United Fresh Announces Inaugural Class of Produce Safety Immersion Program

Three-part program begins at the 2020 FreshStart Conference

WASHINGTON, D.C. (December 18, 2019) – United Fresh Produce Association is pleased to announce the Class One Fellows of the inaugural Produce Safety Immersion Program, sponsored by Renaissance Food Group at the gold level, and Ecolab as a silver sponsor. The 15 fellows will begin their journey next month at United Fresh’s FreshStart Conference, January 14-16 in Tucson, AZ.

“We’re thrilled to welcome the first class of the Produce Safety Immersion Program as they begin their journey as produce safety professionals,” said Dr. Jennifer McEntire, Vice President, Food Safety at United Fresh. “Through a variety of unique experiences over the course of next year, the class will work hard to build their technical capacity, critical thinking skills, and leadership attributes.”

The program is comprised of three face-to-face meetings/trainings, tailored webinars, and ongoing mentorship. Five highly-skilled produce safety professionals will serve as mentors to the program fellows and will accompany them at each meeting, including:

- **2020 FreshStart Conference** (January 14-16, Tucson, AZ)
- **United Fresh 2020 Convention & Expo** (June 16-19, San Diego, CA)
- **2020 United Fresh Washington Conference** (September 21-23, Washington, D.C.)

Class One Fellows include:

- Judy Amaya, Robinson Fresh, Sunrise, FL
- Aaron Anderson, Pacific International Marketing, Salinas, CA
- Nancy Arrieta, Lipman Family Farms, Denver, CO
- John T. Baillie, Amerifresh, Scottsdale, AZ
- Deadra Barnett, DNO Produce, Columbus, OH
- Isabel Chamberlain, Plenty Inc., San Francisco, CA
- Shelby Chih, Renaissance Food Group, Rancho Cordova, CA
- Ken Dreyer, Madison Chemical, Madison, IN
- Kristie Goad, Taylor Farms, Covington, KY
- Jackie Hawkins, Bright Farms, Irvington, NY
- Taylor Livingston, Titan Farms, Ridge Spring, SC
- Kinsey Porter, North Bay Produce, Traverse City , MI
- Kristina Schoen, Wish Farms, Plant City, FL
- Christopher Wright, Duncan Family Farms, Brockport, NY
- Daniel Wu, Giorgi Mushroom, Temple, PA
Early-to-mid career professionals with less than five years’ experience in produce safety were evaluated by members of the United Fresh Food Safety Council Steering Committee based on their backgrounds, roles in the industry, career aspirations, and recommendations. These budding produce safety professionals will be coached by the following mentors:

- Donna Lynn Browne, Director of Food Safety & Social Responsibility, Naturipe Farms
- De Ann Davis, Food Safety Director, Commercial Food Sanitation
- Suresh DeCosta, Director of Food Safety, North America and Latin America, Lipman Family Farms
- Cheryl Enlow, Vice President of Quality Assurance & Food Safety, Renaissance Food Group
- Walter Ram, Vice President of Food Safety, Giumarra Companies

“Ongoing professional development is especially crucial in produce safety, as ensuring consumers can safely consume such healthy products requires knowledge of a wide variety of processes and regulations,” said Donna Lynn Browne, Director of Food Safety & Social Responsibility, Naturipe Farms. “United Fresh has always been on the forefront of all things food safety in produce and this program is yet another great tool for the industry.”

Several United Fresh member companies, including 3M, Braga Family Farms, Ecolab, Heinzen Manufacturing, Merieux Nutrisciences, and Naturipe Farms are supporting the program by hosting the class throughout the year. For more information about the program, contact Katie McGowan, United Fresh’s Food Safety Coordinator, at 202-303-3402 or kmcgowan@unitedfresh.org.

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**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 out industry with a common purpose – to build long-term value for our members and grow produce consumption. For more information, visit [www.unitedfresh.org](http://www.unitedfresh.org)