**Minutes of FNET Coronavirus Call – 31st March 2020**

1. **General update** on situation in the UK and global –
   1. **GLAA temporary licensing regulations** changes as of today
   2. **Highest number of new cases:** USA, Pakistan, Thailand, Argentina, Israel, Mexico, Poland, Cameroon, Hungary, Brazil, Morocco, DRC, Tanzania
   3. **Retailer sponsored webinars** – 8th and 9th April – communications to be sent out tomorrow, Wednesday
   4. **Newsletter** – further information and summary of all emails from last week to go out today
   5. **Zero hour contacts** – Question about zero hour contracts – have heard that workers will only be paid by the government for around 4 hours a day, which is not enough to live off and will therefore come into work with the virus as they cannot afford to stay home and will spread the virus across the site. Does anyone know of any steps being taken to address this? Confirmation from two members that agency able to furlough workers for 80% of their salaries. Louise to double check with Gillian
   6. **ETI discussion** –
      1. **Pay and benefits** – awaiting ETI feedback on being able to share the guidance they’ve developed
      2. **Country-specific guidance** – coordinated activities from Sainsbury’s, M&S, audit bodies, ETI and FNET to get country guidance updated and to you as members
      3. **Non-food side** – ETI looking at financial support for garment workers – working with government, NGOs and companies.
2. **Accommodation**:
   1. This will be covered by the retailer-sponsored webinars – on Thursday the 9th April
   2. How other businesses are approaching management of caravan sites in relation to COVID-19 – **member comments:**
      1. Approaching season and starting to get staff in – at a very low level and have an occupancy of 15 – all in separate caravans. How are people approaching accommodation, how are people approaching people going down with COVID-19?
      2. **Supplier** – have had growers that have already started ramping up – what they seem to be doing is assigning a number of caravans as quarantined caravans – hard to know how many are the right amount – these are sitting empty. Big challenge in that caravans don’t meet the 2 metre rule. Also seeing issues with health and safety and provision of first aid – have a legal responsibility to provide first aid but compromising social distancing requirements – suggestion that first aiders be prioritised with masks and PPE
      3. **Quarantine caravans –** grower has made 10% of caravans available for quarantining
      4. **Thailand** – where suppliers have on site accommodation – have put aside isolation rooms – may not have bathroom facilities in each room so have allocated certain toilets and showers people self-isolating. Changing cleaning rotas/ shifts for bathrooms/ people eating at separate times. What is not clear is around who needs to isolate – here people are being told to isolate if they are in the same house whereas overseas it is just the individual who is isolating. Isolating in the Maldives – government has allocated 5-star resorts for those self-isolating
      5. **China experience** – do we have any experience from China? Request to Ian to see if they could find out. Louise to reach out to Carnstone. Andy to speak to Grocery non-food suppliers
      6. **Spain experience –** **Supplier** to feedback on conversations with Spanish suppliers
3. **Shopping trips for workers** - what methods can you use to help with bulk buying to minimise workers having to travel/ queue outside shops?
   1. **Member comments** –
      1. **Retailer** – Anecdotal feedback from store managers – request that suppliers don’t bring too many workers to stores at once. Store manager suggested that 20 pickers come at a time and that can be managed more easily as they do their shopping. Andy to follow up with more detail
      2. **What would be typical?** Workers would typically buy their own food on shopping trips. **Supplier** – previously there has been a mixture of ways that individuals could get their food either through home delivery or daily/ once a week buses to take workers to shops – may be minibuses or double decker buses. Some farms will have their own farm shops to sell in their own on-site shops. At the moment, on site shops are continuing to run – there is still food for people to purchase on site. Trips to supermarkets are still taking place however reduced number of people per vehicles – sites using larger vehicles to keep social distancing. Normal double decker bus would be half full. More regular trips. Online deliveries not available.
      3. **Has anyone looked at alternative suppliers of foods e.g. Food Service? Supplier** – would definitely be interested in looking at that more if it can supply farm shops. Other interested members please contact Louise
      4. **Local community –** also linking in with other farm shops to fill gaps to fill deliveries. Where you can get delivery slots – seeing if you can share them – ***NOTE: Re the purchasing together - there are issues around restrictions on number of items allowed - there needs to be an agreement and a way of proving that those who are purchasing together are legit and they can have more than the allowed two items.***
      5. **Supplier** **-** Supplying some staple products around the group to prevent visits to shops. Have seen an increase in wholesale distribution for local shop sales.
4. **Transport –** 
   1. **Look at final section of** [**Proexport guidance on transport of workers**](https://www.proexport.es/coronavirus/protocolo-coronavirus/) **–** this is called “Preventive measures in the transportation of workers”you need to click on the section to reveal the text – guidance is from local Murcia government
   2. **Feedback from Supplier** **re Proexport guidance:** 
      1. To apply the logic of Proexport protocol into other type of vehicles, you should only use the at most 30% of the total capacity of that vehicle. This means:
         1. **Cars**: 2 people (driver + one passenger on the back seat)
         2. **9 Seat van**: 3 people (one per row)
         3. **Bus** (30% of the total capacity, leaving one empty row between workers) and no-one sat behind driver
5. Input on **high risk areas of the supply chain** you have concerns about – to date the following have been raised:
   1. **Fishing boats** -
   2. **Drivers** (driver isolation and drivers being quarantined at borders)
   3. **Production facilities facing potential issues because of transport links closing down e.g. where flights aren’t going/ borders are shutting**
   4. **Women workers**
   5. **Discrimination against workers recovering from COVID-19**
   6. **Brazil –** passenger airlines have virtually stopped from Brazil and freighters are very difficult to find to any airport in Europe –thereforecontemplatingmothballing production. State support in Brazil – strong legislation about making people redundant – it would be a very expensive exercise to do that. Companies are therefore very reluctant to do it because it is so expensive but difficult
   7. **Think about what steps you can put in place for emergency supplier approval** to ensure that ethical issues is being covered in some way
   8. **Sedex –** virtual auditing and checks – Andy to feedback
6. **George Eustice – member feedback on key points to go to Secretary of State:**

