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Consumer Survey: Food System Practices Must Reflect Community Values

Research showing technical expertise trails ethical considerations on food safety issues to be discussed at Center for Food Integrity 2008 Food System Summit

Kansas City, Mo (Sept. 30, 2008) Shared values are five times more important than technical know-how when building consumer trust in the food system's commitment to ensuring food safety. The finding is contained in the Center for Food Integrity's (CFI) new Consumer Trust Survey.

CFI believes systems must be ethically grounded, scientifically verified and economically viable in order to be truly sustainable. The organization conducts research each year to benchmark consumer attitudes toward the important issues facing the U.S. food system.

"The food system needs to demonstrate that we share the values of today's consumer," said Charlie Arnot, CEO of CFI. Consumers want to know that even though our systems have changed those in the food system are committed to doing what's right. By the same token, if practices are not based on sound science there is no way to evaluate and validate the claims of sustainability, and if they are not profitable they cannot be commercially sustained."

The study asked consumers to rate their level of concern about a list of current events and situations. Not surprisingly, rising energy costs, the U.S. economy, and the rising cost of food were the top three issues. Consumers also ranked their concern about food safety higher than their concern over the war in Iraq.

Full survey results will be released at the Center for Food Integrity 2008 Food System Summit taking place Oct. 8-9 in Indianapolis. The research also reflects consumer attitudes on the issues of Immigration, Food Animal Well-Being and Energy/Sustainability.

The full summit agenda and information on how to register are available at www.foodintegrity.org.

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The Center for Food Integrity is a not-for-profit corporation established to build consumer trust and confidence in the contemporary U.S. food system. Our members, who represent every segment of the food system, are committed to providing accurate information and addressing important issues among all food system stakeholders. The Center does not lobby or advocate for individual food companies or brands. For more information, visit www.foodintegrity.org.