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Two Food System Voices Partner to Promote Transparency Culture

ARLINGTON, VA/KANSAS CITY – The Food Marketing Institute (FMI) and The Center for Food Integrity (CFI) have partnered to create a new culture of transparency in the food system as a means of building consumer trust and promoting a deeper connection to food. Consolidating research the two groups conducted separately, FMI and CFI today released the white paper *Transparency Roadmap for Food Retailers: Strategies to Build Consumer Trust*. It offers guidance for food retailers and their supplier partners to provide shoppers with clear information about their food.

“In an age when information flows freely – from trustworthy and some not-so-trustworthy sources – food consumers simply want balanced, credible information regarding the products in the supermarket,” said David Fikes, vice president, FMI communications and consumer/community affairs. “Grocers who provide easy access to clear information the shopper wants will be rewarded by a shift in consumer perception – moving from being a simple purveyor of food to a trusted ally in the shopper’s food experience.”

FMI is partnering with CFI to develop a transparency index, based on consumer transparency expectations, that will provide retailers with an easy-to-use tool for both assessing how well they have integrated transparency into their cultures and operations and providing specific research-based guidance to enhance transparency.

In developing the index, CFI identified six transparency areas that are priorities for consumers:

1. Impact of food on health
2. Food safety
3. Impact on environment
4. Labor and human rights

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5. Treatment of animals raised for food
6. Business ethics in food production

“Consumers hold food manufacturers and farmers chiefly responsible for transparency, CFI has found; however, food retailers are increasingly in the spotlight as they place more focus on their own brands and private label products,” said Charlie Arnot, CFI CEO. “Trust-building transparency is no longer optional, but rather a basic consumer expectation.”

The release of *Transparency Roadmap for Food Retailers: Strategies to Build Consumer Trust* and its outline of actionable steps and resources ushers in the first phase of a multi-year transparency journey. Download the roadmap at www.foodintegrity.org.

About CFI

The Center for Food Integrity is a not-for-profit organization that helps today’s food system earn consumer trust. Our members and project partners, who represent the diversity of the food system, are committed to providing accurate information and working together to address important issues in food and agriculture. The Center does not lobby or advocate for individual companies or brands. For more information visit www.foodintegrity.org.

About FMI

Food Marketing Institute proudly advocates on behalf of the food retail industry, which employs nearly 5 million workers and represents a combined annual sales volume of almost \$800 billion. FMI member companies operate nearly 33,000 retail food stores and 12,000 pharmacies. FMI membership includes the entire spectrum of food retail venues; single owner grocery stores, large multi-store supermarket chains, pharmacies, online and mixed retail stores. Through programs in public affairs, food safety, research, education, health and wellness and industry relations, FMI offers resources and provides valuable benefits to almost 1,000 food retail and wholesale member companies and serves 85 international retail member companies. In addition, FMI has almost 500 associate member companies that provide products and services to the food retail industry. For more information, visit www.fmi.org and for information regarding the FMI Foundation, visit www.fmifoundation.org.

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