



April 13, 2020

Tom Hesse, President  
United Food and Commercial Workers Union, Local 401  
#100 46 Hopewell Way N.E.  
Calgary, Alberta T3J 5H7  
Sent via email [thesse@ufcw401.ab.ca](mailto:thesse@ufcw401.ab.ca)

**Re: 2<sup>nd</sup> Shift Fabrication and Harvest Temporary Shut Down**

Dear Tom,

Due to unforeseen circumstances beyond our control and the increasing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on our operations, including an increased impact on employee attendance and 2<sup>nd</sup> shift management personnel, we are taking the necessary step of temporarily suspending 2<sup>nd</sup> shift Fabrication and Harvest Operations, effective immediately.

We are in receipt of your letter of yesterday, and we are deeply concerned with its tone and content. We strongly reject the UFCW's suggestion that Cargill is not doing enough to protect its employees from COVID-19. As you are well aware, the safety of our employees continues to be Cargill's top priority and we are taking significant and important steps to keep employees safe, including:

- Employees who report to work must be cleared, fit for work, and symptom-free. For several weeks employees have been required to pass the active daily screening process and this will continue.
- Cargill is directing that employees who develop symptoms or who have been in contact with a known case of COVID-19 go into isolation immediately.
- Cargill has taken important additional safety measures within the plant including increased distancing between employees, opened up additional break room space, installed over 400 individual stalls in the cafeteria to reduce face to face contact, the implementation of one-way traffic zones, and screening between individual employee stations on the production floor, encouraged and allowed the use of masks.
- Within the plant, Cargill has significantly enhanced cleaning measures with additional resources and personnel. Over the long weekend, we did a full and complete deep sanitation of the entire plant, including a deep clean of the locker rooms and any surfaces touched by employees.
- Our management team continues to work closely with Alberta Health Services and remains in regular communication with them. All of Alberta Health Services directions with respect to our operations are being followed and Alberta Health Services continues to be very supportive of our processes and procedures to ensure the health and safety of our employees. We will continue to cooperate and collaborate with Alberta Health Services.

Cargill is serious about addressing the COVID-19 crisis and about working with the UFCW to protect employees. Unfortunately, your open letter of yesterday was highly inflammatory. We believe your letter unnecessarily contributed to increased fear and anxiety amongst employees. In addition, your call for Cargill to immediately close its facility for two weeks while continuing pay to employees created confusion and likely contributed to employees not attending work this morning. Forty-five percent (45%) of employees scheduled for dayshift this morning did not attend work following your letter yesterday.



**Cargill Meat Solutions**  
472 Ave. & Hwy. 2A N.  
P.O. Bag 3850  
High River, Alberta, Canada, T1V 1P4  
Phone: (403) 652-4688

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Cargill's operations have been designated an essential service by the Alberta government. On review of all of the circumstances, including the safety measures that Cargill has taken and in consultation with Alberta Health Services, Cargill's decision is that a closure of the plant is not required to protect employee safety at this time and would be damaging to the important public goal of maintaining the food supply for Albertans.

In the circumstances, 2<sup>nd</sup> shift has been suspended. Our goal is to ensure that 2<sup>nd</sup> shift employees who are willing and able to report to work can continue to do so on dayshift. Employees who are impacted by the temporary shutdown and who would like to work in their division on dayshift are being asked to contact Devin Tretiak or Jonathan Corsino. For your convenience, their contact information is listed below.

Devin Tretiak:    devin\_tretiak@cargill.com    or    403-652-8456

Jonathan Corsino:    jonathan\_corsino@cargill.com    or    403-652-4688 Ext. 340

Employees from 2<sup>nd</sup> shift who are willing and able to keep working on dayshift will be contacted this week. We will be contacting employees for work on dayshift based on operational requirements and in accordance with the skills, abilities and seniority of employees.

The suspension of the 2<sup>nd</sup> shift was unavoidable. Given the urgency of the situation and these difficult circumstances beyond Cargill's control, we are taking steps to communicate with employees as decisions are made. The suspension of 2<sup>nd</sup> shift is a temporary measure, we expect to be back to full operations on two shifts within the next 7 – 21 days. Once back to regular full operations, we anticipate that all employees will return to their previous shift and department.

The health and safety of Cargill employees continues to be our top priority. The intent of this shift change is to better ensure the safety of our workplace, provide much-needed income to employees who are able to work safely to support our operational needs, and to maintain the supply of food products to Albertans. Our business continues to be an essential service, we will continue to deliver the best we can for our customers and communities to provide a safe, stable food supply. It is our hope that you will join us in this effort.

Sincerely,

Tanya Teeter  
Vice President of Labor  
Cargill Meat Solutions

CC  
Dale LeGrange, General Manager, Cargill limited  
Robbie Hale, Employee Experience / Employee Relations Market Leader, Cargill Limited