

Beat: Health

## **FRENCH MIN OF AGRICULTURE ECONOMY&LABOR SPECIFY HOW TO STRENGTHEN AGRIFOOD CHAIN**

### **OVER LOCKDOWN DUE TO COVID-19**

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**USPA NEWS** - Bruno LeMaire, Minister of Economy and Finance, Muriel Penicaud, Minister of Labor and Didier Guillaume, Minister of Agriculture and Food, specify the ways in which the French can choose to go and strengthen the strength of work in the agricultural and agrifood chain. « Protecting the health of French men and women in this war against the Coronavirus is obviously the government's priority. It is also very important to ensure that everyone has seamless access to healthy, quality food. This is why it is necessary that during this early spring period, farmers and the entire downstream chain of the agrifood chain can count on seasonal reinforcements. This secures our immediate food autonomy, and our production of raw materials for the fall. » Source Ministry of Agriculture.

At this time each year, farmers need labor to harvest fruits and vegetables, but also to plant the seedlings to be harvested this fall. Usually, these seasonal reinforcements were provided by workers from neighboring countries, who can no longer move freely today, given the epidemic that is hitting us. Bruno LeMaire, Minister of economy and Finance, Muriel Penicaud Minister of Labor, and Didier Guillaume Minister of Agriculture,, as part of the Government's permanent effort to adapt the systems to needs, propose a specific support plan to facilitate the rules of access to employment for this agricultural sector and strategic agrifood.

#### **PROTECT EMPLOYEES-----**

The top priority is protecting employees.

In the agricultural and agrifood sector, as in all sectors, barrier gestures and distance rules are the best protection against the spread of covid-19. These principles must be implemented in a very concrete way for employees, depending on each sector of activity. Before the end of the week, a practical guide drawn up by the Ministry of Labor, drawn up in consultation with industry players, will be widely distributed to companies and farms to give them very concrete and operational solutions to guarantee work. safely for their employees.

#### **SIMPLIFY AND FACILITATE RECRUITMENT-----**

To facilitate recruitment, the Ministry of Labor is setting up, with Pôle emploi, a platform dedicated to sectors which have, during this period, specific recruitment needs. Access to this platform will be simplified for applicants as well as for companies and will provide real-time access to recruitment needs throughout France.

This platform will bring together all the offers available for the companies concerned. Pole emploi (Job Center), will offer each employer, if they wish, to take care of the preselection of candidates. Applicants will be able to consult the offers without creating an account and directly access the contact details of recruiters. This platform complements and reinforces initiatives already taken by professionals, in particular the "arms for your plate" initiative

#### **ENCOURAGE UNOCCUPEID EMPLOYEES AND SELF-EMPLOYED TO TEMPORARILY JOIN THE SECTOR-----**

Job seekers or freelancers whose activity has been stopped are obviously the first to be affected by these job opportunities in the sector. But, in this period of economic slowdown, employees employed by companies in decline in activity are also likely to meet the intense recruitment needs of the sector. This is why the legislative and regulatory provisions, taken in application of the law of March 23, 2020 urgently to face the epidemic of covid-19, will provide for a simple and exceptional device, allowing the employees who undergo a measure of partial activity of concluding an employment contract with a company in the sector. The employee may combine his partial activity allowance with the salary of his work contract in the food industry, provided that his initial employer gives him his agreement to respect a notice period of 7 days before resuming work

The employer in the food industry who hires the employee in partial activity must release the employee from his obligations subject to the same period of 7 days. Finally, beneficiaries of the solidarity fund for very small businesses, the self-employed, micro-entrepreneurs and liberal professions, will be able to accumulate the payment by the fund (1,500 euros in early April on request from the tax site) with short contracts in the agricultural and agrifood companies. The Government is now acting to respond in real time to the recruitment needs of a sector vital to the nation, without compromising the safety and health of the employees concerned.

SOURCE: French Ministry of Agriculture.

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