

United Fresh and other food and agricultural organizations are urging both President Trump and President-elect Biden to provide priority access to Covid-19 vaccines as they become available.

In a letter to the President this week and discussions with the Biden transition team, the groups emphasized the critical role workers in food and agriculture have played by continuing operations and ensuring Americans have access to foods.

The letter was signed by groups including United Fresh, the National Grocers Association, the National Restaurant Association, and the Food Industry Association.

The groups are urging a federally orchestrated vaccine distribution program and prioritization of vaccinations for critical infrastructure employees in agriculture, food processing and distribution, retail and restaurants.

"Our members have been on the front lines of the response to the pandemic by continuing operations and ensuring Americans have access to safe, nutritious, and affordable food," the letter said.

"Challenges have taxed the food supply chain over the past eight months, but the food, agriculture, manufacturing, and retail industries are resilient, and the supply chains have not broken."

The letter said that once a vaccine for Covid-19 is developed, it is "imperative that we have a federally orchestrated vaccine distribution program and prioritization of vaccination among population groups".

"The Administration's COVID-19 Vaccination Program Interim Playbook for Jurisdiction Operations (the "Playbook") seeks to do both," it said.

It continued: "As described in the Playbook, we strongly support prioritizing essential workers in critical infrastructure industries, including those responsible for ensuring the continuity of our nation's food supply.

"Prioritizing vaccinations for food, agriculture, retail, and CPG workers will be a key intervention to help keep workers healthy and to ensure that agricultural and food supply chains remain operating."

The groups said that to ensure a successful vaccination campaign, a "strong, coordinated, public education campaign will be required to ensure widespread and sustained acceptance

of vaccinations".

"We encourage the Administration to begin activating this as soon as possible," they said.

"The agricultural, food manufacturing, distribution, and retail industries will continue to fulfill the "special responsibility" critical infrastructure industries carry, and we are proud that our industry's workforce has selflessly persevered to feed America. We also look forward to partnering with the Administration to reinforce the importance and safety of vaccinations and ensuring our essential workers can access and receive vaccinations when available."

Food production and supply operations around the world have continued during the Covid-19 pandemic due to them being considered essential. In many countries including the [U.S.](#) and the [U.K.](#), there have been numerous outbreaks among workers at fruit and meat farms and packing facilities.