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March 27, 2020

NEWS RELEASE

## Essential Services Declaration for food industry will maintain BC's food supply chain.

**Vancouver** – B.C. Food & Beverage (BCFB) applauds the announcement by the BC government designating the food and beverage manufacturing sector as an essential service, which will offer more protection to secure the food supply in BC.

The announcement by the province comes after advocacy efforts made by BCFB and other industry groups, representing food, beverage and natural health product manufacturers in BC.

In a statement, **James Donaldson**, CEO of BCFB says, “Declaring food production, agriculture and its corresponding supply chain an essential service is a vital step to secure the continuation of the food supply to British Columbians. We are grateful to see this declaration made by the BC government.

BC Food & Beverage will be working with government to ensure employees have access to everything they need to continue their essential operations in a safe environment. We will also be working with other stakeholders to ensure the food supply chain is maintained for all British Columbians.

Food production staff are essential, and having the tools and resources to work safely is our top priority. There are more than 39,000 people employed in the sector in BC alone, which at \$15B annually, is the largest manufacturing sector in BC, and a critical component to the provincial economy.

Essential service designation for the food supply chain will assist in procuring sanitation supplies including hand sanitizers, masks, and other essentials that are needed to provide adequate protection for employees. We owe it to these employees to assure them that they are not risking their families or themselves by continuing to come to work. We need to fulfill our ethical and moral obligation to keep essential products on the shelves of grocery store and in homes.

The provincial government has repeatedly highlighted the importance of preserving British Columbia's food and supply chain by ensuring continued access to local foods which is appreciated by all associated with our industry. On behalf of the 39,000 employees in the industry, BC Food & Beverage will continue to lead and support industry and serve as part of the solution to our urgent and time sensitive situation.”

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[James Donaldson's Press Release statement](#)

[BC Government's Essential Service Announcement](#)

[Food & Beverage Manufacturing Stats in BC](#)

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### **About James Donaldson, CEO BC Food and Beverage Association (BCFB)**

James Donaldson brings over 20 years of experience and success in the BC food industry to his position as CEO of the BC Food Processors Association.

James work history includes experience with businesses ranging in size from start-up ventures to multi-national corporations and everything in between. He has held positions with companies such as Diageo, Yves Veggie Cuisine, BC Hot House Foods, Maple Leaf Foods, and Superior Freeze Dry in sales, marketing, and general management functions.

### **About BC Food and Beverage**

BC Food & Beverage is a not-for-profit organization representing all segments of the food, beverage and nutraceutical processing industry, and to coordinate common industry activities and resources under one umbrella. The Association represents micro, small, medium, and large processing companies in BC, and has more than 450 member companies.

### **Media Inquiries**

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