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California's Important Nursery Businesses Continue Operations

Sacramento, CA — In this time of uncertainty, California's nursery industry, which includes growers of nursery plants and garden supply centers, is assuring people they are part of the important food and ag sector which must continue to function as a vital service.

California Farm Bureau Federation President Jamie Johansson reports that in a conference call with the Office of Emergency Services yesterday it was emphasized that 'anyone working in the food supply chain is allowed and should continue to show up for work.'

"Agriculture has been deemed one of 16 "critical infrastructure," said Johansson. "For the purpose of broadly defining this infrastructure, it includes but is not limited to establishments engaged in growing crops, including nurseries and garden centers, raising animals, harvesting timber, and harvesting fish and other animals; food and beverage processors and manufacturers, wholesale and retailers distributing to consumers."

"California nursery businesses provide an incredibly important service to medium and small-sized farming operations, urban gardens and community supported agriculture," said Chris Zanobini, Executive Director of the Plant California Alliance, an association of professionals who bring plants and landscape supplies to Californians and the world.

Zanobini notes that Spring is a critical time for farmers and home gardeners who grow food for their own and other people's consumption.

"Since it is unclear how long the coronavirus will continue to impact our state, we must treat important agriculture service industries with long-term goals in mind," said Zanobini, noting that in some local jurisdictions throughout California nursery businesses have not been included in exemptions provided for other agricultural business. "Nursery businesses are most definitely part of the critically important food and ag sector and they should be considered as such."

Zanobini went on to emphasize that California Governor Gavin Newsom and members of White House administration have stressed the responsibility employees have to continue important operations provided by industries considered essential. Food and agricultural businesses, including nurseries, obviously included under this status and exemptions for their employees to come to work must be allowed.

"We know the Stay at Home Order in California presents some confusion and challenges for both employers and employees," said Zanobini. "We are so thankful for the people who are continuing to serve the citizens of the state and country by keeping the nation's food channels filled. We want to assure people that California nursery and garden businesses will continue to do our part."

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