



PRESS RELEASE

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New Resource Builds the Business Case for Produce Sales at Convenience Stores

WASHINGTON, D.C. (March 9, 2015) – A primer to help sell more produce in convenience stores was published today by the National Association of Convenience Stores (NACS) and the United Fresh Produce Association (United Fresh). “Building the Business Case for Produce Sales at Convenience Stores” combines analysis of industry and consumer trends with practical ideas to develop an enhanced produce offering in stores.

The new publication is the first deliverable from the partnership that NACS and United Fresh formed in June 2014 to identify best practices to grow produce sales in convenience stores. More than two dozen retailers, distributors and produce companies helped develop and review the document.

“We have seen a dramatic increase for customer demand for fresh produce at convenience stores, and this resource was developed to communicate the huge opportunities for everyone in the distribution chain, from farm to store,” said NACS Chairman of the Board Steve Loehr, vice president of operations with La Crosse, WI-based Kwik Trip. “A recent NACS member survey reaffirms the importance of produce; 62% of members say that produce is important to their business plans in 2015.”

“Through contributions from NACS and United Fresh Member Companies participating in this effort, we have identified solutions in the distribution and merchandising of fresh produce, which ultimately will lead to new opportunities for produce suppliers, distributors and convenience store retailers to grow sales,” said United Fresh Chairman of the Board Ron Carkoski, president and CEO with Ephrata, PA-based Four Seasons Family of Companies.

A first step in this process is to build the business case for selling produce in convenience stores to all three critical groups: suppliers, distributors and retailers. The 26-page “Building the Business Case for Produce Sales at Convenience Stores” includes:

- Demand, products and consumer trends that can affect sales success;
- An overview of produce customer demographics and sales trends in convenience stores;
- Key elements to consider in developing and executing a successful produce program;
- Suggestions for how to start a program based on one retailer’s experience; and
- An example of a fresh build-to book including background methodology.

The new document represents the first of several deliverables expected to be released by the NACS-United Fresh partnership this year. The groups are developing follow-up resources to help interested retailers determine the level of fresh produce that they can efficiently offer at stores and a checklist of critical areas to examine. The groups are also planning a number of educational sessions at upcoming industry events.

Additionally, they are examining how to manage costs associated with more frequent delivery of fresh produce to stores, merchandising techniques and handling procedures to minimize spoilage and marketing strategies to communicate this offer to consumers. Internally, the focus will be on training and education, potentially including educational sessions and special hands-on training at existing industry events.

Note to Editors: Photos of Ron Carkoski and Steve Loehr and Logos of United Fresh and NACS available upon request.

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*Founded in 1904, the **United Fresh Produce Association** brings together companies across every segment of the fresh produce supply chain, including growers, shippers, fresh-cut processors, wholesalers, distributors, retailers, foodservice operators, industry suppliers and allied associations. We empower industry leaders to shape sound government policy. We deliver the resources and expertise companies need to succeed in managing complex business and technical issues. We provide the training and development individuals need to advance their careers in produce. And, through these endeavors, we unite our industry with a common purpose – to build long-term value for our members and grow produce consumption. For more information, visit www.unitedfresh.org or call 202-303-3400.*

*Founded in 1961 as the **National Association of Convenience Stores, NACS** (nacsonline.com) is the international association for convenience and fuel retailing. The U.S. convenience store industry, with more than 152,000 stores across the country, posted \$696 billion in total sales in 2013, of which \$491 billion were motor fuels sales. NACS has 2,100 retail and 1,600 supplier member companies, which do business in nearly 50 countries.*

