



AMERICAN  
BAKERS  
ASSOCIATION

September 21, 2021

The Honorable Joe Biden  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden,

The American Bakers Association (ABA) supports your overall goal of vaccinating Americans against COVID-19. As essential critical infrastructure, the baking industry remains on the front lines of the pandemic response, working tirelessly to ensure Americans find nutritious baked goods on our store shelves and restaurant menus. We continue to diligently work to protect our almost 800,000 skilled workers. We support and provide information about the COVID-19 vaccines to our workers. ABA members are wholesale bakers and suppliers who produce bread, rolls, cookies, crackers, bagels, sweet goods, tortillas, and many other wholesome, nutritious, baked products.

From the beginning of this crisis, ABA has advocated for actions that protect workers, including priority access to personal protective equipment, critical hygiene and cleaning supplies, testing, and early access to vaccines. We work collaboratively with the federal government, including the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to effectively communicate and share information on best practices and guidance throughout the pandemic. It is imperative that this collaboration continue as your COVID-19 Action Plan is considered and implemented.

As essential critical infrastructure, the baking industry has remained operational since March 2020 and has utilized COVID-19 testing to ensure the health and safety of workers in our manufacturing plants. ABA is a member of the U.S. [Rapid Action Consortium](#) (RAC), whose mission is to safely and effectively reopen the U.S. economy faster through a COVID-19 rapid action testing system to enable U.S. businesses to better create safer workplaces. The Consortium has already seen a significant supply chain strain on members' ability to access COVID-19 tests through these efforts.

For example, the RAC is facing supply delays from Abbott and Quidel for their over-the-counter COVID-19 tests. To provide context, the RAC has a contractual test kit delivery timeline of under 3-5 days post-purchase order for up to 50,000 tests. However, we understand that Abbott is not taking any new orders at this time, and there are delays with the already accepted purchase orders receiving fewer tests than ordered. Quidel can supply 1 or 2 test kits bundles of 25 tests each against an order of 50 to 100 bundles. Some consortium members are able to sustain short-term delays as they had procured extra in their orders. We remain concerned that the supply shortages will continue despite using the authorities of the Defense Production Act.



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As you continue to implement your action plan, we ask that you bring to the table important stakeholders, especially from the critically important food industry sector, to collaborate on strategies that will help achieve our mutual goals. ABA also strongly recommends a joint, cohesive partnership with key federal agencies including the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, USDA, FDA, U.S. Small Business Administration, and CDC to ensure strong, comprehensive solutions that work.

The logistics of COVID-19 vaccines and testing are challenging. With the baking industry's ongoing workforce shortage, thoughtful implementation to come into compliance with a vaccine and testing policy will be critical to keeping our plants operational and Americans fed.

ABA welcomes the opportunity to sit down and discuss these important issues. We want to continue to partner with the federal government in getting Americans vaccinated.

Sincerely,

Robb MacKie  
ABA President and CEO