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How the produce industry is battling COVID-19

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The COVID-19 virus and its effects are something this country — the world — hasn't seen since the Spanish Flu 100 years ago. Concern is first and foremost, of course personal safety.

Beyond that, the food industry as a whole, and the produce industry specifically is entrusted to keep healthy food in peoples' homes. From growers to shippers to retailers, companies within the industry are doing their best to make sure people are able to get the necessities they need. *The Produce News* is going to do its best to make sure our readers are kept informed on what the great companies and great people within this industry are doing to make sure things go as smoothly as possible during this difficult time.

Take the **Idaho Potato Commission**, for example. A spokesperson from the IPC said that potato demand is up dramatically with product flying off the shelf. "As a staple that has a long shelf, potatoes are a great solution to the challenges of today's Coronavirus affected retail environment," said Seth Pemsler, vice president of retail/international for the IPC.

"The Idaho Potato Commission is working on tools to help retailers optimize sales during this tight supply year by merchandising optimally," he said. "Shippers are doing all they can to meet demand, but retailers do have an opportunity to maximize their category profitability."

Or **Tomra Food**. In preparation for potential disruption to its supply chain, it has identified and increased stocking of critical components. These increased stock levels will help ensure that it can continue to meet current and future order expectations through this pandemic.

"I want to reassure you that Tomra Food has taken several proactive steps to ensure that we

continue to support your business in every possible way we can in these circumstances,” said Michel Picandet, executive vice president of Tomra Food.

Please, whatever role you play in the produce industry, get in touch with us. Tell us what you are doing, what challenges you are facing and what is being done to solve them to keep the industry functioning as smoothly as possible. We will let our readers know the efforts being made to keep our businesses going.

Stay safe.

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