



## NEWS RELEASE

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# New SmartFood Expo™ To Take Center Stage With Other Show Partners in 2018

CHICAGO, IL (June 14, 2017) – During today's opening general session of the United FreshMKT, United FreshTEC, International Floriculture Expo and Global Cold Chain Expo, show organizers announced a fifth new expo will be co-located with the partners in June 2018.

The new **SmartFood Expo™** is being launched by United Fresh, EnsembleIQ, and *Progressive Grocer* to focus on the exploding category of healthy foods marketed as "better-for-you," bringing retail and foodservice buyers a one-stop shop to see what's new and learn about trends and opportunities to increase their share of the healthy foods business.

The **SmartFood Expo™** will feature a wide variety of consumer products including natural foods, plant-based foods, fresh and healthy, organics, raw foods, products with clean labels and limited ingredients, and a wide variety of items that appeal to consumers' demand for "better-for-you" foods. The **SmartFood Expo™ Conference** will bring together industry leaders to explore consumer trends, market data, merchandising strategies and more to help retailers and foodservice executives build upon the excitement and business growth in the "healthy foods" segment.

"We're excited to be partnering with United Fresh, as well as all of the show partners in Chicago, to meet a glaring need in the healthy food space," said Jeff Greisch, chief brand officer, EnsembleIQ. "We know from our readers/users that buyers are anxious to grow their healthy foods offerings to meet increasing consumer demand. Until now, they've had to work too hard to find those products and learn how to take advantage of these business opportunities. With our commitment to retail success, we'll be bringing focus to this diverse marketplace, employing the full resources of the EnsembleIQ team, including the Path to Purchase Institute, *Progressive Grocer*, *Convenience Store News* and our other properties."

"We're equally excited to be partnering with EnsembleIQ, calling upon their deep knowledge and experience in the retail food space," said Tom Stenzel, president & CEO, United Fresh. "Our own experience has been focused on meeting the growing consumer demand for innovations in fresh produce and fresh foods across all retail and foodservice channels. We're now pleased to bring the **SmartFood Expo™** side-by-side with our fresh foods, produce, floral and cold chain shows at McCormick Place in Chicago. A show focused exclusively on healthy foods is the ideal complement to our current events."

The primary audience for the **SmartFood Expo™** consists of buyers from multiple retail and foodservice channels sourcing "better-for-you" foods. These include major national chains but also independents, health and specialty food stores, restaurants, online marketers, home delivery and meal kit marketers, and more. In addition, a number of larger CPG companies and private equity investors will be seeking new food products that might fit within their own portfolios. The primary exhibitor audience includes some of those same CPG companies marketing "better-for-you" foods, but also a wide range of small and mid-sized companies looking for product exposure and sampling opportunities.

“While a few trade shows include a small selection of food products in this space, there are no shows targeted exclusively at the growing healthy foods segment,” Stenzel said. “The show’s mission is to provide a unique opportunity for buyers to concentrate their focus on healthy foods. Chicago is an easy flight from anywhere in the U.S., as well as a major international destination, enabling widespread retail and foodservice attendance with minimal disruption to busy buyers’ daily work.”

The new **SmartFood Expo™** will be the fifth partner show in Chicago in June 2018, filling the 800,000 square-foot South Hall at McCormick Place side-by-side with the International Floriculture Expo, Global Cold Chain Expo, United FreshMKT and United FreshTEC. “We’re thrilled to continue growing the footprint of healthy food, fresh foods, produce, floral and the cold chain services need to deliver the highest quality to consumers,” Stenzel said.

Exhibit sales, educational program development and attendee promotion will begin immediately following the 2017 shows June 13-15, in Chicago. Sales and program development will be handled jointly by the Ensemble IQ account staff and the **SmartFood Expo™** team.

For more information about exhibiting, partnering or supporting the **SmartFood Expo™**, contact John Toner, United Fresh vice president of convention & industry collaboration at 202-303-3424 or [jtoner@smartfoodexpo.org](mailto:jtoner@smartfoodexpo.org), or Jeff Greisch, chief brand officer, EnsembleIQ at 224-337-4029 or [jgreisch@ensembleiq.com](mailto:jgreisch@ensembleiq.com).

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**About EnsembleIQ and *Progressive Grocer*:**

EnsembleIQ serves the business-to-business needs of retailers, consumer goods manufacturers, technology vendors, marketing agencies and retail service providers with an integrated network of media and information resources that are designed to inform, connect and provide actionable marketplace intelligence. Learn more about EnsembleIQ at <http://www.ensembleiq.com>.

*Progressive Grocer* has been the voice of the retail food industry since 1922. From chain supermarkets and supercenters to regional and local independent grocers, distributors, manufacturers and other supply chain trading partners, readers stay “Ahead of What’s Next” using *PG*’s research-based editorial content and need-to-know news. Learn more about *Progressive Grocer* at <http://www.progressivegrocer.com>.

**About United Fresh Produce Association:**

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. Through these endeavors, we unite our industry with a common purpose – to build long-term value for our members and grow produce consumption.