



By Carl Collen

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UFPA works with White House on relief

In the US, the United Fresh Produce Association is working on financial relief and the industry's freedom of movement



Tom Stenzel

United Fresh Produce Association (UFPA) president and chief executive Tom Stenzel has provided an update on the actions that the organisation is taking, in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Given the rapid changes occurring throughout the US, Stenzel said that United Fresh had been involved in some significant developments as it looks to support the country's fresh produce industry.

This, Stenzel outlined, included working with the government to ensure those struggling in the wake of the outbreak got the support they need.

"We are working with the White House and Congress on what financial relief may be forthcoming for

sectors that have been devastated by this crisis," he confirmed. "For now, we urge all companies to carefully track your losses and keep strong financial records."

He also explained how UFPA was communicating with partner associations in the retail and foodservice sectors to help connect companies that may have needs for produce or refrigerated transportation, and availability.

"If you are a foodservice distributor with excess inventory due to restaurants shutting down, please post that information on the LinkedIn site," he said. "We also recommend you directly contact retailers in your region to offer your services. We are trying to restock stores with great fresh produce as fast as we can."

Stenzel said that one of the most frequent questions had been how growers and food establishments are to be treated if local jurisdictions shut down movement.

"The White House, USDA and FDA have made it clear that all food workers and businesses are part of the essential public health infrastructure and must be allowed to work to keep the supply chain moving," he stated. "And that includes the need to feed workers, allow outside contractors such as sanitation companies to clean facilities, etc. If you find local officials blocking your work to feed America, please let us know."