



North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

March 25, 2020

Dear Members of the Law Enforcement Community,

I want to thank you for what you do every day for the citizens of North Carolina. Your work is even more critical in these difficult times than it has ever been. I have always relied on and appreciated the collaborative relationship that the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and the agricultural community as a whole has had with the law enforcement community. I know I can count on that relationship as we meet head on our current challenge of serving North Carolina amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

As our state and nation continue to meet this challenge, some states, counties, and cities have adopted travel restrictions such as “shelter-in-place” and lock down orders. As the virus spreads, we can expect to see more such restrictions adopted. With such orders in place it will no doubt fall upon our great law enforcement officers in North Carolina to ensure that such measures are being followed responsibly.

It is to this end that I write to advise you of my plans moving forward and to request your help. Consistent with the Department of Homeland Security’s identification of the production and supply of food and agriculture as one of 16 critical infrastructure areas providing vital service to the nation, I will be designating certain personnel of the state’s agricultural commodity groups and associations as essential personnel that must continue to travel and perform their job duties amid various travel restrictions that may be implemented.

In addition to the permits I am issuing for NCDA&CS employees, I am also issuing a “Notice of Essential Food and Agriculture Employee” to agricultural commodity groups and other entities that are part of the food and agriculture critical infrastructure (a copy of which is attached to this letter). Like NCDA&CS employees, these workers have been instructed to present the notice signed by me along with a government issued identification if stopped by law enforcement. Should the law enforcement officer have any questions, each permit will contain a signed verification by the head of the agricultural group along with contact information. The agricultural groups are working to get these forms out to the appropriate personnel, but this may take a few days to fully implement.

Once more, I would like to reiterate how important the relationship between NCDA&CS, the agriculture community, and law enforcement is to me and ask for your cooperation as we continue to perform our

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2 West Edenton Street
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essential functions. I greatly appreciate all that our great officers do every day and request your assistance as we as a society continue to battle these unprecedented conditions. Please share this letter with your membership and anyone else you deem appropriate. Please let me know if I can ever be of assistance to NCSA and the law enforcement community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steven W. Troxler". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Steven W. Troxler
Commissioner

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Steve Troxler
Commissioner

North Carolina Department of Agriculture
and Consumer Services

NOTICE OF ESSENTIAL FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYEE

As Commissioner of Agriculture, I hereby give notice that _____, an employee of _____ (farm, business name, agricultural group or association), is an employee performing essential job functions in the area of food and agriculture. It is necessary that this employee be able to proceed to work, conduct any and all functions of his/her job in whatever setting or locale required, and to return home after work, consistent with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) identification of the production and supply of food and agriculture as one of 16 critical infrastructure areas providing a vital service to the nation. This notice is issued due to the restrictions on travel and congregation issued by various government authorities pertaining to the COVID-19 virus, such as "shelter-in-place," "stay-at-home" and similar ordinances and proclamations.

Agricultural Group Verification:

Title:

Date

Organization

For verification or inquiries regarding this designation, please contact the above representative at

Phone number

By his signature, the Commissioner of Agriculture hereby makes this designation on this the 25th day of March, 2020.

Steve Troxler, NC Commissioner of Agriculture

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LOCATION
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The Department of Homeland Security defines Food and Agriculture workers as:

- Workers supporting groceries, pharmacies and other retail that sells food and beverage products
- Restaurant carry-out and quick serve food operations - Carry-out and delivery food employees
- Food manufacturer employees and their supplier employees—to include those employed in food processing (packers, meat processing, cheese plants, milk plants, produce, etc.) facilities; livestock, poultry, seafood slaughter facilities; pet and animal feed processing facilities; human food facilities producing by-products for animal food; beverage production facilities; and the production of food packaging
- Farm workers to include those employed in animal food, feed, and ingredient production, packaging, and distribution; manufacturing, packaging, and distribution of veterinary drugs; truck delivery and transport; farm and fishery labor needed to produce our food supply domestically
- Farm workers and support service workers to include those who field crops; commodity inspection; fuel ethanol facilities; storage facilities; and other agricultural inputs
- Employees and firms supporting food, feed, and beverage distribution, including warehouse workers, vendor-managed inventory controllers and blockchain managers
- Workers supporting the sanitation of all food manufacturing processes and operations from wholesale to retail
- Company cafeterias - in-plant cafeterias used to feed employees
- Workers in food testing labs in private industries and in institutions of higher education
- Workers essential for assistance programs and government payments
- Employees of companies engaged in the production of chemicals, medicines, vaccines, and other substances used by the food and agriculture industry, including pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers, minerals, enrichments, and other agricultural production aids
- Animal agriculture workers to include those employed in veterinary health; manufacturing and distribution of animal medical materials, animal vaccines, animal drugs, feed ingredients, feed, and bedding, etc.; transportation of live animals, animal medical materials; transportation of deceased animals for disposal; raising of animals for food; animal production operations; slaughter and packing plants and associated regulatory and government workforce
- Workers who support the manufacture and distribution of forest products, including, but not limited to timber, paper, and other wood products
- Employees engaged in the manufacture and maintenance of equipment and other infrastructure necessary to agricultural production and distribution
- Agriculture workers supporting the green industry to include nursery operations, garden centers, landscape and maintenance companies critical to the environmental and physical living conditions necessary in our communities. (NCDA&CS addition)
- Agriculture workers and caretakers supporting the equine industry critical to the health and safety of the livestock and physical living conditions in our communities. (NCDA&CS addition)