



NATIONAL CATTLEMEN'S BEEF ASSOCIATION  
CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY



April 7, 2020

The Honorable Mike Pence  
The Office of the Vice President of the United States  
Eisenhower Executive Office Building  
1650 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20501

Dear Vice President Pence:

Representing thousands of American workers across all 50 states that ensure the reliability of our Nation's food supply, we write to express our strong concern that the current coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic creates a significant risk of a shortage in carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) that would significantly impact access to essential food and beverage supplies and other essential sectors of the U.S. economy. We bring this to your attention and request the assistance of the federal government during this temporary emergency to prevent a substantial CO<sub>2</sub> shortage before it creates any food and beverage shortages.

CO<sub>2</sub> is critical for the operations of food and beverage manufacturers that provide essential goods and services to Americans. CO<sub>2</sub> is used in the processing, packaging, preservation, and shipping of many foods. In addition, CO<sub>2</sub> in different forms is used in various aspects of the healthcare industry and is also an important component in many municipal water treatment systems.

CO<sub>2</sub> is produced primarily as a byproduct of industrial manufacturing, including the production of ethanol, ammonia (fertilizer manufacturing), hydrogen (H<sub>2</sub>)/refining processes, and natural wells. CO<sub>2</sub> comes from these various sources that differ geographically due to proximity to the customer, access to viable shipping routes, and availability of trucks and drivers.

The significant economic impact of the COVID-19 outbreak in the U.S., as well as related global economic trends, has significantly affected overall demand and production of industrial manufacturing that leads to CO<sub>2</sub> capture. Many industrial manufacturers have already idled their plants due to diminished demand leading to a decrease in CO<sub>2</sub> access for industrial gas suppliers. Thus, certain industrial gas companies have been forced to ration available CO<sub>2</sub> products amongst essential business users, including food and beverage manufacturing plants. Preliminary data show that production of CO<sub>2</sub> has decreased by approximately 20%, and experts predict that CO<sub>2</sub> production may be reduced by 50% by mid-April unless action is taken to stabilize existing sources of CO<sub>2</sub>, prevent production sources who are indicating they will shut down from doing so, and reopen those sources that have halted production thus far.

A shortage in CO<sub>2</sub> would impact the U.S. availability of fresh food, preserved food and beverages, including beer production. The guidance<sup>1</sup> issued by the Department of Homeland

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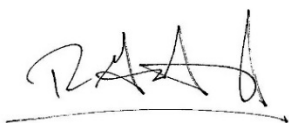
<sup>1</sup> Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency. Guidance On The Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce. March 28, 2020. <https://www.cisa.gov/publication/guidance-essential-critical-infrastructure-workforce>.

Security (DHS) Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) on March 28, 2020 deemed these industries as “essential critical infrastructure”: food manufacture, including food processing and livestock production, beverage production, renewable fuel development, and chemical and industrial gas supply chains. Without stable sources of CO<sub>2</sub> across the nation, these food and beverage manufacturers will be unable to operate at capacity, leading to shortages for Americans of the important goods they depend on, especially during the COVID-19 crisis.

We request your immediate assistance on this issue. We believe that temporary, emergency federal assistance is necessary to prevent shortages in CO<sub>2</sub> by providing federal incentives to industrial manufacturers to put manufacturing plants that result in CO<sub>2</sub> production back into service, especially those sites that are capture-ready, i.e. that have the ability to capture, liquefy, and store usable CO<sub>2</sub>. If federal action is not swift, a slowdown in food and beverage manufacturing due to a shortage in CO<sub>2</sub> will ultimately lead to shortages of needed goods.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this issue. Should you have any questions, please contact Richard Gottwald, President & CEO of the Compressed Gas Association, at 202-487-0288 or [rgottwald@cganet.com](mailto:rgottwald@cganet.com).

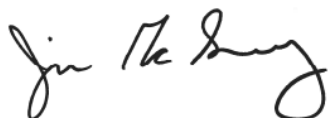
Sincerely,



Rich Gottwald, President & CEO  
Compressed Gas Association, Inc.  
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Neil Dierks, Chief Executive Officer  
National Pork Producers Council  
[www.nppc.org](http://www.nppc.org)



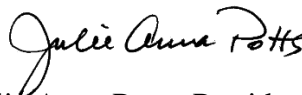
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CC: The Honorable Dan Brouillette, Secretary of Energy, U.S. Department of Energy  
The Honorable Chad Wolf, Secretary of Homeland Security (Acting), U.S. Department  
of Homeland Security  
The Honorable Sonny Perdue III, Secretary of Agriculture, U.S. Department of  
Agriculture  
The Honorable Stephen Hahn, MD, Commissioner, U.S. Food and Drug Administration  
The Honorable Lawrence Kudlow, Director, National Economic Council  
Peter Navarro, PhD, Assistant to the President for Trade and Manufacturing Policy,  
Office of Trade and Manufacturing Policy, National Economic Council, Executive  
Office of the President