



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NEW OUTBREAK AT JBS GREELEY SHOWS COMPANY IS NOT DOING ENOUGH TO PROTECT WORKERS

JBS and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment Have Not Been Transparent in Reporting New Coronavirus Case Numbers; More Must Be Done to Protect Workers.

DENVER, CO – The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) and JBS reported a COVID-19 outbreak at the Greeley JBS beef plant with 20 new, confirmed cases as of Tuesday, November 17th. In response, **UFCW Local 7 President Kim Cordova issued the following statement on behalf of Local 7, which represents more than 22,000 Essential Workers in Colorado and Wyoming:**

“The fact that just two days after CDPHE reported 20 cases at the JBS Greeley plant, not including the corporate headquarter cases, that the company can now claim the number of active cases is only 12 is simply fake news. COVID-19 has a 10 to 14-day infection cycle, which is why it is extremely suspicious and hard to believe JBS that just two days after official reporting that an outbreak occurred six of those workers have tested negative. JBS has also said that the infections came from outside the plant, but, if this was true, why do we have 10 members from the Hide department of the plant who are confirmed to be COVID-19 positive?”

“UFCW Local 7 has been asking CDPHE and JBS for full transparency into the COVID-19 case numbers for weeks as our members started to report illnesses. Instead, we got a delayed, obfuscated response. CDPHE works for all taxpayers and is supposed to be

a transparent agency to protect public health in Colorado. Unfortunately, we are discouraged by their slow reporting and lack of transparency.

“Separately, JBS USA announced today that it would cover 100% of costs associated with COVID-19 diagnosis and treatment. The Union has worked hard to negotiate this offering for our members, and we will continue to fight so that the families of our members affected by COVID-19 are also covered, helping to pay down the hundreds of thousands of dollars in medical bills. This gesture is the least JBS can do for our members after months of gross workplace safety negligence in a pandemic that left more than 300 plant workers sick and six plant workers dead.

“This second outbreak shows that workplace safety at JBS facilities is still insufficient. The company is still conditioning wages with a bonus based on attendance, which encourages workers to come in sick and bolsters the ‘Work While Sick Culture’ prevalent at the plant. The JBS system of attendance points poses a severe problem as this deadly pandemic rages on. In addition, the fast line speeds prevent the opportunity for workers to safely social distance, and there is still a lack of daily onsite COVID-19 testing, quality PPE, such as N95 masks for our essential workers, and paid sick leave. In response to the claim made by JBS that every employee receives a health screening and temperature check before entering facilities, UFCW Local 7 does not have confidence in the screening process following reports from two whistleblowers, under affidavit, that health workers experienced inaccurate temperature screenings and were forced to allow symptomatic employees to work.”

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[Local 7](#), the largest Union in Colorado is affiliated with United Food and Commercial Workers International Union which represents over 1.3 million workers in the United States and Canada, and is one of the largest private sector Unions in North America. UFCW members work in a wide range of industries, including retail food, food processing, agriculture, retail sales, and health care.

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