



Rome, 25 March 2020

Dr. Monique Eloit
Director General
World Organization for Animal Health (OIE)

Dr. Qu Dongyu
Director General
Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

Mr. Roberto Azevêdo
Director-General
World Trade Organization (WTO)

Cc
Mr. Daniel Arboleda
Chairperson of the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures
World Trade Organization (WTO)

Mr. Sung Hwa Jang
Chairperson of the Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade
World Trade Organization (WTO)

Dear Director General Dr. Eloit,

I extend my best regards to you from the International Poultry Council (IPC) and all its Members.

IPC is the association that represents the poultry sector globally. Our 29 Country Members and 55 Associate Members represent almost 90% of poultry meat production and 95% of poultry meat exports worldwide. Our members include international companies producing genetics, equipment and animal health products for the sector, as well as companies engaged in the distribution and sale of poultry meat products.

As you know, IPC has signed cooperation agreements with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) and the Codex Alimentarius Commission, and is recognized by these groups as the organization representing the interests of the global poultry meat industry.

Recognizing the spread of COVID-19 is advancing and putting pressure on the health care sectors of affected countries, it is essential that food supply chains operate with as little interruption as possible. The goal of the international poultry sector is to continue to supply our nutritional products to people worldwide.



Our priorities have always been: worker safety, food safety, animal health and welfare, food security and sustainability. At this critical time, it is imperative that we continue to prioritize the safety of our employees and the production of safe food. Currently our members also feel the weight of an even greater responsibility, to ensure the continued production and distribution of poultry meat for consumers.

In countries where COVID-19 has hit hardest, we have witnessed scenes of panic at supermarkets as consumers look for supplies of food and health products. A shortage of food products would increase this sense of panic, making the situation unmanageable. This must not happen.

We are asking for your public support and encouragement for governments and Competent Authorities of all countries to base their decisions on science. Currently we understand that:

- Scientists and food safety authorities across the world are closely monitoring the spread of COVID-19. There is currently no evidence that food is a source or route of transmission of the virus.
- Although data is still limited, authorities are not aware of any reports worldwide of any animal getting sick after exposure to a human case, despite the large outbreak in humans. To date, there have been no reports of livestock being infected or sick with COVID-19 virus anywhere.
- There is no known risk of coronaviruses entering countries on parcels or packages coming from affected regions.

Currently, one of our biggest issues is the inability to supply critical poultry genetics because of the suspension of most international air freight. In the short term this creates significant animal welfare issues since many hatching eggs were placed in incubation prior to the current crisis. In the longer term the inability to transport hatching eggs and day-old chicks / poulters internationally will create huge issues for meeting food security needs worldwide.

We ask for your public support for continuing air transport of day-old chicks / poulters and hatching eggs.

Going forward we pledge to continue to liaise with your organizations to deal with any food safety, worker safety (including safety of both production employees as well as inspectors from the Competent Authorities) and food supply issues that arise.

Thank you in advance for your kind consideration and positive response.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robin Horel".

Robin Horel
IPC President