

JUSTICE NEWS

Department of Justice

Office of Public Affairs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, May 15, 2020

Department of Justice Supports National Pork Producers Council's Ability to Combat Meat Shortage

The Department of Justice (Department) issued a letter to today to the National Pork Producers Council, the nation's leading association of hog farmers, to address its proposed responses to challenges posed by COVID-19. The department will not challenge the proposed collaborative efforts of the National Pork Producers Council (NPPC) to work with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to address certain hardships facing hog farmers as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The letter explains that the processing plant closures addressed in President Donald J. Trump's April 28, 2020, Executive Order have had impacts up and down the supply chain. One of those impacts, according to NPPC, is the tragic need to euthanize unmarketable hogs that could not be brought to market due to processing capacity challenges. The letter determines that the NPPC and its members may work at the direction of the USDA and state agriculture agencies to achieve humane and efficient euthanization of hogs that have grown too large to be processed and are thus unmarketable. The NPPC may also share general information with its members about best practices for depopulating unmarketable hogs.

"Today's letter addresses some of the challenges created for farmers when packing capacity shuts down," stated Assistant Attorney General Makan Delrahim. "Meanwhile, we remain committed to vigorous enforcement of the antitrust laws to ensure that farmers and consumers see the benefits of competition."

The NPPC submitted its business review request pursuant to the expedited, temporary review procedure detailed in the [Joint Antitrust Statement Regarding COVID-19](#) (joint statement) issued on March 24 by both the department and the Federal Trade Commission (FTC). In the joint statement, the department announced its aim to resolve COVID-19-related business review requests within seven calendar days of receiving all necessary information.

Copies of the business review request and the department's response are available on the Antitrust Division's website at <https://www.justice.gov/atr/business-review-letters-and-request-letters>, as well as in a file maintained by the Antitrust Documents Group of the Antitrust Division. After a 30-day waiting period, any documents supporting the business review will be added to the file, unless a basis for their exclusion for reasons of confidentiality has been established under the business review procedure. Supporting documents in the file will be maintained for a period of one year, and copies will be available upon request to the FOIA/Privacy Act Unit, Antitrust Documents Group at atrdocs.grp@usdoj.gov.

Attachment(s):

[Download National Pork Producers Council Request for a Business Review Letter](#)

[Download Business Review Letter for National Pork Producers Council](#)

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Antitrust

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