



*Communication.  
Preparation.  
Relationships.  
Respect. Safety.*

## Supply Chain & Transportation Contributors



# Members Helping Members™

## Supply Chain & Transportation Counsel During Uncertain Times

PMA asked our supply chain and transportation members for advice as we grapple with the shifting sands of COVID-19. Remember that messages are changing every day, so it is important to stay informed and alert.

→ Stay connected by emailing [PMA Member Services](mailto:member@pma.com) to receive COVID-19 updates and by visiting [www.pma.com](http://www.pma.com)

Thank you to our contributors who took time to offer their thoughts and advice relevant to Supply Chain and Transportation for the benefit of all PMA members. We count on them for thoughtful, relevant advice even as they are also coping with these turbulent times. As one of our contributors said:

**“Our supply chain is up and running—with levelheaded thinking we can all get through this.”**



**George Felix**  
Director, Supply Chain Planning, Driscolls



**M. Scott Howarth, PhD**  
Director, Research and Development, Sinclair Systems International



**Kenny Lund**  
Executive Vice President Allen Lund Company, Inc.



**Mishalin Modena**  
Sr. Business Development Manager, Bunzl Agriculture Group Destiny Packaging



**Tatiana Perez**  
Vice President, Sales and Marketing PPC Flexible Packaging



**Sara Ruffcorn, CTB**  
President, Trinity Logistics, Inc.



**Christina B. Ward**  
Director of Global Brand Marketing Sunkist Growers

### Communicate, Communicate, Communicate...

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Communication to your vendors, suppliers, and team members is so important during these times as everyone manages what is next, expectations, and the quick shifts in the business.

As many of our customers have reduced their personnel, it is of utmost importance to maintain communication with your customers and their operating schedules. We have seen shipments turned around or refused because places were lacking receivers or closed on certain days.

Constant open and swift communication with your staff is critical to keeping people informed. A well-informed team helps maintain daily business activities as normal as possible.

Keeping your customers well-informed of the longer lead times as they are sourcing packaging for the upcoming harvest. Over the next twelve weeks, packaging manufacturers are taking all precautions to keep their plants running healthy, which means taking extra time between shifts to wipe down equipment and temperature testing employees before and during shifts. A team well-informed of these changes allows everyone to plan accordingly and helps alleviate the impacted stress so we can get through these uncertain times more smoothly.

### Leverage Your Relationships

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If there were ever a time to leverage your relationships with your raw material suppliers and your customers, it is now. Keep daily contact with your raw material suppliers as demand in food packaging spikes, your suppliers' lead times are extending more and more.

Being top of mind for your supplier and customers is essential.

### Be Prepared

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Like going to the grocery store, try hard to resist panic buying. We are working hard to keep our customers supplied with produce labels helping them to meet increased retailer demand. For first time customers, setup is quick and painless – be prepared with artwork ideas and have GTIN's ready for all your products.

Having your team well equipped with the correct tools (e.g. laptops, monitors, cell phones) will assure business continuity for core functions. With the right equipment there is not much you cannot coordinate or accomplish remotely at any given time.

## Show Respect to Essential Employees

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It has never been so critical a time to show drivers how much you value their work. They are vital to keeping our products moving through our supply chain. Ensure that all drivers have adequate access to refreshments and restroom facilities. If your temporary policies do not allow the driver to count the load on or off their truck, remember to reflect that on the bill of lading.

Showing true appreciation of the hard work being done by your supply chain team, especially the drivers, goes a long way to keeping everyone moving forward through these challenging times.

Recognize the critical role truck drivers have in the food supply chain. Don't forget to thank the truck drivers for their essential work.

## Keep Safety Top of Mind

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The first thing to do is to monitor the recommendations from the CDC, OSHA, and local and state agencies. It's also important to ensure all packing facilities are kept clean with exposed surfaces wiped down periodically throughout the day and to keep everyone's safety top priority, have the driver stay in their vehicle while the truck is loading. It's genuinely about the commonsense approach we've all been following.

Communicate any new policies with the carrier or 3PL before the truck arrives so they can update the driver and keep all employees safe.