**Covid-19 update - Omicron variant**

**24/12/21**

It has been an incredibly turbulent 18+ months and as we are seeing a rise in the Omicron variant and an increase in restrictions, we have been busy making sure we continue to have the appropriate measures in place to ensure our customers not only receive their deliveries on time, but feel safe when doing so. These include:

**Hygiene measures**

### Continuing with face coverings in communal areas, social distancing and one way systems in place and hand sanitising principles in place across all of our sites

### Continuing to offer and recommend direct contact testing using lateral flow test kits for all employees across our sites. We have daily reporting to track all aspects of those employees showing as symptomatic, positive, isolating and the number of tests completed, so that we can react quickly to keep our teams safe and ensure service is runs smoothly

### Our drivers, warehouse staff and all customer-facing employees are provided with protective personal equipment i.e. hand sanitisers, face coverings and gloves

### Employees and visitors are required to wear a suitable face covering (subject to exemption for medical reasons) upon entrance to Bidfood sites and when moving around communal areas

### All of our employees are required to practice social distancing

### Our vehicles and cabs are cleaned daily (at the start and end of shifts), with the same drivers allocated to the same vehicles, wherever possible

### Sites are continuing to follow strict cleaning regimes which involve cleaning every four hours in hotspots like door handles

### In line with the recent announcement, all employees who can work from home have been asked to return to doing so, in line with agreement of Heads of Department

* We are encouraging all employees to get vaccinated and are offering curb-side deliveries for any customers who are concerned about drivers entering their premises.

**Ensuring safer deliveries**

To ensure safer deliveries to you, we have previously implemented a number of delivery protocols to protect your staff and our own teams. Where requested, we will simply drop off your order and drive away. This would involve leaving the order unchecked when it is delivered, however, if any credit query arises, we can check the order over the phone with your staff, and compare with our own stock records.

Should you also wish that our drivers wash their hands further before unloading deliveries, we are happy to accommodate this, providing the facilities to do so are made available at your premises.

If your site becomes affected by a coronavirus outbreak, we would take guidance from government agencies and work with you to find a safe way of continuing to deliver. For example, with our drop and drive protocol as mentioned above.  If you require any changes in delivery arrangements, please advise your Account Manager in the first instance who can then liaise with our transport teams.

**Employee sickness policy**

As per government guidance, if a Bidfood employee (or a member of their household) is showing any symptoms, we require them to self-isolate from the onset of the first symptoms and obtain a PCR test immediately. Our self-isolation policy outlines responsibilities of any employees who have been asked to self-isolate in order to avoid contact with other people.

We have also developed a guide for General Managers at each of our sites that outlines what should be done in the event of a confirmed case of Covid-19 on site.

**Supplier availability**

Due to the current uncertainty across the industry and possible increase in restrictions, we are seeing the pressure ease on the previous challenges we’ve faced in relation to increased demand and supply shortages. We are continuing to monitor the situation closely and are proud to have strong supplier partnerships in place which we will continue to leverage over the coming weeks, as we wait to hear more from government on what this variant means for our industry as we enter the new year.

We have seen from our own experience in some sites that the new variant would appear to be especially virulent, though thankfully the symptoms and major impact to health appears to be less severe.

Given there is normally a short delay between immediate impact from an outbreak to supply shortages, as suppliers will utilise their own stocks, we have not yet seen any major supply shortages from our key suppliers that are related to Omicron.

Having reviewed this situation via our discussions with industry associations, as well as directly with the government, there is some recognition that the likelihood is that we may well see further increases in cases and therefore potentially higher levels of absences into the New Year, and this may impact our suppliers, and therefore availability of some product lines.

As has been the story since the start of the pandemic, this is very much a moving feast and we will continue to monitor the impact on our suppliers and keep in contact with our customers via our existing supply chain updates, as required. Fortunately, given the various supply challenges the industry has faced over the last year, we already have in place mechanisms to communicate availability issues and suggested alternatives, should this be the case.

We are very proud of the agility and adaptability that our team at Bidfood has shown over this time, and are confident we can continue to deliver a great service as we enter into the the next year.

We would ask our customers to continue to follow the advice we have shared in our previous communications such as continuing to build stock wherever possible, keeping menus flexible, and staying in regular contact with your Bidfood Account Manager.

Wishing you a very Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year.

Andrew Selley

CEO Bidcorp UK