

COVID-19 UPDATE



ADDITIONAL \$1 BILLION ALLOCATED TO FARMERS TO FAMILIES FOOD BOX PROGRAM

Last week, President Trump announced that an additional \$1 billion will be added to the Farmers to Families Food Box Program. Following the President's announcement of additional funding up to \$1 billion, USDA also announced last week that it intends to extend current contractors that desire to continue to deliver food boxes through September 18. These extensions will ensure adequate capacity for food box distribution as USDA plans to incorporate the additional funding. USDA continues to review proposals received for the upcoming third round, and will issue additional agreements in the near future, with subsequent contracts to deliver food boxes the remainder of September and through October 31.

In the ongoing second round of purchasing and distribution, which began July 1 and will conclude Aug. 31, 2020, USDA has purchased more than \$1.113 billion of food through extended contracts of select vendors from the first round of the program as well as new contracts focused on Opportunity Zones in order to direct food to reach underserved areas, places where either no boxes have yet been delivered, or where boxes are being delivered but where there is additional need.

In the upcoming third round, which begins September 1, USDA plans to purchase combination boxes to ensure all recipient organizations have access to fresh produce, dairy products, fluid milk and meat products. Additional box types will be considered on an as needed basis. Entities that proposed under the previous solicitation, including current vendors, will have to reapply. Proposals will be expected to illustrate how coverage will be provided to areas identified as Opportunity Zones, detail subcontracting agreements, and address the "last mile" delivery of product into the hands of the food insecure population.

The first round of purchases occurred from May 15 through June 30, 2020 and saw more than 35.5 million boxes delivered in the first 45 days.

Updates to the number of food boxes verified as delivered will continue to be displayed on the USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) [website](https://www.ams.usda.gov/selling-food-to-usda/farmers-to-families-food-box), with breakdowns by performance period on the Farmers to Families Food Box Program page: <https://www.ams.usda.gov/selling-food-to-usda/farmers-to-families-food-box>.

CALIFORNIA REOPENING GUIDELINES

Governor Newsom released new guidelines for reopening, calling it the Blueprint for a Safer Economy. The new guidelines are based on a 4-tier system. Every county in California is assigned to a tier based on its rate of new cases and positivity. At a minimum, counties must remain in a tier for at least 3 weeks before moving forward. Data is reviewed weekly and tiers are updated on Tuesdays. To move forward, a county must meet the next tier's criteria for two consecutive weeks. If a county's metrics worsen for two consecutive weeks, it will be assigned a more restrictive tier. Public health officials are constantly monitoring data and can step in if necessary – ex) ICU and/or hospitalizations rates spike. Counties can only move 1 tier at a time. The first weekly assessment will be on Sept. 8th.

	Higher Risk → Lower Risk of Community Disease Transmission			
	Widespread Tier 1	Substantial Tier 2	Moderate Tier 3	Minimal Tier 4
Measures*				
New cases**/100,000 population per day (7 day average; 7 day lag)	>7	4-7	1-3.9	<1
Testing % Positivity (7 day average; 7 day lag)	> 8%	5-8%	2-4.9%	<2%

County count per tier:

1. Widespread (this tier replaces the County Monitoring List) – 38 Counties
2. Substantial – 9 Counties
3. Moderate – 8 counties
4. Minimal – 3 counties

Initial step applied on August 28, 2020:

Each county is assigned to a tier based on an adjusted case rate and test positivity from the prior two reporting periods. If a county's case rate and test positivity measure fall into two different tiers, the county will be assigned the more restrictive tier. This tier status will be effective on Monday, August 31, 2020.

If a county is initially assigned to Purple Tier 1 and has met the criteria for a less restrictive tier the prior week, the county only needs to meet the criteria for a less restrictive tier for one more week to move to the Red Tier 2. (For the September 8, 2020 assignment, a county does not need to remain in the Purple Tier 1 for three weeks. For all subsequent assessments, a county must remain in a tier for three weeks and meet the criteria to advance as described below.)

For more information on these tiers and counties- <https://covid19.ca.gov/safer-economy/>. You can find specific sector/activity information for each county on the website, as well.

WEBINAR ON COVID-19 PREVENTION PROGRAM FOR EMPLOYERS

On September 17, 2020, the National Council of Ag Employers will be hosting a webinar design to assist employers in building a COVID-19 prevention program. Space is limited, so please register by clicking the following link: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/7452019631276671758>

CALIFORNIA STATE LEGISLATURE BILL UPDATE

Please see below for an update on recent activity in the California State Legislature. If you have any questions regarding any of these bills, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

- AB 685 (Reyes)-Passed.
- SB 1102 (Monning)-Passed.
- Worker's Compensation: SB 1159 (Hill) was passed and AB 196 (Gonzalez) failed to be brought up for a vote.
- SB 1383 (Jackson) was put on call twice, but with pressure from the Speaker, reached 41 votes a few minutes before midnight.
- Senator Hertzberg tried a last minute play to push AB 1659 to the Assembly, but was stopped. The alternative bond proposal was never given the rule waiver to be placed into print.
- AB 6 (Reyes) was never brought up for a vote on the Senate floor.
- SB 54 (Allen) was brought up for a vote on the Assembly floor, but failed to get 41 votes, so has failed this year. AB 1080 was not brought up for a vote.