



December 3, 2020

Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices  
RE: HHS Docket No. CDC-2020-0121

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Our organization and members eagerly await the availability of COVID-19 vaccines as soon as they may become available. Once they are available, federal and state governments will be faced with prioritizing access to those vaccines in the early months much as they had to prioritize access to personal protective equipment (PPE) in 2020.

As an organization representing farm input suppliers, our members take seriously the tremendous responsibility to protect the health of our farmers and workers so that we may continue feeding the nation. The designation of critical industries and the priorities used in distribution of PPE earlier this year recognized the important role that the labor force throughout the agricultural supply chain play in feeding citizens. Failure to keep that supply chain working could have compounded our public health pandemic with a food security crisis.

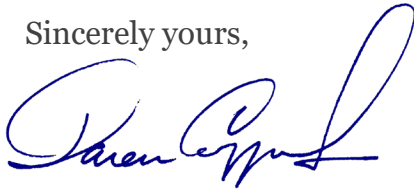
No one disputes that front-line medical workers need to be first in line (Phase 1A) for vaccines. Our nation's heroic first responders, medical professionals, elderly and caretakers, along with other vulnerable individuals, clearly have the highest priority for vaccination. In Phase 1B we urge that the DHS Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers definition be used to maintain the resilience of our agricultural supply chain. This request is consistent with the recommendations of both the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine's (NASEM) Framework for Equitable Allocation of COVID-19 Vaccine and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) COVID-19 Vaccination Program Interim Playbook for Jurisdiction Operations.

Springtime will bring the busiest time of the year for America's farmers and the agricultural retailers who supply and support them. A steady supply of food, feed, fuel and fiber will be a critical foundation upon which our economy will recover. Continuous flow of seed, fertilizer, pesticide and custom applications are most important in the spring. Even missing one or two days in tight windows for planting, and fertilizing or spraying can have significant negative impacts on fresh food and row crop production as well as farm income. A smoothly functioning supply chain of essential crop inputs from the manufacturer to the distributor and retailer is critical for the timely delivery of products to the farm to ensure an economically and environmentally sustainable industry.

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Thank you for your consideration of this request. Please let us know if there is anything we can do to provide assistance.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Daren Coppock", with a large, stylized loop at the end.

W. Daren Coppock  
President & CEO