



To Our Valued Customers -

As the food industry continues to process the impacts of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) in Chicago and the Midwest region, we wanted to take a moment to share what Local Foods is doing to keep our employees, customers and farmers as safe as possible. This is a rapidly changing situation as witnessed by Monday's mandated closure of dine-in sit down options at all Illinois restaurants and bars.

First, we believe it is important to remember that the spread of COVID-19 is exacerbated by human contact, not by food. From the US FDA - ["We are not aware of any reports at this time of human illnesses that suggest COVID-19 can be transmitted by food or food packaging. However, it is always important to follow good hygiene practices \(i.e., wash hands and surfaces often, separate raw meat from other foods, cook to the right temperature, and refrigerate foods promptly\) when handling or preparing foods."](#)

That being said, we are starting with our people first. All employees have received updated communications regarding our personal hygiene standards and all of our employees are offered paid sick leave per city ordinance. Any employee with questionable symptoms will be asked to visit their doctor, stay home and self-quarantine, if recommended. We currently have remote access capabilities and technology that allows many of our employees to work remotely so as not to interrupt our ability to supply.

We are also working to keep our building as clean and sanitized as possible and have put special emphasis with our cleaning crew on disinfecting all high-touch surfaces in our warehouse, offices, trucks and delivery vehicles, and our public market. Our return policy will be strictly enforced in order to prevent unnecessary back and forth of people and food products. Any return/rejection of product must now be handled at time of delivery before our driver leaves your facility.

With respect to our supply chain of farmers and ranchers throughout the Midwest, we are staying in touch with them on a regular basis as usual and monitoring potential risks for supply interruption. Because we are Local Foods, and the vast majority of the products we carry come directly from small family farms in the Midwest, our supply chain is naturally quite insulated from the national and global impacts you may have been reading about. We believe this direct-to-producer, decentralized supply chain is the best way to prevent major disruptions and keep the good food flowing into Chicago and the greater Midwest.

We are all learning more each day as the situation progresses and we intend to stay in regular contact with all of our stakeholders. We are closely monitoring communications from medical professionals, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the World Health Organization (WHO), the U.S. Food & Drug Administration and state & local governmental agencies in order to ensure we are taking appropriate action to protect our employees and customers. The only thing we can ask of you, our customers, is to communicate any changes to your businesses so that we can be smarter and more efficient in how we stock our warehouse. Tell your sales rep if you feel business is trending one way or another, if you will be looking for new products or if you experience supply interruptions from other purveyors.

We are here to help. Please don't hesitate to reach out for any questions, concerns or best practices.

Thank you for your patience and trust in Local Foods. We are prepared to navigate through these challenging circumstances with your safety and confidence at the forefront of everything we do.

