



June 30, 2020

The Honorable Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator, Massachusetts
309 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Cory A. Booker
United States Senator, New Jersey
717 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Warren and Senator Booker:

We received your letter dated June 22, 2020, regarding the actions we have undertaken to protect our team members during the COVID-19 pandemic, the mitigation efforts currently underway at our nationwide facilities and how we continue our crucial mission of feeding American families during this unprecedented national crisis. We appreciate the opportunity to address these matters.

Tyson wholeheartedly agrees that the health and safety of our team members is our top priority. Since the COVID-19 crisis began, we have implemented extensive protective measures in order to ensure the wellbeing of our team members. While this continues to be an evolving situation, with new science emerging and federal and local regulations continually changing, Tyson remains committed to doing our best to modify and fine tune our protective measures in an effort to keep our team members safe while also providing nutritious food to America's families.

From the early stages of the pandemic, Tyson has met or exceeded the COVID-19 guidelines issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). For our facilities, we issued initial guidance in late February 2020 to address virus spread prevention measures such as hand washing and sanitizing and implemented frequent cleaning and sanitization of high touch areas. We also provided educational and reference materials on COVID-19 in more than 15 languages for the facilities to share with team members or mailed directly to team members' home addresses. That initial guidance was quickly followed by additional



guidance in early March 2020 imposing strict visitor restrictions and symptom screening for any contractors. Since that time, Tyson has continued to implement or exceed public health guidelines and has created comprehensive, enterprise-wide policies to implement those guidelines.

Consistent with CDC and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidance, Tyson has taken numerous measures throughout our facilities to prevent the spread of the illness, including: (1) creating barriers and/or requiring face shields on production lines where social distancing is not possible; (2) installing barriers between break room tables and recreational areas; (3) staggering shifts and breaks and reducing line speeds to decrease the number of team members in hallways, break rooms, and production lines; (4) barricading or marking seating in common areas to promote social distancing; (5) adding social distancing markers on the ground around time clocks, entrances and other common areas of congestion; (6) erecting tents outside for additional break room capacity; and (7) using social distancing monitors throughout the facility to manage compliance with best practices. Further, Tyson is proud to employ a diverse, multilingual workforce and many of our facilities utilize infographics, multiple translations of signage and interpreters to communicate best practices with our team members.

Despite a nation-wide shortage due to logistical issues, Tyson took aggressive measures, including chartering space on international cargo flights, to expedite the delivery of surgical-style disposable face coverings, face shields, hand sanitizer and gloves. Through these extensive efforts, Tyson was able to procure large quantities of surgical-style facial coverings by mid-April 2020, which we understand was much earlier than many companies were able to do.

Tyson supplies fresh disposable items to team members daily and non-disposable items are sanitized before subsequent use. Further, we are supplying our team members who rely on group or public commuting with additional surgical-style facial coverings for their commute to and from work. In many locations, cloth facial coverings were also provided to team members to share with their family or housemates. Tyson has also made substantial capital investments to provide thermometers and installed over 100 thermal scan temperature systems in our plants. We will continue to identify new solutions and technologies to keep our team members safe.

In concert with these protective measures, Tyson has been at the forefront of testing since the onset of the COVID-19 crisis. Not only was Tyson the first



company in our industry to proactively initiate a testing strategy for its workforce, but also has likely conducted more employee testing than any other company in America. We currently estimate that we have tested almost 40,000 of our team members for COVID-19. Through our facility-wide testing, we have found team members who have COVID-19 but do not exhibit any symptoms and otherwise would not have been identified. This proactive action has not only allowed us to promptly isolate those asymptomatic team members from the facilities, but also use this information to initiate robust close contact investigation within our facilities and share data externally with health officials and the communities in which we operate. We are the only company to conduct large-scale testing in collaboration with county and local health departments and our data indicates that COVID positives correlate to the incidence in community spread. This is why Tyson worked closely and partnered with local health departments to provide data needed to help stem the spread in the local communities, and why Tyson provides information to all team members on how best to stop the spread of the virus outside of where they work, including in their homes and community at large. Such action and information sharing are critical in doing our part to help fight against COVID-19. Recently, various outlets have noted Tyson's own proactive approach to testing team members to identify and prevent the spread of COVID-19 in both our plants and plant communities.¹ Tyson is proud of the steps we have taken and our transparency in data, even when it creates a challenging environment.

