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PMA contact: Kate Hill, khill@pma.com, +1 (302) 738-7100, ext. 3095

United Fresh contact: Mary Coppola, mcoppola@unitedfresh.org, +1 (202) 303-3425

PMA, United Fresh establish joint working group on *Listeria monocytogenes*

Washington, D.C. —Produce Marketing Association (PMA) and United Fresh Produce Association (United Fresh) are collaborating to address produce-specific challenges surrounding *Listeria monocytogenes* (*Lm*). While both organizations have been actively working with their respective members on individual projects related to reducing the risk of produce-associated foodborne illnesses from *Lm*, additional areas exist where a joint effort will result in greater efficiency and a more meaningful impact within the fresh produce industry. The group’s initial meeting took place Sept. 13 in Washington, D.C., during United Fresh’s Washington Conference; a second meeting is planned for October during PMA’s Fresh Summit Conference & Expo in Orlando, Fla.

“Members of PMA and United Fresh share mutual food safety goals and recognize the value in collaborating to address these concerns,” said Dr. Jim Gorny, PMA vice president of food safety & technology. “And because food safety is everyone’s responsibility across the produce supply chain, this joint working group is composed of members who represent the entire produce supply chain as well as technical subject matter experts.”

“*Lm* continues to challenge the fresh produce industry,” said Dr. Jennifer McEntire, United Fresh vice president of food safety & technology. “Leveraging the expertise within both of our associations will accelerate the pace of progress so that our collective members, and the industry at large, have the tools needed to mitigate the risk of *Lm*..”

The PMA-United Fresh Joint *Lm* Working Group aims to improve food safety by decreasing the risk of *Lm* associated with fresh produce through collaboration in the following key areas:

1. Policy – Advocate for sound science and risk-based U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) *Lm* policy through joint review of forthcoming FDA draft guidance and alignment of comments to FDA.
2. Research – Identify produce-specific *Lm* research needs and inform competitive research funding sources, including the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture and the Center for Produce Safety.
3. Information sharing – Amplify and make readily available new cutting-edge *Lm* research learnings and education resources—such as [PMA’s Listeria Resource Page](#)—as well as inform content development of the associations’ educational outreach efforts, such as United Fresh’s upcoming equipment sanitary design summit for the fresh-cut produce industry.

Both associations are also members of the Alliance for Listeriosis Prevention (ALP), a broad coalition of trade groups representing all sectors of the food industry working collaboratively to advocate for sound FDA

regulatory policy and serve as means to share information about new developments in Listeriosis prevention across food industry sectors.

About Produce Marketing Association (PMA)

Produce Marketing Association is the leading trade association representing companies from every segment of the global produce and floral supply chain. PMA helps members grow by providing connections that expand business opportunities and increase sales and consumption. For more information, visit www.pma.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. For more information, visit www.unitedfresh.org.

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