

August 20, 2020

The Honourable Filomena Tassi, P.C., M.P.  
Minister of Labour  
140 Promenade Du Portage  
Gatineau, Quebec  
K1A 0J9

Dear Minister Tassi:

On behalf of Canada's food, health and consumer products manufacturers, we are deeply concerned about the significant impact of the ongoing strike action at the Port of Montreal on our businesses, on our over 350,000 employees and, most importantly, on our ability to supply the essential products that Canadians rely on every day.

Economic activity through the Port of Montreal for our member companies has been disrupted and is resulting in significant delays and increased costs. Our already COVID- stressed supply chains must now seek slower and costlier alternate routes. Our member companies rely on the delivery of incoming inputs (i.e. ingredients and packaging) through the port to manufacture in Canada. Our members also rely on the port for the importation of many food, health and consumer products.

The implications of an indefinite strike will lead to shortages on shelves as products will not get to consumers. We anticipate that while major urban centres will feel these effects, they will be particularly acute in smaller communities.

Furthermore, if the strike drags on, there will be implications for employment as manufacturing processes cannot run if there are disruptions to the delivery of ingredients and packaging.

As our country tries to launch its economic recovery, our supply chains, still not fully recovered from early demand spikes, remain safe but vulnerable. This crisis only aggravates the already enormous pressure Canada's largest manufacturing workforce is under and threatens its ability to prepare for future infection waves.

We are calling on the federal government to facilitate a resolution to get the Port of Montreal operating again. Until a resolution is in place, we urge the government to take immediate emergency action to help clear the stranded cargo to ensure there remains a stable supply of essential products Canadians rely on every day. We welcome an opportunity to discuss these implications on our sector.

Sincerely,



Michael Graydon  
Chief Executive Officer  
Food & Consumer Products of Canada