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United Fresh publishes Updated Produce GAPs Harmonized Standard

WASHINGTON, D.C. (April 16, 2020) – While the produce industry is faced with daily evolving challenges associated with the COVID-19 crisis, United Fresh continues to support ongoing produce safety initiatives and announces the availability of Produce GAPs Harmonized Standard (V. 2.0).

For over a decade, the Harmonized Standard has provided the produce industry with a food safety focused, risk-based audit standard. As secretariat, United Fresh licenses the standard to several audit organizations, some of which have attained recognition through the Global Food Safety Initiative. United Fresh manages updates through an open, transparent process and continues to invite input from stakeholders.

The revision process began at a September 2019 meeting of the Harmonized Technical Working Group, where members met to align on proposed revisions and additions intended to enhance the standard's recognition and acceptance among buyers, while remaining accessible as a market-entry tool for growers of all sizes.

Throughout the process, over 150 produce industry stakeholders participated in either the Technical Working Group or Calibration Committee, representing a diverse group of producers, buyers, auditing organizations, and other industry partners. These groups deliberated input from buyers, growers, and others to recommend revisions that reflect the current state of science. Between November 2019 – January 2020, the draft revision was open for public comment.

“Even as many 3rd party audits are postponed and certificate extensions are being granted due to the unprecedented nature of the COVID-19 crisis, we recognize that our regular produce safety efforts are as important as ever,” says Dr. Emily Griep, United Fresh's Manager of Food Safety. “The incredible industry support that we've had throughout the revision process, including in these past few weeks, is a clear indication that the industry remains steadfast in their commitment to continually strengthening produce safety efforts, even in a time of crisis.”

The revised standards are available on the [United Fresh website](#). Licensees and auditees of the Harmonized will transition to the updated standard by April 10, 2021.

For more information, contact [Dr. Emily Griep](#), United Fresh's Manager of Food Safety, at 202-303-3401.

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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 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.