Retail Supply Chain Update
July 20, 2020

Many retailers now requiring masks regardless of local/state requirements

- The stores have different start dates for the requirements, but the latest date is Aug 1.
- Target, Walmart, Kroger, Aldi, Kohl’s, Starbucks, Walgreens, CVS, Lowe’s, Home Depot, BJ’s, Costco and many other retailers now requiring masks.

UFCW calls for nationwide face-mask requirement

- To help fight the spread of coronavirus, United Food and Commercial Workers International (UFCW) has partnered with more than 100 health experts in calling for public mask mandates in all 50 states.
- UFCW and the coalition of health experts — including from the World Economic Forum; the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT); Harvard, Yale and Stanford universities; and the National Academy of Sciences, among other organizations — ran a full-page advertisement in the July 12 Sunday New York Times print edition that asked governors, congressional lawmakers and the Trump administration to immediately require face coverings in public nationwide.
- “As COVID-19 spikes across the country continue to put America’s frontline workers at risk, it is time for governors, members of Congress and the Trump administration to step up and make public mask mandates the law in all 50 states,” UFCW International President Marc Perrone said in a statement. “In every grocery store in America, frontline workers are continuing to put themselves in harm’s way to make sure our families have the food we need. Without immediate action, these brave workers will continue to get sick and die. The science is clear: Masks are the most powerful tool we have to stop the spread of COVID-19 and keep both workers and shoppers safe.”

UFCW, Democratic senators call on retailers to reinstate hazard pay for grocery workers

- New poll shows union workers more concerned about COVID-19 now than two weeks ago.
- In its latest call for grocery retailers to reinstate hazard pay for frontline workers in their stores and facilities during the coronavirus pandemic, the United Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCW) brought in added support from Democratic senators Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts and Sherrod Brown of Ohio.
- UFCW CEO and President Marc Perrone noted that there have now been 93 grocery worker deaths and 12,405 grocery workers infected or exposed to COVID-19 among the union’s members. UFCW represents 1.3 million employees in grocery, meatpacking, food processing, retail, health care and other industries in the U.S. and Canada.
Walgreens kicks off last-mile delivery with DoorDash

- Walgreens has launched on-demand delivery, including food, with last-mile delivery provided by DoorDash.
- The service got underway yesterday at Walgreens stores in Chicago, Atlanta and Denver. Customers in those markets can order online from more than 2,300 Walgreens convenience, consumable, and health and wellness items via the DoorDash mobile app and website.
- Plans call for Walgreens and DoorDash to expand delivery service by the end of this summer to more major markets.

Food Lion expands Instacart delivery to half of its stores

- Ahold Delhaize USA's Food Lion supermarket chain has launched same-day online grocery delivery via Instacart at another 300-plus stores in five states.
- With the expansion, more than 500 Food Lion stores now offer Instacart delivery.
- The Salisbury, N.C.-based grocer reported that it plans to bring Instacart delivery service to more towns and cities. Overall, the chain operates over 1,000 stores in 10 Southeastern and Mid-Atlantic states.

US meat processors turn to air cleaning tech after coronavirus outbreaks

- JBS USA and Tyson Inc have installed the equipment to protect workers as concerns mount over the airborne transmission of the coronavirus.
- JBS USA, owned by Brazil's JBS SA and one of four major US beef processors, said it installed "ultraviolet germicidal air sanitation" equipment in plant ventilation and air purification systems that use a specific frequency range of light waves to kill germs.
- Tyson Foods Inc, which produces beef, pork and chicken, said it is doing extensive research on air flow and testing ultraviolet air treatment systems across several plants.
- It is not known whether such technologies kill the new coronavirus.
- The moves underscore the mounting pressure to protect workers in the US meat industry, which has seen more than 16,000 plant employees in 23 states infected with COVID-19 and 86 worker deaths related to the respiratory disease.

Tyson Foods is ramping up development of robots that can cut meat in response to coronavirus outbreaks in meatpacking plants

- Tyson Foods is accelerating development of robotic technology that will assist with meat processing following a series of coronavirus outbreaks at meatpacking facilities around the US.
- Tyson has already invested $500 million in robotics since 2017, but CEO Noel White said the company plans to ramp up these efforts in response to the pandemic.
- Tyson is not the only meat behemoth turning its sites to robotics. Competitors like JBC and Pilgrim's Pride have also been working on developing similar automated robotic technology in recent years. "They are much closer to what the person can do than seven years ago," JBS CEO Andre Nogueira said.
Brazilian judge issues stay-at-home orders for workers at JBS plant due to COVID-19

- Labor prosecutors found that the outbreak has affected over 40 percent of the staff at the plant.
- According to a court document, the judge issued the decision on Thursday 16 July.
- The plant in the town of Tres Passos in Rio Grande do Sul state has about 1,000 employees, according to prosecutors. It is one of six Brazilian meat plants currently barred from exporting to China over coronavirus concerns.
- Tres Passos is about 667 miles southwest of Sao Paolo, and is close to Brazil’s border with Argentina.

FDA further expands list of hand sanitizers to avoid due to methanol risk with more added to 'import alert'

- The Food and Drug Administration has added to its list of hand sanitizers to avoid because they may contain methanol, a toxic substance when absorbed through skin or ingested.
- The FDA's updated chart now includes 75 varieties of hand sanitizer that should be avoided, some which have already been recalled, and other products being recommended for recalls as they may contain the potentially fatal ingredient.
- The federal agency also included many of the hand sanitizers on an updated import alert Friday. All of the products appear to have been produced in Mexico and according to the alert should be detained because they pose a health risk.

Amazon extends work from home order until January 8

- Amazon has told staff who can work from home to do so until Jan. 8.
- It comes after Amazon in May pushed back its return to work deadline to at least Oct. 2.
- Amazon didn’t specify how much of the company’s workforce would be impacted by the order, but said the new policy is “global guidance.” The company said it had 840,400 full and part-time staff at the end of the last quarter.

Amazon begins screening some warehouse employees for coronavirus symptoms as they show up for work

- Amazon notified warehouse workers in at least two states, Michigan and Virginia, that they’d be screened for coronavirus symptoms when they show up to work.
- If workers say they’re experiencing symptoms of the virus, they’ll be asked to return home.
- Amazon has moved forward with its plans to regularly test warehouse workers, with nearly a dozen facilities participating in the testing pilot so far.
- “Beginning this week we’re introducing a symptom screen at our entrances in accordance with guidance from local authorities,” the notice sent to workers states. “Moving forward, when you arrive for your shift you will read signs listing potential Covid-19 symptoms as you enter the building.”
- If workers don’t report any Covid-19 symptoms, they’ll scan their badge, complete a temperature check and enter the building as normal, the notice said.