



May 7, 2020

To: All Domestic Employees

From: Pandemic Working Group

Re: **COVID-19: Meat Prices ~ DHS Lab ~ 5-yr-old Driver Part II**

Meat Prices. As reported by Business Insider, with pork and beef production down by about 35% due to closures of 115 meat and poultry processing plants arising from COVID infection, meat prices have risen by 8% over last year and are expected to rise further. Many stores are now limiting how much meat each customer can buy per visit as a hedge against panic-buying. With nearly 5,000 confirmed cases of coronavirus and 20 deaths among workers in these facilities, even where plants have reopened with social distancing measures in place (as depicted in this photo from Business Insider), some workers are fearful to return. This contrasts with the situation that we reported a few weeks ago, when only a handful of plants had closed, and experts were predicting no shortages. Now pundits like CoBank are conceding that grocery stores running out of product and price inflation are “nearly assured.” The supply chain should improve with time, as meat processors adapt to COVID protocols and workers regain confidence in safer factory conditions.



Secret DHS Lab. In the category of “Who Knew?” as reported by NBC News, the Department of Homeland Security has been operating a heretofore secret laboratory (the National Biodefense Analysis and Countermeasures Center or NBACC) dedicated to biodefense research. Created in response to the anthrax letter attacks of 2001 (which you may recall, unless you are under the age of 19), the lab has been directed to drop everything and focus on the coronavirus. With a level 4 biosafety accreditation level (one of only seven facilities in the country at this level), the NBACC is authorized to work on the most deadly pathogens, including those for which no vaccine or treatment exists. Dozens of teams are now working on such things as replicating climates (hot, cold, humid, dry) to observe how the virus holds up, testing alcohols and disinfectants, and simulating droplet propagation from sneezing and coughing.

One finding of particular note is that the coronavirus cannot survive for long in direct sunlight. In a piece by the L.A. Times, however, experts (such as USC’s Andrea Armani and UCLA’s Karin Michaels) caution that this effect is only observed with viruses that are on surfaces (such as metal and plastic) and that there is “no good data” to support the notion that sunlight exposure at the

beach has any effect on human infection. So, the beach is a great place (if you can find one), but it's not a shield against the coronavirus.

Five-year-old SUV Driver on the Move.



Remember the story of that five-year-old boy who was driving a Dodge Journey on a Utah interstate, got pulled by a highway patrolman and (presumably after having been read his Miranda rights) explained that he was driving to California to buy a Lamborghini for \$3? Well, guess who's back in the news? As reported by our own Don Pruette, it seems that a local entrepreneur who happens to own a Lambo Huracan (check out the Blue

Book value on that thing) got wind of the story and offered to give the young man the ride of his dreams. Here is the lad, seated on the lap of his older sister (courtesy of People.com). By the look on his face, he seems mildly terrified. On the other hand, his sister is having a blast. In the end, I think we've all learned something here – namely, that crime and disobedience don't pay, but sometimes you keep getting into the papers and your sister has a really good day.

If you have any questions or comments on this advisory, please contact either kellyw@amvac.com or timd@amvac.com .