Novel Supply Chain Network Models Inspired by the Covid-19 Pandemic: From Optimization to Game Theory

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Acknowledgments

Many thanks to the INFORMS Chicago Chapter and INFORMS Analytics Society for this invitation.



This presentation is dedicated to essential workers, including tech workers, healthcare workers, first responders, farmers, food processors, grocery store workers, and freight service providers, whose selflessness, expertise, and dedication help to sustain us. Thank you

- **Background and Motivation** Some of Our Relevant Research Pre-Pandemic
- Optimization and Supply Chain Network Models Inspired by the Covid-19 Pandemic
 - Food
 - Medical Supplies
- Game Theory and Supply Chain Network Models Inspired by the Covid-19 Pandemic
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Background and Motivation - Some of Our Relevant Research Pre-Pandemic

I Work on the Modeling of Network Systems



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Much of My Recent Research Has Been on Supply Chains



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A Multidisciplinary Approach

In our research on perishable and time-sensitive product supply chains, we utilize results from physics, chemistry, biology, and medicine in order to capture the perishability of various products over time from healthcare products such as blood, medical nucleotides, and pharmaceuticals to food.



Food Supply Chains

Food is essential to our health and well-being. During the Covid-19 pandemic, declared on March 11, 2020 by the World Health Organization, the associated supply chains have suffered major disruptions.



Professor Anna Nagurney Novel Supply Chain Network Models

Fresh Produce Food Supply Chains

Our fresh produce supply chain network oligopoly model:

- captures the deterioration of fresh food along the entire supply chain from a network perspective;
- handles the time decay through the introduction of arc multipliers;
- formulates oligopolistic competition with product differentiation;
- includes the disposal of the spoiled food products, along with the associated costs;
- allows for the assessment of alternative technologies involved in each supply chain activity.

M. Yu and A. Nagurney, "Competitive Food Supply Chain Networks with Application to Fresh Produce," European Journal of Operational Research 224(2) (2013), pp 273-282.

Fresh Produce Food Supply Chains



The Fresh Produce Supply Chain Network Topology

Farmers' Markets and Fresh Produce Supply Chains

- The I farms compete noncooperatively in an oligopolistic manner.
- Products are differentiated based on quality at the farmers' markets.



D. Besik and A. Nagurney, "Quality in Competitive Fresh Produce Supply Chains with Application to Farmers' Markets," *Socio-Economic Planning Sciences* 60 (2017), pp 62-76.

Pharmaceutical Supply Chains

The supply chain generalized network oligopoly model has the following novel features:

- it handles the perishability of the pharmaceutical product through the introduction of arc multipliers;
- it allows each firm to minimize the discarding cost of waste / perished medicine;
- it captures product differentiation under oligopolistic competition through the branding of drugs, which can also include generics as distinct brands.

A.H. Masoumi, M. Yu, and A. Nagurney, "A Supply Chain Generalized Network Oligopoly Model for Pharmaceuticals Under Brand Differentiation and Perishability," *Transportation Research E* 48 (2012), pp 762-780.



Blood Supply Chains

Even prior to the pandemic the blood services sector was facing many challenges. This supply chain is unique in that the product cannot be produced but must be donated.

A. Nagurney and P. Dutta, "Supply Chain Network Competition Among Blood Service Organizations: A Generalized Nash Equilibrium Framework," Annals of Operations Research 275(2) (2019), pp 551-586.

Operational challenges faced by blood service organizations.



A. Nagurney and P. Dutta, "Competition for Blood Donations," *Omega* 212 (2019), pp 103-114.

Optimization and Supply Chain Network Models Inspired by the Covid-19 Pandemic

Food Supply Chain Disruptions Due to Covid-19

The Covid-19 pandemic has impacted food supply chains in a dramatic and sustained manner.

- Infections at three of the nation's largest meat processors quadrupled in May despite new safety measures. At Tysons Foods, the largest meat processor in the US, the number of Tyson employees with the coronavirus exploded to more than 7,000 as of May 25, 2020.
- Shortages of many types of meats, even organic chicken, were experienced this past spring, with price increases. It is projected that meat supplies in grocery stores could shrink as much as 35%, prices could rise 20% with even greater impact later this year.
- Fresh produce (oranges, potatoes, strawberries, etc.) on some farms, has had to be discarded because of lack of timely processing capabilities at plants. Shortages now of workers for blueberry picking.

