

# American flower industry suffering staggering losses

The coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak has American consumers focused on purchasing necessities like toilet paper, hand soap and food. What they're not purchasing is flowers on their way to check out, and that's a problem.

In a conference call on Friday, March 20, over 50 California flower farmers discussed the devastation their farming industry is experiencing due to lack of demand from consumers, canceled orders from industry outlets and transportation line shutdowns.

The bottom line, according to American flower farmers: If the general public doesn't start buying American Grown Flowers immediately, the American flower industry, its farmers, wholesale distributors, retail designers and all the people who work in those businesses cannot survive.

In fact, several flower farmers on the call said they're less than a week away from complete ruin.

"America's flower farmers, the floral industry and all of their employees are teetering on economic devastation" said Dave Pruitt, CEO for The California Cut Flower Commission and administrator of Certified American Grown Flowers. "These people literally cannot hold on without support from consumers. We urge our fellow Americans to please consider purchasing fresh American Grown Flowers and Greens the next time you're in the store, and ask for our flowers to be added back into the distribution pipeline as a valued agricultural commodity."

While a handful of retailers nationwide continue to carry flowers, many grocery brands and distributors are canceling orders or turning deliveries away. Farmers also express difficulty with getting their blooms and greens transported due to confusion around agricultural products and their exemption from the restrictions.

“Our Certified American Grown farmers are out in their local communities now assisting the overworked people in the best ways we know – delivering flowers and greens to help alleviate stress and bring moments of joy. We encourage you all to BUY FLOWERS where you can, SHARE THEM and let’s make sure that all farmers are still in business when this crisis is over. Once gone, a farm may be gone forever,” said Rita Jo Shultz, owner of Alaska Perfect Peony and chair of the Certified American Grown Council.

“A Rutgers University Study indicated that flowers bring happiness. In the home, they support self care, provide joy, hope and healing,” Shultz added. “Flowers help counteract negative messages and darkness prevalent at this very moment. Flowers will assuage troubled minds and bring peace to hearts and souls in this time of anxiety and fear.”

Today, flower farmers are asking consumers to purchase a bunch of flowers next time they’re in stores to buy essentials. That purchase could make the difference in an entire industry – one we count on to add beauty to life’s celebrations, express love and decorate our homes.

For more information:



### **American Grown Flowers**

916.441.1701

[info@americangrownflowers.org](mailto:info@americangrownflowers.org)

[www.americangrownflowers.org](http://www.americangrownflowers.org) (<http://www.americangrownflowers.org>)

### **California Cut Flower Commission**

PO Box 90225, Santa Barbara, CA

93190-0225

[www.cffc.org](http://www.cffc.org) (<http://www.cffc.org>)



Publication date: Mon 23 Mar 2020