

## Association for Supply Chain Management: People Need to be Put First

Staying open won't "fix" the supply chain, worker protection will

CHICAGO – April 30, 2020 – The impact of COVID-19 has brought the term “supply chain” front and center, with many people associating the phrase with the challenge in getting products to store shelves. The Association for Supply Chain Management (ASCM), the largest nonprofit association for supply chain, wants to emphasize that while availability of products is important, the most critical part of the supply chain is the people producing, shipping, stocking and selling those goods.

“Any disruption, whether it be environmental, geopolitical or disease, causes disruption to the entire supply chain. The difference is that now we have a disruption to the people that work in processing plants, manage warehouses and transport goods,” said ASCM CEO Abe Eshkenazi, CSCP, CPA, CAE. “Whether we’re talking about meat, milk, packaged goods or whatever product, if workers don’t feel safe in their environment, consumer and patient needs can’t be met. People are the fuel of supply chains, and if they’re not protected, nothing moves.”

ASCM supports the safety measures issued and guidelines issued by the U.S. Department of Labor’s Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), which include proper sanitation and cleaning of facilities, COVID-19 testing for employees, 6-feet social distancing, using appropriate personal protective equipment and screening of employees before entering work facilities.

Supply chains are a network of activities used to deliver products and services from raw materials to end customers, which includes planning, sourcing, manufacturing, warehousing, transportation and support. When there’s a disruption, the entire chain is impacted. Supply chain professionals are trained to respond to spikes in demand regardless of the cause. Even though this is an extreme event, the supply chain can account for increases but it takes time to smooth out the demand signals and respond to short-term spikes.

ASCM has created a COVID-19 resource web page that is updated daily to help organizations navigate through the rapidly changing situation related to the spread of coronavirus. Please visit [www.ascm.org](http://www.ascm.org) for more information.



## ABOUT ASCM

The Association for Supply Chain Management (ASCM) is the global leader in supply chain organizational transformation, innovation and leadership. As the largest nonprofit association for supply chain, ASCM is an unbiased partner, connecting companies around the world to the newest thought leadership on all aspects of supply chain. ASCM is built on a foundation of APICS certification and training spanning 60 years. Now, ASCM is driving innovation in the industry with new products, services and partnerships that enable companies to further optimize their supply chains, secure their competitive advantage and positively influence their bottom lines. For more information, visit [ascm.org](http://ascm.org).