To help ensure our processes and procedures were beneficial and effective, Tyson engaged third-party medical providers Matrix Medical and Axiom Medical to conduct onsite testing and case assessment of team members at various facilities across the nation. In addition, Matrix Medical and our own health staff have been involved in close contact investigation, education of our workforce, follow-up monitoring of our team members and strict adherence to protocols for returning team members who meet CDC, OSHA and local health department criteria for return-to-work.

Tyson also significantly modified its attendance policies to encourage workers to stay at home when they exhibited any COVID-related illnesses. Tyson waived the waiting periods for short-term disability benefits and relaxed our attendance

¹ National Public Radio, "How Widespread Coronavirus Testing Helped Meatpacking Plants Slow Outbreaks," Dan Charles, June 22, 2020, <https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2020/06/22/879774584/how-widespread-coronavirus-testing-helped-meatpacking-plants-halt-outbreaks>

Bloomberg Government, "Tyson's Virus Transparency Made It Vulnerable to China Ban," Michael Hirtzer, June 22, 2020, <https://www.bgov.com/core/news/#!/articles/QCCJFIT0G1KY>



policies to allow team members with child or dependent care issues to stay home to address those issues rather than coming to work. Tyson paid a \$500 “*Thank You Bonus*” in early May to 116,000 hourly management support and management level operations team members working in our facilities. We will be paying a second \$500 “*Thank You Bonus*” to these same team members in July. This bonus is available to all employees including those who remained at home for COVID-related issues. The only requirement to receive the bonus is that the team member report their absence to their manager.

At Tyson, we are proud of our commitment to feeding our neighbors in America and those around the world as appropriate. As we have publicly stated and as our actions reflect, we will not hesitate to idle a plant for a period of time if needed to keep our team members safe. As a result, Tyson’s production capacity was significantly reduced for all proteins, with pork and beef more significantly affected than chicken.

We prioritized the U.S. market and shipped products that are part of the American diet to our U.S. customers during the crisis. As to our international exports, a large portion of meat exports from the United States are cuts of meat or portions the animal (e.g. organ meats, chicken paws, etc.) that are not desired by our customers or consumers because they are not part of the traditional American diet and would otherwise be discarded or rendered. Because export markets do not generally desire the same commodity products as those sold in the U.S. market, exporting does not threaten the American meat supply.

Moreover, export demand bolsters the profitability of America’s farmers and ranchers by making the entire animal more valuable at market and supports the nearly 800,000 people who work in the food processing industry. The export market is a critical component of a sustainable and efficient use of protein as it allows the industry to meet the market demand for consumer preferences both in the United States and abroad.

Companies work in advance with merchants worldwide to find suitable destinations for those otherwise undervalued portions of the animal, to provide the availability to pass on greater value to farmers and ranchers when purchasing animals for processing. Based on the practice of pre-contracting loads, many of the export loads had been booked and sold weeks before the pandemic affected the U.S.



In closing, we want to reiterate that our team members' health and safety is our top priority. This has been and will continue to be our primary focus. Tyson has implemented and is fully committed to continuing to implement proactive measures to protect our workers during this national crisis. We also take seriously our responsibility as part of the United States' critical infrastructure to maintain food supply chains to the American people without compromising this commitment. Our plants and the 120,000 team members who support them are an indispensable part of a supply chain that includes farmers, ranchers, truckers, grocers, hospitals and many others.

Thank you for allowing us to address your concerns. We welcome the opportunity to schedule a telephone conference with your staff to further answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Dan Turton
Senior Vice President
Global Government Affairs