Food Supply Chain Disruptions Due to Covid-19

- Many farm animals have had to be culled because of the shutdown of several big meat processing plants. Enhanced cleaning, redesign, and emphasis on social distancing is slowing down the processing, causing additional delays. It is estimated that up to 300,000 market hogs were euthanized as of mid July.
- 2 Labor needed to pick ripened produce is less available due to migrant labor restrictions, illnesses, etc.
- With the closures of schools, restaurants, businesses, etc., outlets for perishable food have been changed dramatically.
 Distribution channels are in need of being reinvisioned and redesigned.

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Food Insecurity

According to The New York Times magazine, Sept. 6, 2020:



A shadow of hunger looms over the United States. In the pandemic economy, nearly one in eight households doesn't have enough to eat. The lockdown, with its epic lines at food banks, has revealed what was hidden in plain sight: that the struggle to make food last long enough, and to get food that's healthful - what experts call 'food insecurity' - is a persistent one for millions of Americans.

Food Supply Chain Disruptions Due to Covid-19



New paper, "Perishable Food Supply Chain Networks with Labor in the Covid-19 Pandemic," A. Nagurney, in: Dynamics of Disasters - Impact, Risk, Resilience, and Solutions, I.S. Kotsireas, A. Nagurney, and P.M. Pardalos, Editors, Springer International Publishing Switzerland, 2020.

• With lack of availability of labor being one of the drivers of supply chain disruptions, the model that considers labor in all the supply chain network economic activities of production, transportation, processing, storage, and distribution.

• Impacts of the reduction of labor (capacities) on supply chain network links can then be quantitatively evaluated on the perishable product flows, the prices that the consumers pay, and profits of the firm.

• The framework enables a variety of sensitivity analysis exercises.

Perishable Food Supply Chain Network Model with Labor



Our findings include:

- The lack of labor on a single link, even a freight one, may significantly negatively impact a food firm.
- Preserving productivity in all utilized supply chain network economic activities is critical since the impact of a drastic reduction can severely reduce profits.
- Adding more direct sales, whether at farmers' markets or nearby farm stands, may help a food firm in a pandemic.
- Also, if a firm enhances its marketing so as to have consumers be willing to pay a higher price for its fresh produce, major profit increases can occur.

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Shortages of Medical Supplies, Including PPEs

• In early March, it was reported that by the Department of Health and Human Services that the national stockpile had about 12 million N95 respirators and 30 million surgical masks - 1% of the estimated 3.5 billion masks the nation would need in a severe pandemic. Another 5 million N95 masks in the stockpile were expired.

• Prior to the coronavirus outbreak, China made half the world's face masks. When the outbreak took off there, China started to use its supply and hoard what remained. This problem has only spread since, as more countries hoarded medical supplies, with some even banning most PPE exports. So as demand increased due to Covid-19 there was less supply to go around.

• "We are out of everything, wrote a staffer at a large hospital in Tennessee in mid April. "Providers using one mask for 3+ weeks. Many COVID patients. Zero gowns."

Where Are the PPEs?

The Press Democrat

TIME

Face masks in the national stockpile have not been substantially replenished since 2009



FierceHealthcare A physician exec was trying to secure PPE for his hospital. Then the feds showed up

Begging for Thermometers, Body Bags, and Gowns: U.S. Health Care Workers Are Dangerously Ill-Equipped to Fight COVID-19



The New York Times

F.D.A. Bans Faulty Masks, 3 Weeks After Failed Tests



Why America ran out of protective masks — and what can be done about it Why don't hospitals have enough masks? Because coronavirus broke the market.



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Dr. Susan R. Bailey, President of the American Medical Association, wrote on August 26, 2020:

• "It is hard to believe that our nation finds itself dealing with the same shortfalls in PPE witnessed during the first few weeks that SARS-CoV-2 began its unrelenting spread ..."

• "But that same situation exists today, and in many ways things have only gotten worse."

• "The lack of a coordinated national strategy to acquire and distribute PPE has certainly played a role forcing state governments to compete with each other – and with the federal government as well as foreign nations – to secure masks, gowns, gloves and other gear."

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The modeling framework considers first elastic demands for a product and then fixed demands, coupled with distinct types of labor capacities in order to capture the availability of this valuable resource in a pandemic, as well as possible flexibility.

The supply chain network framework includes electronic commerce and is relevant to many different supply chain applications including protective personal and medical equipment.

A. Nagurney, "Optimization of Supply Chain Networks with Inclusion of Labor: Applications to Covid-19 Pandemic Disruptions," 2020.

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Supply Chain Model with Different Labor Constraints



Supply Chain Model with Different Labor Constraints

The model considers three sets of labor constraints, of increasing flexibility of movement.