* **Update on worker availability and shortages** – current situation and shortages
* **Recruitment challenges** – timings are crucial – when they go out and recruit and when people are furloughed
* **Worker accommodation, worker locations, access to food and transport**
  + **D**on’t have a single facility within 25 miles of the city – when you are going out of sector this is challenging – if you move them into accommodation there is challenges with that
  + **Provision for quarantining on farms and in factories** – what should people be doing
  + **Shops and resources for farm workers** – can we link that up to Food service to get people food/ supply on farm shops
  + **Clarity on cleaning of** areas of transport after workers have been transported– what should be done after transporting workers. Good practice on that – cleaning or using alternative seats?
* **Support around the movement of workers** – agency workers travelling to and from sites have been stopped by Police and issues with fines, despite having letters to confirm key worker status. Reports of 6 cars stopped by Greater Manchester Police this weekend and two workers were issued with fixed penalty fines. Feels like greater clarity is required from DEFRA / Home Sec.
* **Horticulture industry –** in conversation with DEFRA about crop write off scheme – can we ensure agriculture is included?
* **How can government support the GLAA** – we are asking for a lot of rule changing to be happening – this will enable the bad actors to come in- - can they give the GLAA more resources at this time?
* **Highlight the gender dimension to the impacts of this within the supply chain** and the specific impact of this on **'non-essential' floriculture**.  Many growers teetering on closure
* **In terms of monitoring supply chains** – is there a way for government to pool resources – supply chains will have less scrutiny than normal. More information like we are seeing a transition to detail about specific supply chains – what risks are there? Extent to which foreign office and embassies are supporting them and DfID – what coordination there is?

1. **Furloughing –** tomorrow’s [ALP Coronavirus Support Forum will cover furloughing](https://applauncher.gotowebinar.com/#notStarted/5215010444436600077/en_US) – please encourage hour labour providers to attend
2. **Retailer – sponsored webinars**
3. **Asks from Gillian – if members have any information about the below – please get in touch with her directly if so:**
   1. **Do you have a case study of how you are managing shifts?**
   2. **Do you have a case study about how you are furloughing people?**
4. **Questions – businesses being in touch about labour that is no longer needed – how is the SWAP scheme working??**
   1. **A**t the moment the scheme is only going through registered labour providers
   2. Relaxation of GLA rules will allow any business outside of our sector will allow labour providers outside of the sector
   3. Suppliers are recruiting directly for their own businesses via HR and working with local businesses
   4. SWAP scheme is about moving agency workers around
   5. **Louise to pick up with David and Gillian and revert tomorrow.**