



1 July 2020

## Joint Statement to the General Administration of Customs, People's Republic of China (GACC)

SARS-CoV-2, the virus causing the COVID-19 disease, is challenging our domestic and global food production and trade systems. We feel we have a responsibility to provide nutritious and safe meat products to consumers globally. We ask for your support and cooperation to facilitate the trade of food based upon the known scientific understanding of COVID-19 and the established international science-based sanitary and phytosanitary measures.

Based upon current WHO, FAO, OIE, Codex and WTO scientific understanding regarding COVID-19, and the established sanitary measures and practices by the industry, the current safety information is (please refer to page 2 for the sources):

- **Food safety:** The SARS-CoV-2 virus is not a food safety issue; it causes a respiratory illness and its primary route of transmission is person-to-person via respiratory droplets. Currently, there is no evidence that the SARS-CoV-2 virus can be transmitted by food or by meat. Nevertheless, the food industry continues to practice stringent food safety procedures to ensure safe food.
- **Packaging safety:** According to the FAO and WHO there is no evidence of virus transfer via packaging to date. Research has indicated the SARS-CoV-2 virus only lasts up to 24 hours on cardboard and 72 hours on plastic and stainless steel. Current measures would minimize or eliminate the risk of exposure due to packaging, when considering time from initial packaging till utilization, and also considering the ability for a viable infectious dose.
- **Handling and surfaces safety:** Food handling procedures include stringent sanitation and hygiene practices that minimize or eliminate the risk of transferring the virus via food handling, utensils, and surfaces. HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points) procedures that are in place globally are a systematic preventive approach to food safety biological risks, including for viruses such as SARS-CoV-2.
- **Worker safety:** Safety of people, including all those involved in the supply chain, is of the highest priority for food Companies and producers, including regarding COVID-19. For the global meat sector this includes biosecurity measures, physical separation, protective equipment, clothing for workers, and active vigilance through body temperature monitoring and quarantine of sick workers to strongly limit the potential spread of the disease. These measures start with input suppliers, then to farmers and producers, to processors and distributors, to exporters and the trade, to retailers and food service, and ultimately to the consumer.

The International Poultry Council (IPC) and the International Meat Secretariat (IMS) and their Members are committed to ensuring the highest level of safety at each step from the farm to the consumer. We encourage all our Members to follow the established international governmental recommendations and guidance as well as that of national Authorities to ensure safety.

Be assured our members remain committed to best practices for management of this pandemic, in accordance with the principles of risk analysis and critical point control with strict requirements at all stages. We strongly believe the science-based approach remains the best way to move forward for our mutual benefit.

Sincerely yours,

Robin Horel  
President  
International Poultry Council (IPC)

Guillaume Roué  
President  
International Meat Secretariat (IMS)

CC Li Shuilong  
Nicolò Cinotti  
Hsin Huang

The core international scientific, and sanitary and phytosanitary measures, sources are:

- ◆ Codex Alimentarius - International Food Standards: General information: <http://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/thematic-areas/COVID-19/en/>
- ◆ FAO - Food and Agriculture Organization: General information: <http://www.fao.org/2019-ncov/en/>, and specific to food safety: <http://www.fao.org/2019-ncov/q-and-a/food-safety/en/>, and interim guidance for business: <http://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/ca8660en>
- ◆ WHO - World Health Organization: General information: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>, and technical guidance: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/technical-guidance>
- ◆ OIE - World Organisation for Animal Health: General information: <https://www.oie.int/en/scientific-expertise/specific-information-and-recommendations/questions-and-answers-on-2019-novel-coronavirus/>
- ◆ WTO - World Trade Organization: General information: [https://www.wto.org/english/tratop\\_e/covid19\\_e/covid19\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/covid19_e/covid19_e.htm)