

January 13, 2021

Hon. Andrew M. Cuomo  
Governor, State of New York  
NYS Capitol  
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo,

As New York State navigates through the Coronavirus vaccination schedule and rollout, the agriculture and food processing/manufacturing industries are writing to you to urge you to allow employees in these work groups a priority for being eligible to receive the vaccine. The agriculture and food processing industries in New York consists of thousands of workers in New York alone that are critical to providing food during this global health crisis to the people of this state and the region.

Throughout the entirety of the pandemic, it has been proven that agriculture and food processing/manufacturing employees are essential to ensuring the continuity of a safe and efficient food supply system. Agriculture and food processing employees were originally included in Phase 1B of New York State's vaccination schedule. As you are aware, due to limited quantities of available vaccines, agriculture and food processing employees were not eligible to receive the vaccine at the opening of Phase 1B. As the Center for Disease Control defines these employees as essential, and as more vaccines become available to New York, agriculture and food processing employees should be the first to be considered when opening more work groups in Phase 1B.

Additionally, as there may be logistical challenges to inoculating agriculture and food processing employees, the industry stands willing and able to assist the state in any way possible to support the vaccination process. Our industry is eager to receive the vaccine, and would like to be able to begin developing plans on how employees will receive the vaccine in coordination with state agencies and local health departments to administer the vaccine. We ask that the state department of Health and Agriculture & Markets communicate and coordinate with willing partners and facilities that can accommodate the vaccination process.

Again, the agriculture and food processing employees are essential to surviving the pandemic, and we request they be the first to be considered when expanding Phase 1B to additional work groups when more vaccines are available to the state.

Thank you in advance for your consideration to these requests.

Sincerely,

Alex E. Walsh  
Associate Vice President of Regulatory Affairs  
Northeast Dairy Foods Association, Inc.

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Executive Director  
NYS Brewers Association

Kareem Massoud  
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Long Island Wine Country

Patrick McCormick  
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Cynthia Haskins  
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CC: Richard Ball, Commissioner, Agriculture & Markets  
Jennifer Trodden, Deputy Commissioner, Agriculture & Markets  
Dr. Howard Zucker, Commissioner, Department of Health  
Senator Michelle Hinchey, Chair, Senate Agriculture Committee  
Assemblywoman Donna Lupardo, Chair, Assembly Agriculture Committee