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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Health Officials Confirm Ninth Death Linked to Foster Farms Outbreak

MERCED COUNTY, CA – The Merced County Department of Public Health (Department) confirmed another COVID-19 related death of a Foster Farms employee. The death occurred in an individual who had been diagnosed and hospitalized from COVID-19 prior to intervention from the Department. Foster Farms was directed to close in September and the individual who died had been hospitalized since August. The Livingston Plant facility in which the employee worked is no longer in outbreak.

Foster Farms continues operations while following mandatory safety measures, testing requirements, and all other directives provided in the site-specific Health Officer Order, issued on August 28, 2020. The Department is still working closely with Foster Farms in order to monitor, provide technical assistance, and conduct on-site visits to ensure compliance at the Livingston Complex.

"We are saddened by the confirmation of another death of a Foster Farms employee and the Department sends our deepest condolences to the family. Since the reopening of Foster Farms, Department staff have conducted inspections regularly to verify compliance with the August 28, 2020, Health Order." says Dr. Salvador Sandoval, Merced County Public Health Officer.

As a reminder, it is still a **local and statewide mandate** to wear a cloth face covering inside of, or in line to enter any indoor public space, or when unable to maintain six feet of social distance outside. Merced County Health Officials strongly recommend that all residents (including business sectors) practice the following safety measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19:

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces
- Practice social distancing
- Wash hands with soap and warm water for 20 seconds
- Use hand sanitizer with 60 percent alcohol base when hand washing is not possible
- Stay home and self-monitor if you experience any COVID-19 symptoms (available here: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019- ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html).
- For more information on COVID-19, please visit the Department's resource website at www.countyofmerced.com/coronavirus.

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