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USDA Outlines Clear Expectations to States Regarding Compliance with Defense Production Act Ordered by the President

Yesterday Secretary of Agriculture Sunny Perdue issued letters to governors and leadership of major meat processing companies requiring continuity of their business. The two letters outline the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)'s "clear expectations for the implementation of President Donald J. Trump's Executive Order signed last week and states. He also made clear that further action under the Executive Order and the Defense Production Act is under consideration and will be taken if necessary referring the language in the Executive Order that conferred authority on the Secretary of Agriculture over all food supply chains, including the meat and poultry industry.

- Executive Order 13917 signed by President Trump on Tuesday, delegated to the Secretary of Agriculture the powers of the President under the Defense Production Act to take all appropriate action to ensure America's meat and poultry processors continue operations.
- Meat and poultry processors should utilize the guidance issued by CDC and OSHA specifically for the meat and poultry processing industry. The guidance meant to help keep these critical facilities open while maintaining worker safety.
- USDA directed meat and poultry processing plants currently closed and without a clear timetable for near-term reopening to submit to USDA their protocol, based on the CDC/OSHA guidance and resume operations as soon as they are able to after implementing the CDC/OSHA guidance.
- USDA will work with CDC, OSHA, state, and local officials to ensure that facilities are implementing best

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practices designed to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 while maintaining operations.

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The letters were sent to nine governors and six companies.

Companies:

- Tyson Foods
- Aurora Packing Company
- JBS
- Smithfield
- Indiana Packers
- Jennie-O-Turkey

Governors:

- Nebraska, Ricketts
- Washington, Inslee
- Illinois, Pritzker
- Minnesota, Walz
- Wisconsin, Evers
- Kentucky, Beshear
- South Dakota, Noem
- Iowa, Reynolds
- Indiana, Holcomb

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