



## **Statement to the Media**

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### **United Fresh Statement on House Energy and Commerce Committee Reporting of the Food Safety Enhancement Act of 2009**

United Fresh Produce Association President and CEO Tom Stenzel releases the following statement on House Energy and Commerce Committee Reporting of H.R. 2749:

"We congratulate the House Energy and Commerce Committee on reporting H.R. 2749 out of committee today on a broad bipartisan basis. Since the bill's debut as a legislative draft in May, through its markup in subcommittee last week and full Committee review today, it is clear that both Democrats and Republicans have worked together to make this a better bill addressing comprehensive food safety reform.

"The United Fresh Produce Association has supported Congressional action on food safety for more than two years, and has worked closely with Congressional leaders in both houses to develop policy concepts that would both maximize public health and rebuild consumer confidence in our overall food safety system.

"While our association was pleased that a number of produce industry priorities were included in the original draft of H.R. 2749, there were still many problem areas in that draft. Since that time, we have worked closely with Committee members on both sides of the aisle, as well as Congressional leaders outside of the Committee, and are pleased with a number of significant improvements in the bill.

"Specifically, we found bipartisan support for the following improvements, which are contained in the bill reported out of Committee today:

- Strengthened the bill's commodity-specific approach to produce;
- Ensured that FDA would work with USDA, state departments of agriculture and other agencies in implementing all produce provisions;
- Kept a mandate for traceability across all foods, but eliminated the draft bill's prescriptive dictates that could have set back work on our current Produce Traceability Initiative;
- Exempted produce from any duplicative requirements for country of origin labeling;

- Enhanced the ability of fresh processors to develop individual HACCP programs without rigid one-size fits-all mandates;
- Assured equal treatment of imported and domestic produce in food safety standards;
- Secured a pilot program and feasibility study for potential mandatory test reporting, and limited such testing to facilities required to comply with Good Manufacturing Practices;
- Ensured tighter control of potential FDA geographic quarantine authority, requiring an imminent threat to take such action; and,
- Capped registration fees for both facilities and importers.

“These are significant improvements in the bill, and we appreciate the support from both sides of the aisle in making these changes to ensure that the bill reported today would continue to advance these concepts on a bipartisan basis. We will continue to work with the Committee and other House leaders to fine-tune improvements as this bill moves to the House floor. We’ll also continue to work closely with Senate leaders as they take up their own food safety bill later this year, in order to eventually pass sound, scientific food safety legislation that will be signed by President Obama.”

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**United Fresh Produce Association** is the pre-eminent trade association for the produce industry in managing critical public policy issues; shaping legislative and regulatory action; providing scientific and technical leadership in food safety, quality assurance, nutrition and health; and developing educational programs and business opportunities for members to better meet consumer needs for increased consumption of fresh produce. Founded in 1904, United Fresh represents the interests of member companies from small family businesses to the largest international corporations throughout the global fresh produce supply chain, including growers, shippers, fresh-cut processors, wholesalers, distributors, retailers, foodservice operators, industry suppliers and allied associations. For more information, visit [www.unitedfresh.org](http://www.unitedfresh.org)