

News Release

For Immediate Release February 9, 2010

Contact: Ray Gilmer
rgilmer@unitedfresh.org
202-510-8205 (mobile)
202-303-3425 (office)

United Fresh Launches “Salad Bar in Every School” Campaign *Produce Industry Supports Obama Administration’s Childhood Obesity Initiative*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The United Fresh Produce Association Foundation announced today the launch of “A Salad Bar in Every School” campaign, a multi-year public health commitment from the fresh produce industry designed to bring fruit and vegetable salad bars to schools across America. “We are pleased to join First Lady Michelle Obama’s campaign announced today to combat childhood obesity, one of the greatest health threats to our children, and long-term threats to our nation’s ability to provide affordable health care,” said United Fresh President and CEO Tom Stenzel.

“Research has shown that children significantly increase their consumption of fruits and vegetables when given a variety of choices in a school salad bar,” said Dr. Lorelei DiSogra, United Fresh vice president of nutrition and health. “When offered multiple fruit and vegetable choices, children respond by trying new items, incorporating greater variety into their diets, and increasing their daily consumption of fruits and vegetables,” she said.

“By increasing access to fresh fruits and vegetables through salad bars in schools, we can provide kids a personal experience about making choices that can shape behavior far beyond the school lunch line. Children learn to make decisions that carry over outside of school, providing a platform for a lifetime of healthy snack and meal choices,” she said.

The United Fresh Foundation’s “Salad Bar in Every School” campaign is based on the personal involvement and charitable commitment of produce growers, distributors and marketers to raise private funds to donate salad bars to schools in cities and counties across the country to serve as demonstration models for increasing children’s fresh fruit and vegetable consumption. These demonstration projects will then assist school nutrition professionals, principals and teachers, parents groups and community supporters in working with local, state and federal government officials to bring salad bars to all schools. United Fresh donated its first salad bar to the Elsie Whitlow Stokes Public Charter School in Washington, DC last fall, where it continues to help school officials foster healthier choices and children’s interest in a variety of fresh produce items.

“We strongly support the Obama Administration’s childhood obesity initiatives, and urge the Congress to provide similar support in reauthorizing childhood nutrition legislation this year,” Stenzel said. “We believe an important step in reauthorization would be to include key elements of the Children’s Fruit and Vegetable Act of 2009 (H.R. 4333) introduced by Representatives Sam Farr and Adam Putnam, along with numerous co-sponsors. This bill supports a national salad bar policy for schools, increased funding for school equipment, and better access to fruits and vegetables, which will be required to enable schools to meet the Dietary Guidelines,” he said.