

Good morning,

As Young Farmers and Ranchers Chair for Mendocino County I'm concerned with how shelter in place orders would impact our farming and ranching operations. Farmers and ranchers can't completely shut down their operations for the next few weeks. There are crops that need care and attention and livestock that can't be neglected and unfed. As a wine grape grower, we are in the middle of frost season and not being able to work would result in irreversible damage or loss of our grapes. I ask that agriculture businesses (farms, ranches, farmers markets, etc.) and processing facilities be defined as "essential businesses" and be allowed to continue to operate. Social distancing or other measures can continue to be implemented by essential businesses.

It is times like these farmers and ranchers roles in our society are even more evident. Today people in our county are placing orders of beef or produce with local farmers/ranchers to stock up for the next few weeks. It is because of farmers and ranchers that they are able to have food on their table.

Please keep farmers and ranchers defined as "essential businesses" so they can keep operating.

If there are any questions, please feel free to contact me.
Thank you,

Whitney (Vau) Seckora
YF&R Chair - Mendocino County