

U.S. fruit and vegetable producers are bracing for dramatic disruptions to their labor force after the U.S. government said it was suspending H-2A visa interviews in Mexico to reduce the spread of the coronavirus (Covid-19), [Reuters](#) reports.

The expected restrictions on migrant workers come as U.S. consumers strip grocery stores bare in preparation for potential orders to quarantine.

Starting on Wednesday, new applications will not be processed for the H-2A guest worker program and only returning seasonal workers will be allowed to enter the United States, growers said.

The U.S. State Department has limited visa processing in many countries as governments try to curtail contact and curb the spread of the highly contagious respiratory illness. This week the U.S. announced restrictions in Mexico.

While the harvesting of grains like wheat and corn is mostly automated in the United States, fruit and vegetable farmers rely on seasonal guest workers to pick their crops. Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, many U.S. produce companies were already struggling with labor availability on their farms.

The news comes as many countries around the world brace for major farmworkers shortages over the coming months resulting from travel restrictions due to the pandemic.

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