Reconfiguring Food Facilities in Response to Covid-19

Guest Speaker
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August 5, 2020
Learning Objectives

Food facilities will find it necessary to develop long-term solutions to combat the spread of the virus throughout their facilities to ensure employee safety and work-force retention.

The reconfiguration of Food Facilities is a viable and necessary solution.

There are four specific solutions to be considered, each providing varying degrees of defense while incurring different levels of facility and cost impacts.
### The Food Industry and Covid-19

Since the start of the Coronavirus pandemic in the US, more than 70 food facilities have been forced to shut down for a period of time.  

**Source:** www.fooddive.com

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#### BY THE NUMBERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FACILITIES</th>
<th>WORKERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>**Confirmed cases</td>
<td>Covid-19**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meatpacking and food processing plants</td>
<td>635</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farms and production facilities</td>
<td>89</td>
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**Source:** FERN, as of July 31, 2020

The Food and Environment Reporting Network (www.thefern.org)
The closure of this facility, combined with a growing list of other protein plants that have temporarily ceased operations across our industry, is pushing our country perilously close to the edge in terms of our meat supply. It is impossible to keep our grocery stores stocked if our plants are not running.

Everyone is most worried about factory workers. We can find different packaging-materials or raw-materials suppliers, but we need those plants to keep operating.

If you’re a business you want to make money, and the only way to do that is by continuing to operate the plants with healthy employees. So what is good for employees is also good for business.

KEN SULLIVAN
CEO Smithfield Foods
Announcing the initial closing of Smithfield’s Sioux Falls facility

PATRICK CRITESER
Chief Executive
Tillamook County Creamery Association

STEWART GLENDINNING
Executive Vice President & Chief Financial Officer
Tyson Foods
The Two Layers of Food Facility Safety

1. Employee Physical Safety
   - Protecting the worker from physical harm

2. Food Safety
   - Keeping the product safe from pathogens or harmful materials
Infectious Disease Protection
Keeping employees safe from the spread of virus

The New Third Layer of Safety
Unique aspects of food processing and food distribution facilities

Essential businesses for our society

Workers cannot work remotely

Facility designs involved close proximity between workers
New Challenges Covid-19 Presents to Food Facility Operators

- Protecting workers from contracting harmful virus during normal work activities
- Maintaining operational productivity and efficiency amid facility changes
- Retaining workforce
Reconfiguration of Food Facilities is a long-term solution to address the challenges presented by Virus Pandemics as related to the unique aspects of food processing and distribution.
Four solution considerations with varying degrees of facility and cost impacts
Barriers of Separation

Methods and materials providing barriers

Consider areas of separation (production, welfare, entrances and exits)

Employee efficiency and productivity negatively impacted

Low to Medium
Process Modification

Evaluating existing processes to allow distancing and separation

Employee access / work functions and locations / shift changes

Movement within a facility of equipment and product

Equipment relocation additional doors or walls / traffic lanes / finishes

Low to High
Space Planning

Provide opportunity for employee distancing
Allocation opportunities of existing space
Conversion of under-utilized space
Expanding a facility footprint

Modifications involve design and construction
Medium to High

THE RECONFIGURATION OF FOOD FACILITIES IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19 | AUGUST 5, 2020
Automation

Available automation solutions vs solutions under development
Collaboration with equipment vendors / manufacturers
Consideration of long-term goals
Conduct an ROI exercise

Footprint, processes and operations may all be impacted
High
Further Considerations

COLLABORATION
A collaborative team will always develop the best solutions – designers, construction professionals, equipment manufacturers, facility management and facility workers.

FACILITY IMPACT
No solution will be without some level of impact, both to the facility and from a cost perspective.

EXPANSION & GROWTH
When determining re-configuration to protect workers from virus spread, consider future expansion and growth needs and goals.

NECESSARY ADJUSTMENTS
Safety requirements addressing Virus Pandemics will alter the design and operations of food facilities. Successful companies of the future will be those who adapt and adjust to operate the most productively in this new environment.
Resources

- www.coronavirus.gov
- www.usda.gov/coronavirus
QUESTIONS?

THANK YOU.

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