



Missouri Governor — Michael L. Parson

Office of Communications

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 4, 2020

Governor Parson Assures Missourians Food Supply Chain Remains Strong

(JEFFERSON CITY, MO) – At today’s press briefing, Governor Mike Parson assured Missourians that the state’s food supply chain remains strong.

Governor Parson was joined by Missouri Department of Public Safety Director Sandy Karsten, Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services Director Dr. Randall Williams, Missouri Department of Agriculture (MDA) Director Chris Chinn, and President of Sysco Foods St. Louis Rob Kirkland.

MDA continues to work with its partners across the state and assist with every part of the food supply chain. Director Chinn shared several updates at today’s briefing:

- **Food Insecurity** – Missouri Farmers Care, a coalition of food and agriculture organizations, has launched a special fundraising campaign for the Drive to Feed Kids.
 - Over the last three years, this drive has provided 6.5 million meals to children in need. All funds go directly to Feeding Missouri.
- **School Lunches** – a primary demand for fluid milk is the school lunch program.
 - On behalf of dairy farmers across the United States, Midwest Dairy donated coolers to school districts across the state to safely serve and keep milk cold. This will soon extend to food banks across the state.
- **Healthcare Workers** – many restaurants are taking care of Missouri’s hardest working citizens and vulnerable children. Restaurants are also donating to food banks and pantries.
- **Grocery stores** are providing team member bonuses and working creatively to fill the unique needs of their communities.
- **Ethanol plants** are shifting from fuel to hand sanitizer.

- **Protein companies** are practicing social distancing and screening employees every day to make sure their team stays healthy.
- **Life science companies** are providing medicine and supplies.

Many companies and organizations have stepped up to assist with the COVID-19 response in Missouri, including Sysco Foods St. Louis. Sysco has been working closely with a variety of stakeholders to address both the added constraints on the food supply chain as well as increasing its work to address food insecurity in Missouri communities.

In the restaurant community, Sysco is helping its customers set up delivery and takeout platforms to help keep people working. It is also providing the tools and products to help restaurants convert their dining rooms to mini-markets supplying key food staples to their neighborhoods.

Additionally, Sysco is serving the most vulnerable in the community from pop-up food pantries, meal prep, and distribution sites for out-of-work restaurant and hospitality workers to direct-to-consumer donations of produce and other perishables.

On March 19, Sysco announced a goal to donate 2.5 million meals over a four-week period as part of its pandemic response strategy. Today, Sysco Foods St. Louis President Rob Kirkland reported that the company has achieved that goal in half the time.

Local to the St. Louis region, Sysco has partnered with a number of support organizations, such as Operation Food Search, Circle of Concern, the Urban League (St. Louis Chapter), and Better Family Life in efforts to get as many donated essentials as possible into the hands of fellow neighbors most in need.

On Thursday, Sysco partnered with the Urban League in St. Louis to provide groceries and essentials to more than 1,000 families.

Yesterday, Governor Parson announced a statewide “Stay Home Missouri” Order effective beginning Monday, April 6 through Friday, April 24. **For clarification on the guidelines set forth in the Order, please see attachment.**