



AFIF  
AMERICA'S  
FLOWER  
CONNECTION

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To Whom It May Concern:

This is an update on the current logistics situation that we are facing with the flights from South America to Miami. As Latin America continues to open up from the shut downs attributed to COVID-19, the volume of exports is increasing which puts more pressure on the flower that are needed to fly every day. Not having belly cargo space on passenger planes out of South America creates an additional pressure on cargo plane availability. Seasonable products are willing to pay more for space, so even more pressure. Freight forwarders continue to try and secure the needed space, but there just aren't enough flights.

Several airlines state that they are adding more flights this week and in the coming weeks, but it does not seem to be enough to support the additional volumes that are needing to be shipped from Colombia and Ecuador which are the main countries supplying flowers to Miami and ultimately throughout the United States. In order for airlines to add additional flights there needs to be both north and southbound freight to fill those planes.

Due to COVID Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is having some challenges too. There are some inspectors that have health issues that do not allow them to work until COVID is controlled, there have been some inspectors that have moved leaving open positions and then, the USDA is not providing education for the academy at this time, therefore no new inspectors are coming into the workforce at this time. Because there have not been as many passengers coming into Miami, the CBP inspectors have been able to help on the cargo side until the passenger volume increases. So, even though Miami has 24/7/365 CBP service for inspections there are not always enough people on staff to support the cargo volumes of all agricultural products that are coming into Miami. Everything is being inspected as soon as possible with the staffing.

AFIF will continue to work with the importers, the airlines and CBP to have them understand how important it is to have enough space and flights, to inspect and clear the flowers in Miami as quickly as possible. We will also continue to work with Miami International Airport to help recruit more southbound cargo to support the need for more flights.

If you have any questions please reach out to me.

Christine Boldt  
Executive Vice President