



A Letter to Our Members

As Chairmen of our respective associations, we would like to provide all of our members an update on an important new project we have undertaken together.

In late 2015, the Boards of Directors of PMA and United Fresh formed a Joint Committee on Responsible Labor Practices. The committee's charge is to evaluate appropriate labor practices across the produce and floral supply chain, potentially leading to an industrywide, global approach to responsible labor practices and consistent expectations among trading partners and the public.

The committee is being co-chaired by Brian Kocher of Castellini Group of Companies on behalf of United Fresh, and Wesley Wilson of Walmart on behalf of PMA. The committee was launched with 16 members, equally divided among produce suppliers and buyers. After two meetings discussing goals and objectives, the group is now being augmented to include additional specific expertise as we begin our work ahead. The entire list of members will be publicized once final. Our staff CEOs Tom Stenzel of United Fresh and Bryan Silbermann of PMA are leading the project for our associations.

Responsible labor practices are an important issue for our industry, and we recognize the growing interest of stakeholders in transparency throughout the global supply chain. This Joint Committee is working to help ensure our industry has a clear and well-defined commitment to treat all workers with dignity and respect as they work to bring fresh produce to consumers. As an industry, we want to proactively address this issue.

Members have met to discuss the wide range of information available on labor issues, which supports an industrywide approach to help drive consensus across the produce and floral supply chain and increase consumers' confidence that the produce they buy is responsibly sourced. With support from both associations' Boards, the committee now intends to engage with a broader set of stakeholders inside and outside the industry to develop specific goals and action plans to achieve those goals.

The input and collaboration of many stakeholders on this issue is important in order to drive real change. We know that multiple perspectives are critical to bringing consensus and positive movement. It is also important to acknowledge the huge diversity among commodities, growing regions and cultural practices in the broad produce and floral industry. We want to meet with grower organizations, labor employers and others serving different aspects of the supply chain to ensure that we understand their specific views and incorporate their thinking into any future action.

With foundational work behind it, the committee has now issued a Request for Proposals aimed at engaging a consultant with expertise in this field to help support the committee's outreach and work products. The consultant hired will assist the associations in arranging stakeholder engagement sessions, developing a Code of Conduct, and creating a detailed action plan for next steps. A decision on the consultant is expected by June. The committee will meet in late June, and will review and approve a workplan for the consultant.

We want our members to know that this will not be a short process or an easy one. But, we believe this is a critical discussion we need to have as an industry. We anticipate this will be the beginning of a continuing dialogue with our members, the broader global produce industry and other stakeholders.

We thank you in advance for your support, and welcome your views along the way.

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