- In the first set, each supply chain link has an upper bound of available labor. Labor is is not free to move to other production sites, nor to other distribution centers, or assist in freight service provision.
- In the second set, labor is free to move across a supply chain set of network economic activities (such as production, or transportation, or storage, and, finally, distribution). There is a capacity of labor associated with each such "tier" of supply chain links. Those who have skills in production, or in distribution, etc., may be reallocated. This has been happening in freight service provision, for example, during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- In the third set, labor is free to move across all the supply chain network economic activities, and there is a single capacity. McKinsey & Company noted this is a means towards resilience and returning the supply chain to effectiveness while reenvisioning and reforming.

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Supply Chain Model with Different Labor Constraints

Our findings include:

- Having appropriate healthcare pandemic mitigation processes and procedures in place is essential to continuing operations. With even one of the two manufacturing plants closed, the can prices rise at the demand markets.
- Preduction in labor availability can result in a significant increase in product prices at the consumer level.
- Even in the case of reduced labor availability, electronic commerce can result in increased profits.
- Having the flexibility of labor being able to be reallocated across supply chain network activities can enable enhanced profits.

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Game Theory and Supply Chain Network Models Inspired by the Covid-19 Pandemic

Raging Competition for Medical Supplies

On August 4, 2020, I published an article in The Conversation,

"The Raging Competition for Medical Supplies is not a Game, but Game Theory Can Help."



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Game Theory Supply Chain Network Model with Labor

The Covid-10 pandemic has dramatically illustrated the importance of including labor (and associated possible disruptions) into the analysis of supply chain networks.

In addition, the pandemic has, in such essential sectors as food and healthcare, demonstrated the competition for labor resources!

In the paper, "Supply Chain Game Theory Network Modeling Under Labor Constraints: Applications to the Covid-19 Pandemic," A. Nagurney (2020), a game theory model for supply chains with labor was constructed, under three different sets of constraints, building on our previous work.

Since, labor in this context, may be shared among the competing supply chain networks of firms/organizations, the governing concept is that of a **Generalized Nash Equilibrium** (rather than a Nash Equilibrium).

Game Theory Supply Chain Network Model with Labor



Figure: The Supply Chain Network Topology of the Game Theory Model with Labor

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In the paper, we present a series of numerical examples documenting the potential impacts of labor disruptions under different scenarios.

We include results for disruptions at manufacturing plants, storage facilities; the impacts of the addition of a competitor, changes in demand price functions, as well as decreases in available labor throughout the supply chain network economy.

The research adds to modeling methodology as well as applications.

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The fierce competition for PPEs and other medical supplies also inspired the following work:

"Competition for Medical Supplies Under Stochastic Demand in the Covid-19 Pandemic: A Generalized Nash Equilibrium Framework", A. Nagurney, M. Salarpour, J. Dong, and P. Dutta (2020), to appear in: *Nonlinear Analysis and Global Optimization*, T.M. Rassias, and P.M. Pardalos, Editors, Springer Nature Switzerland AG.

In this paper, we modeled the competition for medical supplies in the Covid-19 pandemic under stochastic demand and a fixed amount of supplies at different points.

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Figure: The Network Structure of the Competitive Game Theory Model for Medical Supplies with Stochastic Demands

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Competition for Medical Supplies Under Stochastic Demand

The objective function of each demand point j is given by:

Minimize
$$\sum_{i=1}^{m} \rho_i q_{ij} + \sum_{i=1}^{m} c_{ij}(q) + \lambda_j^- E(\Delta_j^-) + \lambda_j^+ E(\Delta_j^+)$$

subject to the following constraints:

$$\sum_{j=1}^n q_{ij} \leq S_i, \quad i=1,\ldots,m,$$

$$q_{ij} \geq 0, \quad i=1,\ldots,m.$$

The model is a Generalized Nash Equilibrium one due to the competition for limited medical supplies.

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Competition for Medical Supplies Under Stochastic Demand

Our findings include:

- Our numerical results are consistent with what one can expect to observe in reality in terms of how organizations would procure critical medical supplies such as N95 masks under demand unpredictability and competition.
- The findings confirm that more supply points with sufficient supplies are needed to ensure that organizations are not deprived of critical supplies due to competition.
- As a result of this competition and limited local availability; in particular in the case of supplies such as masks and even coronavirus test kits, we are seeing several countries now setting up local production sites.
- This work adds to the literature on game theory models for disaster relief with the specific features of the Covid-19 pandemic.

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Novel Supply Chain Network Models

Coverage by the Media



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Writing OpEds

On March 11, 2020 the WHO declared the pandemic. On March 12 my article on blood supply chains in The Conversation appeared and, on March 24 my article in INFORMS Analytics Coronavirus Chronicles.



