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**Statement from IBA President Buzz Iliff on the impact of Coronavirus on the Beef Supply Chain**

There is a great deal of uncertainty about the ongoing impact of COVID-19, its impact on the beef industry and our state. At this time, it's impossible to measure the full effects of the virus or determine how it may continue to unfold. Although the full beef supply chain is being challenged by the outbreak, all segments of the industry are working closely together and must continue to do so. We recognize the current uncertainty facing beef producers and are working at the state and federal level to advocate for our members and communicate the need for:

- packing plants/meat inspectors/supply systems beef producers rely on are essential services and must remain open,
- farmers have access to capital.

IBA has been in consistent communication with our director at the Illinois Department of Agriculture, our Congressional leaders, and our national affiliate which is working with the United States Department of Agriculture and every sector of the supply chain to remove possible barriers to beef production. As we continue to work through this crisis, we must do everything in our power to safeguard every sector of the business from disruption while ensuring cattle and beef continue to move in an orderly manner.

Demand for beef in grocery stores is very high with many retailers selling out as soon as they refill cases. Making sure our plants remain open and keeping inspectors on the job is of the utmost priority so this retail demand can be supplied as quickly as possible. Our work at the state and federal levels will help keep the supply chain full and create the necessary food security required by consumers through the entirety of this event. We know our Illinois beef producers remain ready to provide the safe, delicious, high-quality protein that's required and desired around the globe.

IBA will continue to work with our members and partners throughout the beef supply chain to facilitate communication. By working together, every segment of the beef community can serve a role in returning the industry to normalcy as quickly as possible.

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