in those plants, yet our recommendations – based on best practices identified by food worker unions around the globe – have largely been ignored by your government. Indeed, your Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food convenes a twice weekly briefing for producers and processors that we have not been invited to. Reportedly, she told this group this week that “maintaining processing levels is our top priority.” Mr. Prime Minister, a US-style response to meat production will not result in positive outcomes for meat industry workers and Canadians who depend upon a safe and secure protein supply.

In spite of the federal oversight of these plants, the CFIA has remained on the sidelines. Mr. Prime Minister, the federal government has the obligation and the authority to intervene to ensure an appropriate response to the outbreaks in these plants.

The CFIA must adopt a consistent approach to the presence of COVID-19 in meat and other food production facilities that places the health and safety of those working in the plants first. Measures to ensure social distancing need to be implemented and production lines slowed to allow people to work safely.

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We have recommended extensive measures to address the crisis in our food production industry that have been all but ignored by your Ministers to date.

There are several examples of positive results that have been achieved to control the spread of the virus in these kinds of facilities when employers and the unions that represent the workers there discuss and work together. We would be happy to share the details with you and your staff.

Please get back to us on an urgent basis.

Yours sincerely,



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the Public Service of
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