How coronavirus is upsetting the blood supply chain



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The coronavirus, which causes the disease COVID-19, has created enormous

in anxiety, uncertainty, and disruption to our lives. Much has already been written about potential shortages of medicines and face masks, but little has been said

about something only you and I can provide - lifesaving blood.

Our nation's blood supply is essential to our health care security. Blood transfusions are integral parts of major surgeries. Blood is used in the treatment of diseases, particularly sickle cell anemia and some cancers. Blood is needed for victims who have injuries caused by accidents or natural disasters. Every day, the U.S. needs 36,000 units of red blood cells, 7,000 units of platelets, and 10,000 units of plasma.

I am a professor and director of the Virtual Center for Supernetworks at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Because of the escalating coronavirus stress. The timing could hardly be worse: the COVID-19 outbreak coincides with our seasonal flus and colds.

Patients need blood in many states

Many states, including Washington, California, Kansas, Pennsylvania, the Carolinas. Massachusetts and Rhode Island, are now calling for blood donations. At the same time, some states are closing schools and other sites that typically host mobile blood drives; even prior to the coronavirus, some events had been

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Analytics

The COVID-19 Pandemic and the Stressed Blood Supply Chain



Blood is essential to our option's healthcare security it is a life-saving product that cannot be manufactured and comes solely from volunteer donors. No substitute for blood has wet been invented. Blood transfusions are integra parts of major surgeries. Blood is a must for saving victims of accidents and natural disasters. Blood is also used in divided into red blood cells, plasma and platelets, can save up to three lives. Adults have 8-12 pints of blood

Even in the best of times, the complex blood supply chain in the United States is under stress. Although 38% of the U.5. oppulation is eligible to donate blood, less than 10% actually does so in a year. Purthermore, issues of seasonality come into play with flu and colds cutting donations; the same for weather related events and holid

The blood banking industry, entrusted with maintaining a sufficient supply of blood, is facing a battle of the century medical procedures [1]. For example, there is increased competition among blood service organizations for donors of the country. There have also been mergers and acquisitions of blood service organizations [2]. On the other hand,

The critical blood supply chain is unique from others that we study in operations research (0.R.) because it requires supply chain can be visualized, modeled and studied as a network [4]. The coronavirus can disrupt the links in the blood supply chain network through a variety of means. If donors are ill, they cannot donate; if the staff is ill, they

In China, specifically Wuhan where the coronavirus is generally thought to have originated, blood donations have

Novel Supply Chain Network Models

Coverage by the Media During the Pandemic



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On April 22, 2020, a letter from California Attorney General Xavier Becerra to the Admiral Brett Giroir, the Assistant Secretary of the US Department of Health & Human Services, and signed by US Attorney Generals of 21 other states, requested updates, because of the pandemic blood shortages, to blood donation policies that discriminate.

My article in *The Conversation*, which was reprinted in LiveScience, was the first reference and was cited on the first page.

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State of California Office of the Attorney General Xavier Becerra Arronney General

April 22, 2020

Via Electronic Mail

The Honorable Admiral Brett Giroir, MD Assistant Secretary for Health U.S. Department of Health & Human Services Mary E. Switzer Building 330 C Street SW, Room L600 Washington, DC 20024 Attr: ACBTS/Ag/hrs.gov ACBTS/Ag/hrs.gov

RE: "Solicitation for Public Comments on Section 209 of the Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness and Advancing Innovation Act." 85 Fed. Reg. 16.372 (March 23, 2020)

Dear Assistant Secretary Giroir:

The undersigned State Alterneys General frem California, Colerada, Connecticat, Delavaras, the District of Columbia, Havini, Illinois, Joux, Maine, Masachusetta, Kheighan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jeney, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Pennylvania, Vermont, and Vigrinai submit hist letter in response to the folcard government" "Solicitation for Public Comments on Section 209 of the Pandemis and All-Hazards Preparedness and Advancing Imovation Act, "QFS ed. Reg. [3:27]. We support the Office of the Assistant Secteratry for Health in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HIB) efforts and work in maintaining an adequent antional Nodo supply during the COVID-19 pandemic.

An adequate blood supply is critical to the nation's healthcare. Blood transfusions and blood products are needed for major surgeries, to treat diseases such as sickle cell anemia and some cancers, and to treat victims who have injuries caused by accidents or natural disasters.¹ Every day, the United States needs approximately 36,000 units of red blood cells, nearly 7,000

¹ Anna Nagurney, How Coronavirus is Upsetting the Blood Supply Chain, Live Science (Mar. 13, 2020), https://www.livescience.com/coronavirus-blood-supply-chain.html/.

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Hon. Brett Giroir April 22, 2020 Page 7

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Thank You!

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