

President Ursula von der Leyen
European Commission

By e-mail: ec.president.vdl@ec.europa.eu
cab-von-der-leyen-contact@ec.europa.eu

Brussels, 24 March 2020

Subject: COVID-19

Urgency measures requested by the temperature controlled logistics sector to make sure that the cold chain for food and perishable food products remains operational

Dear Mrs. President,

ECSLA is the European umbrella association for the temperature controlled logistics sector. We represent food business operators who deal in particular with foodstuff that needs to be stored, transported and distributed in temperature controlled conditions.

Our members daily business is to take care of frozen and fresh (perishable) food and to provide the temperature controlled storage capacity to safely freeze, store and distribute raw materials such as fruit and vegetable as well as meats and fish products, essential ingredients such as milk and dairy products and all finished frozen food like ice-cream, readymade dishes, etc.

ECSLA member companies and national associations are a crucial link in the food supply chain connecting producers and processing companies with retailers and ultimately with the consumer. Our members run public cold stores across the EU with a capacity of more than 60 Mio. Cubic meters.

The smooth functioning of the temperature controlled supply chain for the supply of food is essential to keep moving food from farms and food manufacturers to the retail outlets across Europe. The food supply chains and in particular those for perishable and frozen food must be kept operational and everything should be done to guarantee they continue to function uninterrupted.

The temperature controlled logistics industry is very adaptable and executes contingency planning very well. However in this time of extraordinary circumstances of the outbreak of COVID-19 supply chains across Europe and around the world are under strain and we therefore ask the Commission to urgently call on Member States to implement measures in the fight against the pandemic in a coordinated and transparent manner.

To keep the food moving along the temperature controlled supply chain and for temperature controlled food logistics to continue to work, we ask

- To recognize the temperature controlled logistics sector as critical service as it keeps the food moving along the cold chain
- To guarantee the swift border crossing of refrigerated trucks
- To open the proposed “Green Lanes” for essential transport services to refrigerated trucks
- To temporarily relax the driving and resting hours for drivers of refrigerated trucks
- To relax the restrictions on delivery hours and lift driving bans to allow for the ongoing supply of essential food
- To make sure, in order to guarantee safe working conditions for truck drivers and ensure the safety of truck equipment, we would recommend that efforts are made in all member states to ensure that the control centers are kept open to ensure that controls can be maintained (in order to guarantee the security of our drivers and of their trucks (for example brakes and tailgates).

This will guarantee that members will continue to be able to do their job and that consumers will be able to continue to buy essential food in their retail outlets.

We remain at your entire disposal for any additional questions you might have.

With best regards,



Christine Weiker
ECSLA Secretary General